

Henderson County Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

Tuesday September 14th, 2021 12pm, Zoom

In attendance: Terry Maybin, David Hill, Milton Butterworth, Katie Breckheimer, Philip Ellis and Stephanie Cantwell.

Staff in attendance: Carleen Dixon, Megan Bishop, Jason Kilgore, Bruce Gilliam, Betsy Gerwig, and Autumn Radcliff.

Speakers in attendance: Greg Jennings

1. Call to Order: 12:02

2. Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve the July 2021 minutes was made by Milton Butterworth, seconded by Philip Ellis, unanimously approved.

3. Unfinished Business:

a. Edneyville Stream Restoration Presentation – Greg Jennings

Greg Jennings from Jennings Environmental, the contracted engineering firm for the project, presented information about the stream restoration project to the Board. Betsy Gerwig from Soil and Water was also in attendance and she has been instrumental in applying for the grants that make this project possible.

The main objectives of the project are to improve water quality, fish habitat, and habitat for birds and pollinators. The project strives to improve public safety and provide recreation and environmental education opportunities.

Greg showed a before and after of the Reedy Patch Creek restoration project that is a similar comparison to the project in Edneyville.

Katie asked if the project would require removing the mature trees that line the stream.

Greg stated that the county owns the near side and the other side of the stream is farmland owned by private landowners. There will not be tree removal on the private landowner side unless they are falling in or leaning.

Philip asked about the trees on the park side.

Greg stated that most but not all will need to be removed. A lot of them are invasive species.

Betsy mentioned that money is included in the grant money to purchase some larger plants that will be utilized in the planting stage to jumpstart the regrowth.

Katie asked about the state requirements for the riparian buffer.

Greg replied that there is an incentive program through the grant that provides a 35-foot buffer, and the farmer agrees to maintain that through the life of the contract. Requirements vary depending on a variety of factors but generally 25-35 feet is the minimum, and 50+ is better.

Betsy stated according to the grant application there will be a 30-foot buffer on the park side, but there will be flowering and pollinator plants on the park side near the walking trail to make the area more attractive.

There will be at least one designated access point where school classes can conduct water samples as well as educational kiosks detailing the stream restoration project. As the project develops there will also be opportunity to install educational signage along the walking trail. This is an ideal location for schools on this side of the county to visit.

Philip asked if this project will include trail access down to the water?

Betsy replied that it will.

Philip asked if the project involves relocating the stream to the Henderson County land portion.

Greg stated that despite the GIS map, the center of the stream is the property line. The landowners will not lose any farmland.

Philip asked why the stream needs to be moved at all?

Greg replied that the water in streams do not move straight, so providing areas for the stream to meander supports the natural tendency of the stream. He also noted that Lewis Creek had been straightened in the past.

Philip asked if the floodplain will be the same elevation of the current grass field.

Greg stated the floodplain will be roughly 2 feet above the waters surface and extend back around 30 feet. The grassy area will be reduced in size, reducing the amount of mowing the county will need to do.

Philip asked why the stream is eroding, if anything upstream that has changed the peak flows of the stream?

Greg stated there hasn't been a lot of development in the area, and the watershed has remained relatively the same. However we do experience higher intensity storms that produce higher flows. The best way to counter erosion is to give water plenty of flood plain to slow down.

Greg plans to attend either the October or November meeting to provide the preliminary design for the boards review.

b. Greenway Update – Autumn Radcliff

The Ecusta Trail ribbon cutting happened last month, and the City of Brevard is holding their own ribbon cutting this week.

The BOC will hopefully approve the lease agreement with Conserving Carolina tomorrow at their meeting. If that is approved we will have that lease for 150 years and proceed with the construction of the trail. Staff is still working on STBG money for the grant funding, that involves state and federal involvement.

It will likely be January by the time a firm is selected and contracts are approved to start work.

Carleen stated once the rails and ties are removed the overgrown vegetation will need to be cut down. We will need to contract out mowing and maintenance along the rail once the rails and ties are removed until the construction process begins, this will allow the community to access the railbed.

Katie asked if Autumn could talk briefly about the Comprehensive Planning process.

They are going through a lot of the data with the consultants and steering committee, and a lot of the public involvement is coming up soon. They are holding informal and formal events. There is a survey online that was advertised in every property and personal tax bill that went out this month. They have had a great response rate.

Autumn mentioned a meeting in a box idea, where neighbors or community groups can gather informally and share ideas to bring back to the planning department.

4. Staff Updates

1. Parks Update – Jason

The parks have been extremely busy and are starting to pick up for fall sports. We got a new ball field drag and a new paint machine that has already saved us so much time and energy as well as more efficient material use. In material alone it saves us \$120.00 a week in paint.

2. Admin Update – Megan

We have two part time staff members that are doing great. We are working on updating our facility information online and adding photos of facilities as well.

3. Recreation Update – Bruce

We have another Movie in the Park this Friday at Tuxedo Park.

We have over 360 kids in our recreation soccer program, as well as 75 kids in our sprouts 3-5 age soccer program.

Softball prices have returned to a team rate rather than an individual rate.

Our programmers are also starting several new programs that we are excited to start up.

Katie stated she would like to write a policy concerning balloon releases in the park.

4. Departmental Update – Carleen

The ETC institute will be presenting the results from our Community Needs Assessment tomorrow at the BOC meeting.

The LWCF grant deadline is October 1st and is the most appropriate fit for the Oklawaha greenway fix in Jackson Park. The WGLA is presenting a proposed solution for the Oklawaha Greenway to the BOC tomorrow also.

Philip asked what the proposed solution is.

The solution includes a raised bed for the trail with drainage that raises the greenway up further out of the floodplain.

Philip asked if WLGA is doing generalized work or if they are in the permitting process already.

Carleen replied they have not applied for permits yet, more detailed work will come to follow if we receive the grant.

Milton asked if there was a soccer update.

Carleen stated we have had a successful start to the Fall season and that our numbers have improved. We will revisit the soccer discussing next month.

Carleen mentioned another item we will bring back for discussion is the mobile food vending policy.

5. Member Comments

6. Call to Adjourn: 1:22