

Henderson County
RAIL-TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
May 11, 2022

The RTAC held a regularly scheduled meeting on May 11, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. in the King Street Meeting Room.

Voting Member	Present	Not in Attendance
Chuck McGrady, Chair	√	
Chris Burns, Vice Chair	√	
Douglas Moon, at-large	√	
Selena Einwechter, at-large	√	
David Adams, at-large	√	
Dr. Ken Shelton, at-large	√	
Brent Detwiler, City of Hendersonville	√	
Nancy McKinnley, Town of Laurel Park	√	
Mike Egan, Conserving Carolina	√	

Also present: Chris Todd, Business & Community Development Director; Autumn Radcliff, Planning Director; Marcus Jones, County Engineer; and Jimmy Brissie, Emergency Services Director.

Chair McGrady called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Welcome

Chair McGrady welcomed the committee and noted that Chris Burns and David Adams was joining remotely.

Approval of Meeting Summary

No changes. Unanimous approval.

Public Comment

None.

Updates

Staff

Chris Todd stated that staff is working on signs per the RTAC discussion last meeting and is replacing any current signs on the trail where they have been removed or knocked down. He stated that the County worked with the Friends group to facilitate another clean-up day at the French Broad River that went well. In addition, the contracts have been executed by the County for the section from Kanuga to just past N. Main Street. Staff is also continuing to work the consultant on the 30% design work. Chairman McGrady mentioned that Transylvania member put together several pictures of signage that was sent to county staff and hoped it was helpful in preparing signs for the rail-trail.

Conserving Carolina

Rebekah Robinson, Assistant Director, shared that Kieran Roe was currently in DC advocating for the rail-trail on behalf of the City of Brevard's RAISE grant application. She stated that the lease agreement for the Transylvania portion will go to the City Council next month. She also said that Conserving Carolina continues its fund raising for matching funds.

Friends of the Ecusta Trail

Mark Tooley, the newly elected President for the Friends of the Ecusta Trail, stated that the friends continue to work on fund raising goals. He said that they are working with Conserving Carolina on landowner outreach and signage for the Transylvania County side.

Discussion

Discussion of Trail Development Matrix and Schedule

Chris Todd provided the committee with a handout of the trail development matrix and schedule. The reviewed and briefly discussed the upcoming items the committee would be addressing in the coming months. The committee was asked if any additional items needed to be added to the decision matrix. None was noted at this time. The process is ongoing, and items will be added as needed. He stated that the engineer was on scheduled to bring back the 30% design to the committee in August. Marcus Jones mentioned that there has been delays across the state with required state permits and environmental reviews and staff will continue to work with the engineer on these items. The RTAC agreed with the presented matrix.

Discussion of Emergency Management for Trail Development

Jimmy Brissie, Emergency Services Director for Henderson County, provided the committee with an overview of related emergency service as they related to the trail use and design. Staff provided the committee with a map hand that sited the location of the fire stations and the road and trail intersections Mr. Brissie stated that he has been discussing the trail response with the City of Hendersonville and Laurel Park chiefs to police as well as the sheriff. Response to areas on the trail will be like Pisgah or other hiking trails. He said that the fire departments are looking and needed items and future budgets. He also said that he had spoke to Greenville County on the swamp rabbit trail about any issues they experienced to be better prepared and informed.

Mr. Brissie stated that they can get a small SUV or van ambulance on the Oklawaha Greenway and compared the different size and weight of their vehicles. He stated that Etowah and Valley Hill fire departments are looking at additional vehicles for the trail, and that Horseshoe fire department plans to be fully staffed in the future. He stated that emergency services can respond to issues on the trail and that the longest section of trail not directly accessed by a road is about ½ mile which is not an issue.

Marcus Jones provided the committee with a handout on bridge structures and cost estimates for replacement that was provided by the engineer. He stated this will be included in the 30% design and it does not cost much to replace the bridge to accommodate a large vehicle.

Public Comment and Additional Comment

Ken Shelton appealed to the RTAC to consider making an individual contribution. He also stated that at the last meeting, the engineer mentioned that public involvement was needed for the environmental requirements. He asked how the public was being involved. Chris Todd stated that staff is working with the engineer's subconsultants to develop a story map that will be posted online, and link would be provided to other groups and agencies. This story map will outline the project and the process and updates will be ongoing. He also stated that staff is working on identifying user groups along the trail and working with them.

The Chairman asked staff to discuss some of the items that will be discussed at the next meetings based on the discussion today. Chris mentioned that the committee asked about blue lights. That was something that needed to be discussed if that should be recommended. As well as other emergency services items that can be passed onto the engineer for consideration into the design. These types of items will also need to be part of the MOU that is being drafted and will need to be reviewed by the committee. An example is law enforcement. Mr. Todd stated that the committee will also begin preview the user groups at the next meeting. The Chairman requested that staff get items to the RTAC a few days prior to the meeting for their review.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

