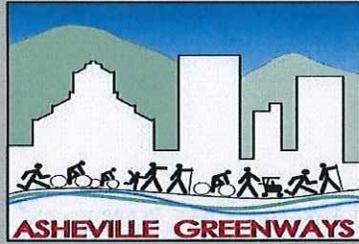


GREENWAY COMMISSION MEETING



June 14, 2012

3:30-5:00 pm

First Floor Conference Room City Hall

Members Present: Jim Grode, Marcia Bromberg, Glen Locascio, Susan Barlow, Stephen Jones, Mary Weber.

Council Liaison: Chris Pelly.

Staff Present: Al Kopf, Parks & Rec, Mariate Echeverry, Staff Liaison, Martha McGlohon, Legal Liaison, Janet Georgemurr, Nathan Gower.

Community Present: None

Jim called the meeting to order at 3:30.

Review and approval of 6-14-12 agenda: Under Staff updates: Jim stated to remove Planning update since Blake Esselstyn will not be attending this meeting. Under New Business: Marcia stated to add Parking for Commissioners. Jim Grode will have brief announcements.

Review and approval of 4-12-12 and Retreat Minutes of May 10, 2012: Glen stated that on page 3 under Old Business on Ribbon Cutting Ceremony discussion to correct the spelling to Reed Creek on the first and fourth bullet point. Jim moved to approve the 4/12/12 Greenway Commission Minutes and 5/10/12 Greenway Commission Retreat Minutes, Marcia approved, Sue seconded and unanimously approved.

New Business:

- **Recap of Retreat and Next Steps Arising from Retreat:** Jim stated the main steps arising from the 5/10/12 retreat are how to keep the momentum going, such as scheduling another work session and other topics when moving forward. Jim asked the commissioners for specifics:
 - Marcia expressed the importance on how the commissioners would proceed in setting general parameters assessing greenways and then prioritization. If the specifics are on a planned list there is a better chance of funding.
 - Mary stated that it would be helpful to learn about funding options.
 - Sue stated the result and comments from the public meeting a year ago could be studied make the right decisions.
 - Glen stated that he also agrees with the above listed suggestions. In addition, to link with the one page list that GC produced of the different funding levels, in order to compare the one-page list to the map as to the commissioners' request of priorities. Marcia stated that the Buncombe County will have a draft of their master plan by the GC work session on Sept.
 - For clarification, Marcia explained that the one page list consists of greenways which is part of the PRCA and Greenway Master Plan (GMP) and/or that GC had added based upon public input. The list is in a priority order that would be planned and constructed, if funding is available. If the list of priorities does not meet the public views, then a re-prioritization within that list of greenways and what is realistic to accomplish.
 - Marcia stated another topic for the work session would be to update the Wilma Dykeman Plan and greenways along the river which are not part of the GMP but is important.

- Marcia stated that since GC is working with the Transportation Department that GC needs to think of things in a new way. Some greenways are not part of the master plan and it is necessary to discuss the needs and desires of the public.
- Mariate stated that focusing on the process is better than focusing on the projects. Focusing on the process; how to modify the process; and the document would be a good point to start. Staff generally pursues only projects that are in the master plan. The master plan is a guide to achieve the City's goals
- Stephen and Marcia asked how GC could move forward with the staff's assistance.
- Glen stated that GC has the document which was voted on that lists the different funding categories. Top category was the GMP and GC is thinking beyond that list in a more complete greenway system for the City. The master plan pieces are being worked on at this time but this is a fragmented piece.
- Al stated that incorporating the master planning of every mode within the Transportation Dept is thinking not only of the greenways but integrating with bike and ped, transit, etc.
- Jim stated that this discussion is about a number of items:
 1. There are items that are not on the GMP that GC has heard through channels about potential greenways.
 2. The GC had concerns that there would be decisions made that were inconsistent with the possibility of ever developing as greenways and GC wanted a mechanism by which those items could be identified in a more formal way.
 3. GC was informed to place the priority list into the Capital Improvements Project budget even though there wasn't funding budgeted, but, the list would be documented.
 4. GC wants to know if that is enough or is there something else that GC can do to revisit the questions.
 5. Jim summarized that GC is referring to items that were approved in 2008 GMP, which rough prioritizations were made that was based on a set of criteria. Since 2008, events have occurred, for instance, the acquisition of the Waller Tract could potentially serve as a reason to move the Hominy Creek in the priority list than other projects. GC feels that it is appropriate to revisit that issue as well. Jim understands that the GC is an advisory commission and cannot say that the Waller Tract is a priority; but GC thinks that it is their duty and role to advise as to what GC believes the priorities should be.
- Martha asked the chair for clarification as to whether he was told that certain greenways or proposed greenways that are not set forth in the GMP, that one way the GMP process could be by-passed is to do a CIP.
- Al stated that the one page document that is being referred to lists all the properties that were listed in the GMP adopted by Council; and placed in priorities with criteria such as length, density of development and connectivity. The first priorities are being designed and constructed. There were also lower priorities that are not being planned or funded for construction and that nothing would be happening for some time. Al stated that Roderick suggested in the context of that list, the commission could add projects that are not officially recognized in the GMP by putting it on the list in a different category of Proposed Greenways, but not earmarked for funding
- Martha asked if an item could be placed on the CIP list that is not on a master plan. Al stated that the CIP list that goes to City Council are projects being supported by the Master Plan. He stated that it was his understanding that a CIP proposal by a department is only made official when City Council adopts it.
- Mary and Councilman Pelly asked if there are other methods of achieving the same as a GMP update or amendment.
- Martha stated that it is important to nail down the process if there are proposed greenways that GC would like to have recognized; and how does the staff go about making sure that those proposed greenways are of importance to the City as well and to have staff move forward.

