



2020 Hampton Street • Room 3063A
P.O. Box 192 • Columbia, SC 29202
(803) 576-2083

Minutes September 26, 2011

Attendance:

Members present: Carol Kososki, John Grego, Becky Bailey, Jim Lawracy, Gary Atkinson via phone, Frank Houston, Margaret DuBard, Virginia Sanders, and Sam Holland

Absent: Mildred Myers, Glenice Pearson

Others Present:

James B. Atkins (Buddy), Environmental Planning Division
Chanda Cooper, Environmental Planning Division
Nancy Stone-Collum, Environmental Planning Division
Charlie Fisher, Environmental Planning Division
Ken Driggers, Legal
Quinton Epps, Richland County Storm Water
Jessica Artz, Gills Creek Watershed Association
Ted Creech, AT&T Director of External Affairs

Chair Carol Kososki called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

Minutes: A motion was made by Jim Lawracy and seconded by Becky Bailey to approve the minutes of August 22, 2011 as written. Motion carried.

Agenda: A motion was made by Jim Lawracy and seconded by Glenice Pearson to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Presentation: Gills Creek Watershed

Jessica Artz, Program Coordinator for Gills Creek Watershed Association (GCWA), presented a video on The Cary Lake Water Quality Improvement Project. This project was implemented by Richland County in association with GCWA to address water quality concerns, particularly sedimentation and trash/debris that has built up over several decades at Cary Lake. Fifteen acres of sediment were removed to increase the capacity of the lake and decrease flooding. A trash rack has been installed to help improve water quality. Future Gills Creek Watershed projects include work at Little Jackson Creek, Devil's Ditch and the Middle Watershed (Kilbourne to Bluff Road).

The iPhone project is an FY12 Community Conservation grant which provides volunteers with iPhones and iPads to document stormwater problems with photos and GPS locations. An email is then sent to the county's Ombudsman or City of Columbia Storm Water Division, and GCWA for appropriate action to be taken. Jessica introduced Mr. Ted Creech, Director of External Affairs for AT&T whose Citizenship

and Sustainability Committee was intrigued by the project. AT&T gave GCWA a check for \$11,500 to pay for staff and operating expenses, thus allowing the RCCC grant to provide more iPhone and iPads to more volunteers.

Environmental Division Manager's Report – Buddy Atkins

SCE&G 230kV Transmission line – Buddy reported the memos discussed at the August 22 Commission meeting had been forwarded to County Council, who voted at their September 6 meeting to intervene. County staff will submit prefiled written testimony by October 6 to the Public Service Commission regarding concerns with siting analysis and lack of conformity with Richland County ordinances and comprehensive plan. The goal is to have a less intrusive route sited. The hearing will be held October 20-21st at the Public Service Commission. Staff will send out an email with details as to time and location.

Jackson Creek Mitigation Bank – At the September 6th meeting, County Council voted to approve RCCC proceeding with negotiations with land owners. Those discussions should begin in October.

Cook's Mountain – John Grego is continuing to investigate water quality issues from the Northeast landfill through Freedom of Information requested reports. Contrary to *The State* Sept. 18, 2011 newspaper article, no residential waste was accepted last year; it is all industrial and commercial waste. Polluted groundwater is headed downstream to Colonel's Creek and the Wateree River. Glenice Pearson raised concerns about the impact on the Old McGraw community, respiratory and environmental justice issues. Jim Lawracy asked why the Department of Health and Environmental Control and Environmental Protection Agency are not taking a stronger stance about the pollution. Carol Kososki emphasized the need for an independent analysis to look at water, air and health issues. The Development and Services Committee will take up Republic's request to remove the closure date for the landfill at its 5pm meeting on October 25. Staff will provide comments and raise questions about pollution and the solid waste needs of the county.

Caughman property – County Administrator Milton Pope contacted Buddy to inquire whether RCCC will fund maintenance at the property. (RCCC designated \$100,000 to assist with purchasing the property.) A memo dated September 22, 2011 from James Brown, III, Executive Director of Richland County Recreation Commission (RCRC) to Milton Pope, states RCRC will not maintain the lake, wet lands, or existing building structures and RCCC has agreed to maintain areas surrounding the lake. RCRC would like to have this agreement in writing. Ken Driggers said at a meeting he attended with Jim Wilson and the RCRC there was never any mention of maintenance. Virginia Sanders relayed that at her meeting of June 15, 2011 with Norman Jackson and Mr. Brown, she asked Mr. Brown if they managed parks with ponds. He replied they do have several parks with ponds. No mention was made of RCCC providing funding for maintenance on the property at that meeting either. The recollection of several Commission Members was a request for \$200,000 to purchase the property had been made originally, but the Commission only approved \$100,000 at the October 25, 2010 meeting. Jim Lawracy stated the September 22, 2011 memorandum regarding the Conservation Commission's agreement to maintain areas surrounding the lake is unequivocally in error. He moved, and Virginia Sanders seconded the motion, that the RCCC not fund maintenance at the Caughman Pond property. The motion was approved unanimously.

