

**Henderson County  
RAIL-TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, January 11, 2023**

The RTAC held a regularly scheduled meeting on January 11, 2023, 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 McKinley, 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 the engineer consultants Joel Setzer and Hunter Marks.

**Call to Order**

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

**Public Comment**

None.

**Approval Meeting Summary**

The committee approved the November meeting summary by majority. There was no meeting in December.

**Updates**

**Conserving Carolina**

Kieran Roe with Conserving Carolina stated that CC celebrated meeting its milestone for private fundraising and will continue to work on additional fundraising for the 20% match requirements.

**Friends of Ecusta Trail (FOET)**

Mark Tooley, FOET, reported that the bid was let for the removal of the trestles near Davidson River Road. He stated that the fundraising goal had been met but more money was needed. He announced that TPD (Traffic Planning and Design) had been selected to do the design of the trail on the Transylvania side and will be conducting a walk through in January. He stated that FOET had joined the Great State Trails Coalition and encouraged other to join as well. The purpose of the coalition is to work with the legislature to seek more permanent funding for trail work in the state. He also stated that NCDOT and others are looking at applying for the next round of RAISE funds for the remaining portion of the trail in case the NSFLTP grant is not funded.

**HC Staff**

Chris Todd stated that the County is still on schedule to begin construction in the summer especially now that the 90% design is complete. Marcus Jones stated that the BOC is considering changes to the encroachment

policy that will extend the scope and allow trail access from private property where appropriate and with permission.

## **Discussion 90% Designs**

### **Schedule Update:**

Joel Setzer stated that Vaughn and Melton is now JMT but the work and the staff would remain the same. He provided the RTAC with a schedule update and went over the 90% design plans. He said that the plans included everything except for the erosion control plan which would be completed this week and sent to the County. The next step after hearing from the RTAC will be:

- Construction cost estimate which will be submitted to the County later in January
- contracts for FHWA compliance
- Permitting for erosion control, stormwater, 401/404 environmental, NCDOT and City of Hendersonville encroachments, and NCDEM floodway and floodplain impacts, all to be completed in February/March
- Construction bids in mid-April after all permits have been issued
- Mid July to start construction

He stated that the designs and the schedule will be updated on the storymap once the RTAC and County approve the 90% designs.

### **90% Design:**

Joel provided an overview of the 90% designs and highlighted some items. He stated that the plans follow NCDOT format. Zero station starts in Horseshoe and the maps read left to right with each station being 100 feet apart. The mile post will match the railroad, and it starts in Hendersonville at the spur of the rail line near the jail. Some important notes are: value engineering will be done where applicable to save money, there will be connections at sidewalks to public roads where necessary, the rail alignment will be the same except where safety issues or environmental impacts require adjustments including grade adjustments, and the trail width is 14 feet east of White Pine and 12 feet west of White Pine.

### **Landscape Features/Elements:**

Hunter Marks provided an overview of the landscape features/elements. He stated that there would be markers to identify where you are on the trail but the design is so the Ecusta trail would have its own signature that would identify its history with the rail line. He stated that the color palate was the same that the railroad used at its station and the design utilized the existing rail crossing mast arms at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Kanuga Road. The features looked at ADA accessible access at stations and safety features at crossings. It was discussed that removable bollards could be used initially, but they can create their own unique safety issues. The recommendation from the consultant was to look at concrete islands instead of bollards. The features also suggested bike racks, waste receptacles, benches, and graphics or interpretive signs. It was noted that these amenities cannot be funded with STBG funds but are included in the design and planned for. Working with existing and future business owners was planned for additional parking options. The Chair requested that the Mayor of Brevard be invited to next meeting to share this design information on these features so there is a connection between the two counties. He stated that Conserving Carolina and the FOET should also be involved for fundraising opportunities and continued design themes. Marcus Jones stated that the County is recovering any rails or other items to be used for future trail features.

### **Bridge Design Plans:**

Joel stated that the bridge design is a rusty steel to mimic the railroad and is planned to be a prefabricated bridge due to money and time constraints. There are 6 prefabricated bridges that will be steel. The load capacity will be for tractors for mowing, and a F350 truck or ambulance.

### Traffic During Construction and Cross sections:

Joel stated that the trail sections would be closed during constructions. There will be flagging at road crossings, and a detour on Willow Road would be needed at Kanuga to remove rails in the road. He stated that there will 2 signal installations at Brevard Road and Kanuga road. Pavement markings and signs for safety will be provided that meets the MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices). Joel also stated that flashing signals are considered signs. He said that the cross sections views on the plans are for every 50 feet and there are approximately 160 sheets total. He said that there are no retaining walls on this project except for abutment walls at the entrances of some of the bridges for safety purposes.

The Chair asked that a copy of the plans be sent to the RTAC. The Chair stated that the RTAC needed to have a special called meeting to continue its discussion on the 90% design plans. Mike Egan made a motion to call a special called meeting for Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. Chris Burns second the motion. All voted in favor.

### Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.