

**MINUTES**  
**City Council Parks, Trails, & Recreation Committee**

**Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at 3:30 PM**  
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Mac Morrow, Chair, Council Member (Arrived at 3:55 pm)  
Aaron Baker, Vice-Chair, Council Member  
Nancy DePippo, Citizen Member  
Wyn Birkenthal, Citizen Member  
JD Powers, Citizen Member  
Reba Osborne, Citizen Member

Absent: Howie Granat, Citizen Member

Staff Present: Wilson Hooper, City Manager  
Wesley Shook, Acting Public Works Director  
Paul Ray, Planning Director  
Aaron Bland, Assistant Planning Director  
Becky McCann, Communications Coordinator  
Denise Hodsdon, City Clerk

Media: Jon Rich, Transylvania Times

**A. Welcome & Call to Order**

Committee Vice-Chair Aaron Baker welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:34 pm.

**B. Introduction of New Committee Members**

Mr. Baker welcomed new members Wyn Birkenthal, JD Powers and Reba Osborne. All committee members and staff then introduced themselves.

**C. Certification of Quorum**

Quorum was certified by City Clerk Denise Hodsdon.

**D. Approval of Agenda**

There was a request to add an item regarding Updates on Ongoing Projects as Item G. Motion by Ms. DePippo, seconded by JD Powers, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

## **E. Approval of Minutes from May 17, 2023 Meeting**

Motion by Ms. DePippo, seconded by Ms. Osborne to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2023 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

## **F. Unopened Rights of Way**

Mr. Hooper explained that unopened rights of ways are roads that are platted on maps and considered a road legally, but are not actual roads on the ground. The City has legal control over those and sometimes there are useful ways to use them, such as to connect dead-end streets in a neighborhood, to extend a trail, a greenway or a sidewalk, or use for other recreational purposes. The tradeoff is that some of them have been unused as rights of way for so long that property owners consider it theirs and you run the risk of alienating the adjacent neighbor if you decide to build something there.

Aaron Bland added that this was brought up by Council after we received a few petitions to formally abandon some of these unopened rights of way and the idea was that maybe we should think about this more holistically and identify which ones could be useful or valuable. He reviewed a map of the current unopened rights of way (copy attached) and pointed out some that might make sense and look intriguing for recreational use, but they would need to be investigated on the ground. Following discussion, Mr. Baker asked that Mr. Bland email the map to committee members to review and identify some that they would be interested in for further discussion at the next meeting. He asked committee members to provide that feedback to Mr. Bland ahead of the meeting.

## **G. Updates on Ongoing Projects**

Community Garden – Mr. Ray reported that the garden has been very successful and there are no more available beds. We have added some shelves for the gardeners who want to share their vegetables with others. Mr. Morrow added that one of the proposed next phases is to add a shared garden space.

Skate Parks – Ms. DePippo asked if with the TYSA improvements to the soccer field, has there been any discussion about the next phase of the skate park? Mr. Ray explained that there is no money in the budget for expanding the skate park, but we made sure that the TYSA plans are not going to interfere with our future phases when we do have the funding. Ms. DePippo asked if the Tannery Skate Park surface is holding up. Mr. Hooper noted that our insurance carrier required that we submit a maintenance plan which calls for frequent inspection of the surface and Public Works is very attentive to the condition of that facility. Mr. Shook added that other than having to tighten a few screws, the surface is holding up okay. Mr. Baker said he has met several people who travel quite a bit of distance to use the Tannery Skate Park because of its unique surface and construction.

Adopt-a-Green Space – Mr. Ray reported that there has been quite a bit of interest in the program and the folks who have adopted spaces are doing well with maintaining them. Ms. Osborne noted that this could be popular with corporations or businesses and suggested connecting with the Chamber of Commerce.

TYSA – Mr. Hooper reported that TYSA had their groundbreaking this past weekend. He noted that opening up this new amenity puts pressure on us to enhance our other facilities there, specifically the bathrooms. At some point we will need to build a bathroom facility closer to the soccer field. In order to try to make that happen we have applied for a PARTF grant from the state, which is not eligible for use on the bathrooms, but is eligible for use on the soccer field. If we get the grant, we will replace some of the private money on the soccer field with the grant and then use the private money to build the bathroom facility. We will find out in August whether our grant application is successful.

Bracken Preserve – Mr. Hooper reported that we are still trying to raise the last \$30,000 for the acquisition and Conserving Carolina has indicated that they would be willing to give us until September 1<sup>st</sup> to fill that gap. Mr. Baker said that TDA has intentions to give money for the trail construction, but he has reached out to Clark Lovelace and asked him to talk to the County Attorney about whether there is any way that their funds could be used toward the purchase.

Howie Granat sent an email with the following update:

1. Brackenfest is set for Saturday September 23<sup>rd</sup> and will start and finish at the Depot with festivities and lunch following at 185 King Street;
2. Home Trust Bank has made an offer to donate two of the four lots on Waterford Place that are still available to help in the trail construction of Phases 2 and 3;
3. Will be meeting with Brevard Music Center next week to follow up on the trail easement change to support the climbing trail construction;

Year of the Trail Scavenger Hunt – Ms. DePippo reported that she and Mr. Granat have talked about enlisting the help of the newly formed Brevard Bike Alliance to put together the scavenger hunt. In his email Mr. Granat reported that he has spoken with the co-founders of the group and they are very interested. Ms. DePippo said she spoke with the owner of Ecusta Creative and they have said they could make something around the white squirrel theme. She will touch base with Mr. Granat and hopefully have a report at the next meeting.

Davidson River Bridge – Mr. Morrow reported that we learned this morning that the contract has been let for this project. Mr. Ray added that the project will begin in October.

Estatoe Trail – Mr. Baker said that with an eye toward the Ecusta Trail, we want people to ride that trail and keep going on the Estatoe Trail to Main Street. He noted that there are some sections of the Estatoe Trail that we could work on, such as the crossing by Arby's and Blue Ridge Community College. That crossing light has not been working and the landing where people wait to cross is about as big as a postage stamp. Mr.

Hooper said the Traffic Working Group met this morning and talked about some of the sections of the trail and needed maintenance and touchup to keep it safe and effective. He said we will add that to the list, but noted that anything we do there will be temporary because eventually there will be a roundabout there.

**Additional Comments**


Ms. DePippo said she volunteers at the Ranger Station and people are requesting information about riding their bikes into town. They don't have any map to give people and it would be very helpful to have a map to hand out.

**H. Set Date for Next Meeting**

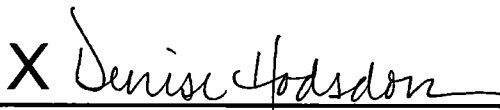
The next regular meeting of the Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee was scheduled for Wednesday, July 19, 2023 at 3:30 PM.

**I. Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:52 pm.

X   
Mac Morrow  
Chair, Council Member

Minutes Approved: July 19, 2023

X   
Denise Hodsdon  
City Clerk

Unused Right-of-Way Study  
Prepared July 2022 by the  
City of Brevard Planning Department  
Updated June 2023