Committee Reports

Conservation Committee: Nancy Stone-Collum explained time is running out for completing easements for this calendar year. With the addition of the latest Pebble Creek easement, RCCC has a total of 854 acres under easement with 25 different property owners. Subordination is holding up two other Pebble

Creek easements. Gary Atkins said he envisioned using those neighbors in the program as references to encourage the rest of the community to donate easements. Owners of the 23-acre Spring Valley tract are still trying to work out an agreement with the Home Owners Association. The Conservation Committee will meet soon to consider a request for an easement on 100 acres in Lower Richland. There have also been two recent inquires in the Crane Creek Watershed that look interesting.

Historic Committee: Chairman Frank Houston said RCCC should be proud of the restoration, rehabilitation, and education projects the Commission has funded. The September 15th downtown tour of five grant projects (Sims-Stack House, Modjeska Simpkins Dependency, Randolph Cemetery, Columbia Cottage at Zion, and Fox Theater) was very informative and encouraging. The last two stops at Mast General Store and the reception at 1329 Blanding Street hosted by Historic Columbia made for a packed but successful afternoon.

The Committee held a Conference call on Friday September 23rd with Frank, Glenice Pearson, Jim Lawracy, and Margaret DuBard participating. The purpose was to make recommendations to the Commission on the following three issues.

Langford Nord Landmark Designation - The Blythewood Historical Society requested Landmark designation for the Langford-Nord House. The house was built in 1904 by Luther Langford and is significant locally due to the prominence of the family and as a well-known community landmark. As a member of the Historic Society, Margaret recused herself from all discussion and voting on the project. Frank moved to approve the designation of the Langford House as a Richland County Landmark. The motion was seconded by Jim Lawracy and approved.

Special Project – In 2008 RCCC funded a conditions assessment/preservation plan for the last remaining cabin at Kensington plantation. New leadership at International Paper, owners of the property, is interested in restoring the cabin but wants it moved to within site of the manor house. Two quotes to move and stabilize the building have been obtained at a cost of \$45,000-\$50,000. This includes a new foundation, sills, floor joists, exterior walls, and roof, making the cabin structurally sound and protected from the elements. Frank Houston moved to approve spending \$20,000 from Professional Services as a special project for the moving and stabilization of a Kensington cabin. Jim Lawracy seconded the motion which was approved unanimously. Since \$40,000 was budgeted for special projects, \$20,000 remains uncommitted.

Grant Extension -The Eastover Lower Richland Business Association is requesting a grant extension for the Farmers & Merchants Bank building in Eastover. An FY10 grant of \$35,000 was never spent. The organization has a cash match of \$7,000 in hand and a quote from Shenandoah Restoration of \$40,525 for restoring 18 windows on the second story and three doors.

Time Extension – At 5:25pm, Jim Lawracy moved and Margaret DuBard seconded the motion to extend the meeting until 5:45pm. Motion carried.

Frank moved to approve a six month extension (April 1, 2012) for window and door restoration. Margaret DuBard seconded the motion which was approved.

Finance Committee: Virginia Sanders referred members to the Budget Inquiry Report. Nancy explained that \$236,835 rolled over from FY11 for four grants and two contracts now shows up in the budget.

Outreach Committee: Sam Holland reported that as a result of a committee meeting, RCCC now has a Facebook page. Photos from grant projects and the tour have been posted. Changes to the website have been made but a complete overhaul is being investigated. Chanda Cooper is designing a new brochure and display panels that should be ready for the Commission table at the Smart Growth and Sustainable Site Design Conference in Blythewood October 12-13. Nancy encouraged members to attend the 7th Annual Neighborhood Planning Conference on October 22. She distributed a two-page overview of the RCCC for use as a handout.

Public Input: None

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

Next meeting: Monday, October 24, 2011 at 4:00pm

Submitted by
Charlie Fisher
Administrative Assistant