

Carrboro Greenways Commission
Minutes
February 15th, 2010

At –Large Members Present

*George Daniel (Chair) – At Large
*Robert Kirschner – At Large
*Salli Benedict – At Large

Representatives Present

*Ranee Haven-O’Donnell – Board of Aldermen
*Gary Junker – Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools
*Dave Otto (Vice chair) – Friends of Bolin Creek
*Johnny Randall – Morgan Creek Valley Alliance/NC Botanical Garden
*Eric Allman – Recreation and Parks Commission
*Matthew Arnsberger– Environmental Advisory Board

Staff Present

Randy Dodd- Town of Carrboro Planning Department
Brendan Moore – Town of Carrboro Recreation and Parks Department
Jeff Brubaker—Town of Carrboro Planning Department
Marabeth Carr – Orange County Environmental Resources and Conservation Department
Ray Magyar – UNC

Absent

*Heidi Paulsen – Planning Board
* Robin Michler – Transportation Advisory Board
Nick Parker – OWASA
Bill Webster – Town of Chapel Hill

Guests

Dan Jewell - Coulter Jewell Thames
Casey Dillon
Erika Dean
Michelle Jones
Bruce Sinclair

* indicates voting member

- I. **Call to order:** George Daniel called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.
- II. **Administrative matters:** MOTION (Dave, Gary second): The Commission approved the minutes of the January 25th meeting (unanimous).
- III. **Morgan Creek Greenway work session:** Dan presented the recommended alignment for the connector trail to BPW Club Rd. and the high school. The alignment uses the OWASA easement going southeast from the creek up to the road. The preferred route to the high school would then utilize on-road bicycle facilities on BPW Club Rd. and Tar Hill Dr.

Commission members discussed how to proceed with the work session. Members agreed to “walk through” the report section-by-section and assemble comments based on the different groups represented by the Commission and the subject matter of the report. Subjects included alignment, environmental conditions and creek health, and connectivity. The Commission discussed the importance of considering stormwater impacts, especially near the Public Works facility. The greenway

project is an opportunity to clean up the creek and conduct before-and-after water quality analysis. Randy gave an overview of the Town's recent water quality research on the creek, and several members discussed other water quality monitoring efforts.

The Commission proceeded to review the proposed alignment phases, as presented in the draft Morgan Creek Greenway Conceptual Master Plan, and make review comments.

Phase 1

Dan presented the plan's recommendations on the main greenway route, starting with the proposed *Phase 1 alignment*: Smith Level Rd. west to Berryhill with a spur connecting to Abbey Ln., crossing the creek west of the Public Works parcel. This section includes an alternate route south of the creek (with a crossing adjacent and parallel to the Smith Level Rd. bridge) based on the contingency that a flood study finds the preferred alignment's bridge is not allowed by FEMA. Gary asked about the steps and timing of the flood study and the process of seeking Duke Energy's approval for the alternate route in the event the bridge is not allowed. Dan said it might take a year to get the flood study permit, but the Town might know about bridge feasibility after three or four months. It would take 30 to 60 days afterward for Duke Energy's decision. Dan said it would make sense to model all of the crossings on the entire length of the alignment. Randee said that it was important that the public knows if the *Phase 1 alternate alignment* is selected.

Phase 1 review comments:

1. The Commission strongly endorses the *Phase 1 alignment* in light of the connectivity it affords the surrounding communities with access to Abbey Ln.
2. The Commission finds the aesthetics of the bridge placement in the *Phase 1 alignment* – even if it has to be moved slightly to the north or south – far preferable to the placement of the bridge adjacent to Smith Level Rd.
3. In support of the *Phase 1 alignment*, the Commission recommends that all possible bridge crossings be explored along the *Phase 1 alignment* before resorting to the *Phase 1 alternate alignment*.
4. The *Phase 1 alignment* is preferable due to minimal disturbance to trees.
5. The *Phase 1 alignment* is preferable due to the availability of Abbey Ln. as a public access point.
6. If the *Phase 1 alternate alignment* is selected, this decision should be presented to the Greenways Commission and Board of Aldermen for review before implementation.

Randee said stormwater impacts and water quality testing for the Phase 1 alignment. Several members said that these considerations were relevant for the entire greenway.