- Mary asked if there could be two tracks: short and longer term visions where evaluation of the master plan and incorporating all of the proposed sites. In the interim, possibly propose an amendment to the GMP.
- Martha stated that this is a very detailed and elaborate process. Martha stated she will schedule a meeting with Mariate and Ken; and that hopefully subsequent thereto, staff will report back to GC.
- Mariate indicated that to revisit the process will be an open public process. Many details are involved and time consuming.
- Sue will send Mariate the list and comments from the public.
- Mariate suggested adding this discussion to the work session.
- Marcia suggested having staff research on how to break the "log jam"; integrate greenways in plans that exist for Transportation; and to have one more meeting before the work session.
- After a group discussion it was decided to schedule the work session on September 13 and expand the time from 1-5pm. Location to be determined.

Hominy Creek Update: Jim updated GC of the April meeting discussing the ownership of the Waller Tract and the fact trail for some length is on private property. GC developed a resolution and he and Marcia spoke with Councilman Pelly.

- Councilman Pelly spoke with Gary Jackson who stated that given the budget situation there wasn't funding to pay for the easements. Mr. Jackson has directed Nikki Reed to speak with the owners to volunteer the easements, but also mentioned that Nikki was very busy with other projects.
- Marcia stated that she heard that Mrs. Corpening is willing to proceed with the easement.
- Al stated that Nikki contacted both property owners of Trinity Baptist and Ms. Corpening to discuss the greenway crossing the property.
- Al talked to Jannice Ashley, in the Legal Department and she indicated that a temporary access right of entry agreement for this project would not be feasible for these properties. (This was a preliminary idea to be pursued when the City Manager directed staff to see a no-cost option.)
- Nikki met with Ms. Corpening who is willing to donate the property. Trinity Baptist has rescheduled 3 times but is interested in meeting with her.
- Nikki will report back to Gary Jackson with her findings for there will be costs incurred and see what direction Gary would like to approach.
- Marcia reported from the Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway who are clearing identified evasive plants and are incorporating as a non-profit corporation. They plan to approach the City to propose a formal agreement to manage or maintain the property based on a model of a Buncombe County park leased and maintained by a neighborhood group.

□ **Parking for Commissioners; After** a group discussion, Mariate stated that this is in the works and will have an update from the Director of Transportation.

□ **Beaverdam Update:** Glen reported that will be a group from the Beaverdam Community at the July meeting to express interest in the greenway. Glen will share a map with the GC before the meeting that shows the key features along Kimberley to the City limits where Beaverdam Road ends and Lynn and Webb Cove split off which is not in the GMP. There is a lot of community interest for the Beaverdam greenway which is different from any of the other greenway projects, since there are many homeowners as opposed to a large tract of land.

Old Business:

□ **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Discussion Update:**

- Sue Barlow reported that the Montford Neighbourhood Group is donating \$12,000 to Riverlink for assistance between Catawba and WT Weaver Blvd.
- Sue asked for another GC member to volunteer as a back up for the ribbon cutting ceremony and is proposing the fall. Stephen and Mary offered to help and will be obtaining a date from the Mayor

and many of the Council members. Councilman Pelly suggested a Saturday morning around 9am. Stephen stated that Montford would give the check to Riverlink.

- Stephen will speak with Karen Cragolin of Riverlink regarding the presentation of the \$12,000 donation.

