

Brevard/Transylvania County
Ecusta Trail Advisory Board

Date: July 27, 2022

Location: City Hall Council Chambers

Members:

- ✓ Maureen Copelof, Mayor
- ✓ Mac Morrow, Council Member
- ✓ Larry Chapman, County Commissioner
- Addison Bradley, NC Cooperative Extension Dir (absent)
- ✓ Clark Lovelace, Tourism Development Authority
- ✓ Mark Tooley, Conserving Carolina
- ✓ John Ditillo, Friends of Ecusta Trail
- ✓ Billy Parrish, Blue Zones Project
- ✓ Lauren Wise, At-Large Member (via Zoom)
- ✓ Chuck McGrady, Henderson County Advisory Board Chair, Ex Officio (arrived at 3:34pm)
- ✓ Larry Faison, Interim City Manager, Ex Officio
- ✓ Paul Ray, Planning Director, Ex Officio
- ✓ Meredith Carli, At-Large Member (via Zoom)

Staff:

- ✓ Katherine Buzby, City Planner

Guests:

- ✓ Vicki Eastland, Land of Sky
- ✓ Rebekah Robinson, Conserving Carolina (via Zoom)
- ✓ Jonathan Rich, Transylvania Times
- ✓ Matt Revis, Ecusta Trail Talk Newsletter

A. Welcome & Call to Order

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

at 3:31pm.

B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Committee Co-Chair Maureen Copelof.

C. Approval of Agenda

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

D. Approval of Minutes from June 29, 2022 Meeting

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

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E. Updates

Conserving Carolina: The closure signage is almost complete at the corridor road crossings and at the trestles. They will get an update about the timeline for removing the trestles next month. The vertical pieces over the roads will need to be removed as well as they are not stable enough to remain after the horizontal piece is gone.

Planning Dept: Mayor sent out 2 letters to adjoining property owners to invite them to a "Neighbors Input Meeting" on August 9th in the Rogow Room of the library at 5:30pm. The purpose of this is to answer questions and clear up any misconceptions about the Ecusta Trail. A map of the entire Ecusta Trail corridor is in progress so the neighbors can see where the trail is and can make comments/suggestions prior to the design. A general public session will be later after we have vetted the logistical problems of crossing people's properties. The FLAP grant is in process and money will become available in October when DOT's federal fiscal year starts and they will be selecting a preapproved contractor from their list.

Transylvania Co: They are not receiving any comments, good or bad.

Tourism Development Authority: They are sharing an update with their board tomorrow and it has caused them to look at all the progress in the last 6 months that this board has completed which is a lot.

Henderson Co: They are using their current ordinances that relate to parks and applying those same ordinances to the "linear" park aka Ecusta Trail with the recommendation that pedestrian scale motor vehicles at the discretion at the Parks and Rec director. They are expecting their consulting engineer to provide the 30% report which gives them new numbers and assess what needs to be done. This will be updated costs estimates which they expect to be higher than quoted due to the current market inflation. NC DOT is handling the contracting for this project and the contractors will be picked by District 14 (WNC) not the Raleigh office. The contractor that is being used for Henderson County will be on the list as a possible contractor for Transylvania County.

NCDOT (via Land of Sky): The City is looking at the **NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT FEDERAL LANDS AND TRIBAL PROJECTS (NSFLTP) PROGRAM** grant but the application requirements and deadlines are not known yet so Vicki will discuss with NC DOT at her next meeting to get more information as a "plan B" if the City is not awarded the RAISE grant. NC DOT (Steve Williams) will be checking to see if some of the old railroad tracks can be removed or paved over on the streets they cross.

City: The mayor has heard comments that the Transylvania Commissioners are not being informed of the progress the City is making on the trail. She will personally come to a meeting and update them at any time they deem necessary. We are thankful for Chuck and Kieran for their help in the political offices to get support for the Ecusta Trail. The RAISE grant will be announced August 12th. The more options we have for the trail, the more clarity we will have on what is viable.

Friends of Ecusta Trail: They held a board retreat last week and are looking to get revised numbers together to refocus fundraising efforts with emphasis on big donors. They are also looking at transitioning to a true "friends" organization and they are looking to restructure to make this possible.

Blue Zones Project: Blue Zone's certification deadline is November 1st and they need to wrap things up by that date. One major project is bringing focus to bicycle and pedestrian safety and are suggesting to

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reactivating the participation for "Watch for Me" NC DOT program. The other project is to get clarity around a where a trailhead will be located like where the Estatoe and Ecusta trails meet or by Oskar Blues.

Citizens/Public: N/A

F. Next Steps

Continue working on ongoing progress as discussed.

G. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Brevard/Transylvania County Ecusta Trail Advisory Board is scheduled for August 31, 2022 at 3:30 pm. (last Wednesday of the month at 3:30 pm)

H. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:29 pm.

Minutes Approved- 8/31/22

x Maureen Copelof
Maureen Copelof, Chair, Mayor

x Katherine Buzby
Katherine Buzby, City Planner