Phase 2

Dan presented the *Phase 2 alignment*, which extends west and south around the Berryhill soccer field and crosses the creek onto the Weatherhill Pointe neighborhood. This would allow Weatherhill Pointe residents to access Smith Level Rd. However, for the *Phase 2 alignment's* western terminus, there is no public access or easement at the Tennis Club property or at that section of Weatherhill Pointe. A *Phase 2 alternate alignment* would extend east from the Rosewalk gravel trail, cross Tom's Creek and Morgan Creek, and connect to the BPW Club Rd. / High School spur trail. This alternate alignment would cost

about the same as the *Phase 2 alignment*. It would not alter the overall alignment but would rather shift the priorities for the timing of the two segments. If the Phase 2 alternate alignment were pursued, Phase 3 would connect Phase 2 and Phase 1, going from the Tennis Club property east to Weatherhill Pointe and across to Berryhill.

The Commission discussed the merits of the *Phase 2 alignment* versus the *Phase 2 alternate alignment*. Issues discussed included the connectivity of each option, the influence of funding availability on what can get built and when, and the placement of the bridge across the creek from Berryhill to Weatherhill Pointe. Funding constraints may leave a gap between the *Phase 1 alignment* and the *Phase 2 alternate alignment* (between Weatherhill Pointe and Rosewalk), but a segment from Rosewalk to BPW Club Rd. would increase access for neighborhoods north and south of the creek. An easement will have to be obtained along the sewer line on the property south of the creek for the High School connector trail.

Phase 2 review comments:

7. The Commission recommends the Phase 2 alignment with the consideration that all possible locations near the described location of the bridge crossing from Berryhill to Weatherhill Pointe be considered for a final bridge crossing.
8. On the east side of the Berryhill soccer field, the trail should be projected north as close to the creek as possible so that it directs users around, rather than onto, the soccer field.
9. Areas for privacy screening should be considered throughout the Phase 2 alignment.

Phase 3

Dan presented the trail alignment as continuing generally west from Rosewalk to University Lake before turning north to connect to the Jones Ferry Park-and-Ride. Dan recommended starting negotiations with the property owners as soon as the conceptual plan is endorsed by the Board of Aldermen. Since the Commission recommended the Berryhill-to-Weatherhill-Pointe segment as Phase 2, the *Phase 3 alignment* would connect Phase 2 with the existing Rosewalk gravel trail, crossing Tom's Creek.

Phase 3 review comments:

10. The Commission recommends that the *Phase 3 alignment* connect Phase 2 with Rosewalk, crossing Tom's Creek.

Phase 4

The Commission agreed that the *Phase 4 alignment* should be development of the BPW Club Rd. / High School connector trail due to the connectivity that this phase would provide.

Phase 4 review comments:

11. The Commission recommends that the *Phase 4 alignment* be the development of a spur trail connecting the main greenway alignment to BPW Club Rd. and the High School.

Phase 5

The Commission agreed that the Phase 5 alignment would extend from the Jones Ferry Park-and-Ride to Rosewalk. There was further discussion regarding general greenway issues. Gary said that Berryhill is a frequent host to runners in the community. The biggest concerns for Berryhill are whether the soccer field would become a “neighborhood park” and trail safety in general. Dave expressed concern about any segments of the greenway being non-ADA-compliant. Randee said that it didn’t make sense to not recommend a nature trail because there are folks who require ADA accessibility. Jeff passed along Ray’s comments regarding UNC’s considerations. Gary asked that the Town aggressively seek funding to clean up the creek.

Phase 5 review comments:

12. The Commission recommends that the *Phase 5 alignment* be the completion of the project by extending from the Rosewalk trail to University Lake and the Jones Ferry Park-and-Ride, resurfacing the existing Rosewalk trail with an ADA-compliant surface, and adding a nature trail.

MOTION (Dave, Gary): The Commission recommends that the Board of Aldermen adopt the Morgan Creek Greenway Conceptual Master Plan with the above review comments (unanimous).

IV. **Upcoming Meetings:** The next regular Greenways Commission meeting is Monday, March 15th, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Town Hall.

V. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.