□ **Greenway Commission Updates:**

1. Community Outreach Committee Report: Sue reported that GC had a table at the Rexpo exhibit and collected 50 names of support for greenways and took a lot of photos for the County. The public are embracing the Commission and the greenways. Stephen stated that greenways enhance their businesses. Sports Festival - Mary and Marcia worked at the festival; and Healthy Buncombe had a booth. No plans for July and Sue encourages the commissioners to email GC of any activities that GC could attend.

2. Asheville-Buncombe Bicycle Pedestrian Task Force Report - Jim reported that the main discussion was the news that Asheville was recognized as a Bike Friendly Community at the bronze level. We need to keep the momentum and commend the City's commitment to cycling. There will be a presentation planned at the 6/26 Council Meeting. Also, at the 6/26 Council meeting that Council will be considering the Complete Streets Resolution/Policy.

4. Asheville Parks and Greenway Foundation Report - Glen reported that he exchanged emails with Jeff Furland, who is the Chair of the Greenway Foundation and is working on different fronts. Glen has had some conflicts with the Foundation's meeting times.

4. Buncombe County Greenway Commission Update - Marcia reported the Commission did not meet this past month due to the public sessions of the master plan. There is an active oversight meeting next Tuesday and the commission will meet next Wednesday. It is coming to a closure and the plans do flow into the City's plans. Stephen stated that David Gantt has a vision of the greenway discussed a future bond issue. Stephen commended the County for the bond issue for ABTech and a precedent for the next bond issue for the greenways. Marcia stated that the positive vote came from the City and not the County. Mary stated that there are greenways on the ground now that people are using and experiencing in the City and the 3 RFQ's out for major construction will add to the momentum. The City is actually constructing them which might be a good time for a bond issue. Marcia stated that if the two entities could work together it would make more sense. Final BC master plan will be on the website in July. Stephen suggested having a County representative to speak about the master plan.

PRCA Staff Update:

Al reported on 3 RFQ's: planning the Clingman Forest and Town Branch Greenways and planning and constructing the Beaucatcher Greenway. In the case of the first project, which is funded by a TIGR grant, 3 candidates were chosen for interviews with an alternate listed in case one of the candidates did not qualify. Marcia and Mariate participated on this selection panel. Interviews have not yet been scheduled.

On the Beaucatcher submittal where there were 14 submittals; staff, commission members, neighbourhood representatives were on the committee. They narrowed it down to 4 firms and interviews are scheduled for the 6/28.

Cathy Ball put out the RFQ for the new Belgium Brewer site for road improvements, stormwater, and a greenway. The firm selected is not only working with COA aspect of the property but also doing the work for New Belgium to have a seamless project clearly defined in the contract basis.

Councilman Pelly asked Al if the City's commitment was a 1/2 mile of greenway for New Belgium that will interface the New Belgium events and how twill it link to the greenway and the transition on how it works. Al stated that there is a stream running down the middle of the property. COA will be working on improvements of the stream channel and how to make it asset. Glen asked if the 1/2 greenway connects to other greenways. Al stated that it starts at Craven Street that goes south to Haywood Bridge and with a switchback up to the Brewer and neighbourhood. Eventually it could continue south to the French Board River Dog Park. Progress Energy was instrumental in all French Broad River park

development and AI foresees a great partnership. There will be a trail head at either end and as well as an intermediate access to the brewer. Marcia could see the connection of the dog park to connect to Hominy Creek.

Stephen asked AI about the fence the other side of the road that goes along the Riverlink Property and the City property. AI stated the wooden fences are to keep cars out until there is a development as a barrier, but that the metal fence is coming down along the former Progress Energy site except for a post and cable barrier to keep cars out.

Transportation Updates: Mariate reported:

- The Transportation Master Plan Implementation (TMP) first phase was completed on 5/21/12. A lot of outreach was done weeks before and days after. There were many volunteers to speak with the riders including Council members. The implementation ran smoothly considering the magnitude of the change and adjustments will be made as it moves forward.
- The project for the sidewalk on N. Louisiana that connects with the school was funded by multiple sources, i.e.: FTA and Community Development Grant funding. This portion will be ready in approximately 3 months. Also, a bid that is funded by Safe Routes to Schools to help residents connect with the Emma neighbourhood with Patton Avenue. Obtaining all of the easements which were door by door on multiple occasions was a problem. Councilman Pelly stated that this is a very dangerous section and he is most appreciative of what the City is doing.
- Strive Not To Drive - 5/21-5/25/12 - in which multiple businesses/agencies participated on the committee. The event has been active for the past 20 years. During the last day of SNTD week, a number of events occurred: the community leadership bus ride on a new hybrid bus and the ribbon cutting in celebration of the first phase of the TMP; and the bike ride participation of approximately 75 people who visited the green lane on South Lexington.

Jim adjourned the meeting at 5:02 p.m.