

MINUTES

City Council Parks, Trails, & Recreation Committee

Wednesday, February 21, 2018, 3:30 PM

Administrative Conference Room at City Hall

Members Present: Gary Daniel, Chair, Council Member
Maureen Copelof, Vice-Chair, Council Member
Jim Fatland, City Manager
Daniel Cobb, Planning Director
David Lutz, Public Works Director
Keenan Smith, Citizen Member
Colin Izzard, Citizen Member
Cody Owen, Citizen Member
Jonathan Griffin, Ex Officio

Staff Present: Denise Hodsdon, Executive Assistant

Guests: Torry Nergart, Conserving Carolinas
Elizabeth Pell
Tricia Davis

Media: Matt McGregor, Transylvania Times

Absent: Gregory Copeland, At-Large Member

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chairman Gary Daniel called the meeting to order at 3:33 PM.

B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Executive Assistant Denise Hodsdon.

C. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Fatland requested that two items be added to the agenda; 1) PARTF Grant application update, and 2) discussion of a bike track for Rosenwald Community. Motion

by Mr. Fatland, seconded by Mr. Smith to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes from January 24, 2018 Meeting

Motion by Ms. Copelof, seconded by Mr. Fatland to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2018 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Pedestrian Maps

Planning Director Daniel Cobb noted that the original plan which included ten priorities and long term-goals had been adopted in 2007. Priorities 1, 2 and 3 from that plan have been built and a new list of the top five priorities needs to be set as we go into the next budget year. It is important to get the maps updated; so as we apply for a PARTF grant, we can show them that we have built five miles of trails and we intend to build several more miles and this is our plan for doing so. Also in 2007 a sidewalk plan was adopted and several of those have been built. He provided maps identifying proposals for updated Multi-Use Path Priorities and Sidewalk Priorities for the Committee's review. There was discussion about adding to the greenway in the Neely Road/Old Route 64 area, which would require contacting landowners to acquire the necessary easements. Mr. Cobb suggested that it would be best to adopt the plan as presented now in order to meet the May deadline for the grant application. That way we can present to them that we have a master plan adopted this year which is going to expand on the system we have been working on for the last 15 years. The committee could always come back and add to it at a later time.

Ms. Copelof said she has been approached by a few citizens regarding the lack of sidewalk near the Transylvania County Library. She would like to see a continuation of the sidewalk just past the library on Gaston Street, down Varsity Street and connecting to Miner Street in order to improve safety in that area. Ms. Copelof motioned, seconded by Mr. Izzard to add an additional priority to our sidewalk priorities, extending the sidewalk down Gaston Street, to Varsity Street and up Miner Street. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Izzard motioned and Mr. Owen seconded to accept the plan with the additional sidewalk priority. The motion carried unanimously.

F. USFS Horse Cove Road – Joel Branch Road Connector Project

Mr. Cobb explained that a few years ago the City built trails on the Bracken preserve and the trail that runs up the property connects to Forest Service Road 475C. There has been discussion ever since the master plan for Bracken was adopted in 2006 to add a

trail going down Joel Branch. The option is to support a trail along Joel Branch which would be a much more direct connection to Highway 276 than what we have now. Mr. Smith noted that Joel Branch originates behind Davidson River Campground and climbs approximately 7 to 8 miles until it dead ends. The plan would be to connect the end of that road back to 475C and the connector would come out just above where the Art Loeb Trail crosses 475C. It would make a substantial loop without having to get on major roads US 64 or US 276, or on the Art Loeb Trail, where bikes are not allowed, and it would bring more cyclists downtown. Mr. Smith suggested that the Ridge Trail should also be added to the priority list. Motion by Mr. Izzard, seconded by Mr. Smith to add the initial Ridge Trail and Joel Branch Connector to the list of priorities previously approved. The motion carried unanimously.

G. Update – PARTF Grant

Mr. Fatland updated the committee on a recent meeting he had with the PARTF regional representative for the State of North Carolina. They discussed the fact that in the past, land acquisition requests get funded first and then what is left is competitive for projects. His thought is to include land acquisition only this year and then come back next year with some additional projects. We are in the process of acquiring some easements along Railroad Avenue and we would like to look at acquiring sites for a skate park and for the trail. We can show the trail from the campground all the way to Rosman, what has been built, what we have acquired in easements already, and those we are negotiating. By turning that package in, it will strengthen our application. The deadline is May 1st and the planning staff is working with Brown Consultants to move expeditiously on the application.

H. Bike Track for Rosenwald Community

Ms. Copelof said she has had some discussion with people in the Rosenwald Community regarding the fact that Oskar Blues had donated bicycles to the children in the community but they have no place to ride them in that area, except in the road. The feeling is that the pathway planned for Railroad Avenue would be too far away for small children to ride to. Because we didn't get the grant funding to build the bike pump track in Tannery Park and have now moved the track out of that plan, the residents would like to have some sort of a bike track closer to Rosenwald. Ms. Copelof has had preliminary discussions with some certified trail builders who would be willing to help design it and approach SORBA about building it as a project. The committee discussed some possibilities for location of the track, including a city-owned parcel next to the Public Works facility, which was ruled out due to the topography, and there was discussion about possibly approaching WCCA or Bethel A Baptist Church to inquire whether they would be willing to donate some land. Mr. Fatland noted that there is

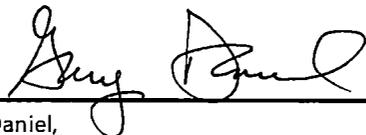
already money set aside to start construction of the trail through Tannery Park once the environmental concerns are addressed and we get the green light to proceed. Ms. Copelof expressed concern that the Tannery Park project may not happen as quickly as the community would like. Mr. Daniel felt that it was not really clear as to what type of track was actually being requested. Mr. Fatland informed the committee that the Mary C. Jenkins Community Center Task Force will be meeting next week and we can have a discussion and report back to this Committee.

I. Adjourn

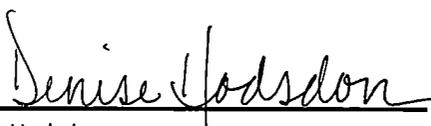
Motion by Mr. Fatland to adjourn the meeting at 5:06 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting

The next City Council Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee Meeting will be on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at 3:30 PM.

X 

Gary Daniel,
Chair, Council Member

X 

Denise Hodsdon
Executive Assistant