

Greenways Advisory Committee Meeting Notes
June 9, 2020 11:00 am
Via Zoom

Attendees:

Richland County Staff:

Transportation: Michael Niermeier, Ali Eliadorani, Mohammed Al-Tofan, Allison Steele, Kim Toney, Jeff McNesby, Rasheed Muwwakkil
Chris Keefer, Bryant Davis, Quinton Epps, Nancy Stone-Collum

City of Columbia Staff: Dana Higgins, John Fellows, Karen Kustafik, Lucinda Statler

Gills Creek Watershed Association (GCWA): Valerie Marcil, Carmony Adler, Madilyn Fletcher

Three Rivers Alliance: Mike Dawson

Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC): Carol Kososki

1. Introductions

The meeting was held virtually through Zoom and began at 11:00 am. Introductions were made and Michael requested help with updating the distribution list.

2. Penny Greenway Program Updates

Greenway funding realignments were approved by Richland County Council and those changes will be reflected in the FY21 budget.

a. Gills Creek:

Jeff McNesby reported phases 2 and 3 are running concurrently and are at 70% design. They will be authorized for final design as soon as clarification is received on reducing the width of the trail from 14' to 12' wide. Phase 4 takes the trail to Timberlane and a scope of work and cost proposal will be sought from the consultants. Within the month, Jeff should have the final design for phases 2 and 3 and have initiated design of phase 4.

Challenges: redesign needed due to work the city is doing at the east end; reduction in width from 14' to 12' would lessen the cost but permits would have to be redone so if the effort to change the width doesn't save money, it will be left at 14'.

Valerie Marcil asked if there was any consideration to eliminating the spur to Beecliff as has been advocated previously. This is a 600' diversion to an isolated community and isn't cost effective nor was it ever approved by the community. John Fellows agreed this was a construction connection that would only connect to 12 homes and if built, the spur could be much narrower than the rest of the pathway.

Jeff said these items are up for discussion and can be revisited. Michael said Holt's designs would be presented to the committee and the community for feedback. Valerie argued there is no reason to spend money on final design work and then decide to eliminate the spur or reduce the width. Holt has ignored these recommendations before but Transportation staff has the opportunity to advise them of these revisions now. Valerie said there had never been a set of

alternatives developed with cost variations. She also pointed out the boardwalk is going through sensitive wetlands so even if the cost savings is not great from reducing the width, there is less impact to the ecosystem from a narrower boardwalk. Finally, Valerie urged staff to do everything possible to get the greenway down to Timberlane Drive. This is a low-to-moderate area and would more equitably serve the neighborhood with access to recreation and natural areas.

b. Crane Creek

Mohammed Al-Tofan said staff was considering all the previous emails and discussions with the PDT and OET on the Gills Creek Greenway design.

Funding for Crane Creek sections A & C were transferred into section B; this follows the city sewer easement from the north end of Canal Park to S. 798, Mountain Drive for a distance of 4,895 ft. The greenway will be mostly boardwalk with a bridge over Smith Branch and a covered railroad crossing. The concept plans are at 30% and staff is finalizing the scope for phase 2 that includes 13 tasks such as design, permitting, right-of-way plan, technical investigation, construction costs, and utility and railroad coordination. Cox and Dinkins are the consultants and will provide pre-bid and construction phase services.

Valerie asked what kind of greenway building experience does Cox and Dinkins have. Michael explained that experience was part of the evaluation when they were chosen but he would get specific information on greenway projects they have done. Nancy Stone-Collum asked to have representative(s) from Crane Creek on the Advisory Committee.

Michael asked about the railroad crossing. John Fellows said he had walked the path earlier this year and since the trail will go under a steel and wooden trestle, he encouraged early negotiations with the railroad for the covered structure that will be needed.

c. Three Rivers

Mike Dawson of River Alliance reported final versions of two easements from the city had been received by the property owners and should be signed soon. Michael stated the intergovernmental agreement between the city and the county needs to be updated. As-built drawings for Boyd Island Connector and a timeline for construction must be provided to the city before the city can assume operational maintenance of the Saluda River Greenway.

To access Boyd Island, the southern terminus of the Saluda River Greenway, the county will have to buy permission to encroach on the railroad. Once staff finds out how much it will cost, they will evaluate three final cost estimates to decide which option to pursue. Two options that do not encroach on railroad property or require a covered walkway are expensive. Mike pointed out the railroad connection alternatives were done by a third party. If the railroad option is rejected, Mike recommended asking AOS, the contractors that built the greenway, to give a design build proposal to get around the railroad.

On the northern terminus, there is a problem with the path and a restroom being in the SCDOT right-of-way where a flyover for the Carolina Crossroad is scheduled to go. The original right-of-way was acquired from SCE&G in 1986; the new right-of-way has not been clearly established. Dana Higgins said that if the path and restroom have to be moved, rather than the Penny having to pay for the move, the expense should be included in the cost to buy the right-of-way.

Next meeting will be held in September. Valerie asked how GCWA can get updates before the next meeting. Michael said there should be a community meeting. Nancy suggested the Gills Creek sub-committee be re-established.