

GREENWAY COMMITTEE MEETING

April 10, 2014

3:30-5:00 pm

First Floor Conference Room-City Hall



GREENWAY COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the City of Asheville's Greenway Commission is to advise City Council on implementation of a system of greenways within Asheville by integrating City and County Parks and Transportation plans while educating and engaging the public and advocating for funding.

Members Present: Sue Barlow, Chairman, Bryan Mitchell, Vice-Chairman/Secretary, Mary Weber, Jim Grode, Marcia Bromberg, Rich Lee, John Ridout, Kimberly Williams.

Staff Present: Mariate Echeverry, Transportation Planning Manager.

Community Present: Forrest Merithew, Susan Roderick.

- Chairman Barlow called the meeting to order at 3:30.

Review and approval of 4-10-14 agenda:

Changes to agenda:

1. Add Rhododendron Creek Greenway Update
2. Add Mission Discussion

Sue moved and Rich seconded and carried unanimously.

Review and approval of 3-13-14 minutes: Marcia moved to approve the minutes as written, Jim seconded and carried unanimously.

Presentation on Clingman Forest and Town Branch Greenways:

- Steven Lee Johnson of Sitework Studios gave an update with highlights below:
 1. Design process has taken 1 year to complete
 2. Funding for design came from TIGER grant
 3. City owned all Town Branch (TB) property except a trailhead. Those property owners are working with the city for access.
 4. Seven historical markers will be placed along TB with wall detailing pulled from historical building photos.
 5. Greenway system signage cohesiveness was a concern and now Parks and Recreation is working with a graphic designer to implement systemwide designs for all facilities and assets.
 6. City will experiment with a bio-retention area to prevent runoff into Town Branch.
 7. Town Branch Greenway will be approximately 7/10 mile in length.
 8. Both greenways will be handicap accessible and ADA compliant with grades less than 5%.
 9. Clingman Forest Greenway will have a 375 foot elevated boardwalk that will feel like a canopy tour. A redesigned trailhead area that will expand and maximize parking at Aston Park Tennis Courts. 15 spaces will be added. The Greenway will be approximately ½ mile in length.
 10. CFG walk through with WECAN will take place on April 23, 2014 at 12pm.
 11. The GC response to the two greenway designs was overwhelmingly positive.

Staff Updates:

- **Transportation Update:** Mariate reported updates on a list of projects:
 1. See the attached List of Projects. A few items of note follow.
 2. The City is applying for TIGER 6 funding for RADTIP, East of the Riverway Transportation Network, and the Town Branch + Clingman Forest Greenways.

3. A consultant will be recommended by the end of April for the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan.
4. A consultant will be engaged by the end of April for the French Broad River Greenway.
5. Nextbus technology is being added over time to the city's public transports system. It will help riders know in real time when the next bus will arrive.
6. Bryan asked for an update on the Reed Creek Greenway connector on UNC-A's property. Mariate responded that her department is not involved in the construction. Bryan updated the GC that he saw that construction has started, temporary fencing is up, and dirt is being moved.

New Business:

- **New GC Member Introductions** - Sue presented:

1. Kimberly Williams, Rich Lee, and John Ridout were present to introduce themselves.

- **Tri-State ASLA Conference Update** - Mary presented:

1. Many sessions focused on greenways. A group called Econsult Solutions has conducting many studies on the economic impact of greenways across the country.
2. The Silver Comet Trail in north Georgia has 1.9 million users annually. The Swamp Rabbit Trail in Greenville County, SC had more than 400,000 in the past two years.
3. There is a trail proposed from Hendersonville to Brevard, NC.
4. Coordination is very important in getting greenways built.

- **Meeting Minutes Posting** - Bryan presented:

1. A proposal to post the draft meeting minutes online prior to approval at the next GC meeting. This would allow the public to be up to date on the meetings.
2. Proposal passed unanimously.

- **Rhododendron Creek Greenway** - Jim presented:

1. A housing developer is going to be constructing a new sewer line in the watershed this summer along the greenway. Jim thinks this is an opportunity to partner with the developer to lay the foundation for the eventual greenway. Alignment of the future greenway could be the focus.
2. While no funding is available currently to look at specific greenway alignment, Mariate will reach out to the developer. The Transportation Dept. is working towards a long range transportation capital improvement plan to have a better idea of investments year after year.

Old Business:

- **Site Visit Reminder for May Meeting:** Sue reminded:

1. The GC will meet in front of City Hall on May 8 at 2pm for a walking tour of the Smith Mill, Hominy Creek, and Canie Creek Greenway.

- **Mission of Greenway Committee Discussion:** Sue reported:

1. The GC would like to emphasize the importance of recreation as a vital component of the greenway system. Sue stated that she felt like the shift of responsibility over greenways from the Parks and Rec Dept. to the Transportation Dept. has left a void in terms of recreation connection. An example is the Parks and Rec Dept. heading up signage of greenways but the GC might not ever get to see the design before it is implemented. The GC discussed the importance of having continued contact with the Parks and Rec Dept. and the Parks and Rec Commission.

Greenway Committee Updates:

- **Friends of Connect Buncombe County (FOCB) Update:** Marcia reported:

1. The group will start a crowdfunding project to do a feasibility study on the first greenway focus section from Hominy Creek Greenway to the NC Arboretum. The group hopes to raise 20%, or \$10,000, of the total cost whereby the County will apply for grant funding for the remainder.

- **Multi-Modal Transportation Commission (MMTC):** Jim stated:

1. The MMTC will present to City Council soon on the need for dedicated funding for multi-modal initiatives like the East of the Riverway Transportation Network Plan.

- **Community Outreach Committee Report:** Sue reported:

1. Amy Vanden Heuvel has volunteered to head the committee, taking over for Sue, and has lots of ideas about how to expand outreach. Kimberly is also interested in working on the committee.

Final Comments:

- Citizen Forrest Merithew commented on his excitement seeing the progress with the Clingman Forest and Town Branch Greenways along with the other greenways reported during the meeting. He thinks more communication with the general public is needed to organize concerned citizens and sees that this is also a focus of the GC.

Sue Adjourned at 5:10 pm