

Brevard/Transylvania County
Ecusta Trail Advisory Board

Date: June 29, 2022

Location: City Hall Council Chambers

Members:

- ✓ Maureen Copelof, Mayor
- ✓ Mac Morrow, Council Member
- ✓ Larry Chapman, County Commissioner
- ✓ Addison Bradley, NC Cooperative Extension Dir (via Zoom)
- ✓ Clark Lovelace, Tourism Development Authority
- ✓ Mark Tooley, Conserving Carolina (via Zoom)
- John Ditillo, Friends of Ecusta Trail (absent)
- ✓ Mark Burrows, Blue Zones Project
- ✓ Lauren Wise, At-Large Member (Via Zoom)
- ✓ Chuck McGrady, Henderson County Advisory Board Chair, Ex Officio
- ✓ Larry Faison, Interim City Manager, Ex Officio
- ✓ Paul Ray, Planning Director, Ex Officio
- Meredith Carli, At-Large Member (absent)

Staff:

- ✓ Katherine Buzby, City Planner

Guests:

- ✓ Vicki Eastland, Land of Sky
- ✓ Rebekah Robinson, Conserving Carolina (via Zoom)
- ✓ Jonathan Rich, Transylvania Times
- ✓ Tom Jordon, Brevard Police Chief
- ✓ Billy Parrish, Blue Zones Project

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Co-Chair Maureen Copelof welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order

at 3:32pm.

B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Committee Co-Chair Maureen Copelof.

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Mr. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Burrows to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Brevard/Transylvania County
Ecusta Trail Advisory Board

D. Approval of Minutes from May 25, 2022 Meeting

Motion by Mr. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Chapman to approve the meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Introductions to new Interim City Manager

Larry Faison was introduced to the board members.

F. Updates

Conserving Carolina: They were granted \$125K State Emergency Management Grant and it will be used to remove the trestles (superstructure) from Davidson River Rd & Davidson River bridge but the vertical structures will remain but will allow Fire Support to enter the area since the low clearance of the span will be removed. This will hopefully be completed by the end of the year. Signs are going up on the Transylvania side of the trail and on the trestles to keep people off the trail.

Planning Dept: A letter drafted by Maureen and Paul went out to adjacent land owners (to the trail) that explains who to contact and that meetings will be held to discuss possible problems and requests. The meetings may have a large printed map so owners along the trail can see the location and write on the map things they want to see (i.e. fences).

Transylvania Co: Discussed clarification on who to contact with questions/concerns about the trail (Maureen and Paul are listed in the neighbor letters).

Tourism Development Authority: Glad to continue to be a part of this board but nothing really new to report

Henderson Co: They are the lead agency but Hendersonville and Laurel Park will police their part of the trail in Henderson County which is reflected in their MOU. They are working on ordinances to enforce the rules they posted on signs along the trail. One idea they are working on is considering the greenway like a "park" so those ordinances can be used. They want to ensure continuity on the trail between the 2 counties. They have been conducting presentations for interested parties (i.e. Lions Club of Etowah). Funding continues to have issues but is getting funding thru the NPO grant they just received and transportation related sources. They are not prepared to build out the entire trail yet but the work is underway. Conserving Carolina and Friends of Ecusta Trail are raising money for both counties for the trail. Scoring mechanisms are in place for the trail and has scored very high in other areas so it is predicted it will score high for the RAISE grant. He will contact a friend at USDOT to lobby support for the grant.

NCDOT: N/A

City: The lease for the trail has been signed with Conserving Carolina (Ecusta Rails to Trails LLC) and will take effect tomorrow (June 30th, 2022) for 8 miles of trail. Political lobbying is the next step for the RAISE grant and Chuck McGrady has been working with government by contacting Senator Tillis and Senator Burr and they have put in letters of support as well as NCDOT. The Governor's office has been requested to put a letter in too. The City has a zoom call with the deputy assistant secretary at USDOT (Secretary Small) on the 13th with Chuck & Kieran to lobby at that level on all the benefits of the trail. We should hear in August on the RAISE grant.

Brevard/Transylvania County
Ecusta Trail Advisory Board

Friends of Ecusta Trail: The booth at White Squirrel Festival was very well attended and mostly positive comments received. Most people were very positive and energetic about the trail. They also have a large number of volunteers ready to help once they are needed.

Blue Zones Project: Mark Burrows is moving out of the country and Billy Parrish will be taking his place at this board. They are very grateful for the help from Friends of Ecusta Trail, Henderson County, and Transylvania County to move this trail forward. A trailhead is their marquee project to direct people into Brevard to shop & eat in town.

Citizens/Public: Happy to hear updates on the project.

Brevard Police: There are many concerns and lots of planning needed to be done for ensuring safety along the trail (A handout was given out with all the police safety & security areas). The police chief will be given the email list of board members to be able to coordinate with Henderson County since they are ahead of Transylvania County and are encountering the same types of issues. Ordinances need to be written and enacted so the police have the law to back up the safety issues (i.e. camping along the trail). The police intend to direct any people encountering homelessness to the appropriate community services and not criminalize homelessness.

G. Next Steps

Continue working on ongoing progress as discussed.

H. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Brevard/Transylvania County Ecusta Trail Advisory Board is scheduled for Wednesday, July 27, 2022 at 3:30 pm. (last Wednesday of the month at 3:30 pm)

I. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 pm.

x Maureen Copelof

Maureen Copelof, Chair, Mayor

x Katherine A. Buzby

Katherine Buzby, City Planner

Minutes Approved- 7/27/22