



MECKLENBURG COUNTY
A Meeting of the McAlpine Creek Greenway Focus Group

MINUTES

February 7, 2013

6:00 pm at William R. Davie Conference Center
4635 Pineville-Matthews Road.

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ed Barnhart
Doug Burnett
Joe Pata

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Gwen Cook, Planner
Kevin Brickman, Planner
Karen Westen-Chien, Project Manager, Asset and Facilities Management
Greg Clemmer, Park Superintendent
Patricia Poteat, General Manager/South Region
Chris Matthews, Natural Resources Manager
Preston Buckman, Recreation Coordinator and Supervisor (Athletics)

Mc KIM AND CREED STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Kenny Draffen
Jason Marshall
Chuck Shue

FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT

Kathy Aitken
Keith Aitken
Mike Weiss
Pender Murphy
Kurt Niedenzu
Thomas Lee
Andrew Swistak
Brian Costa

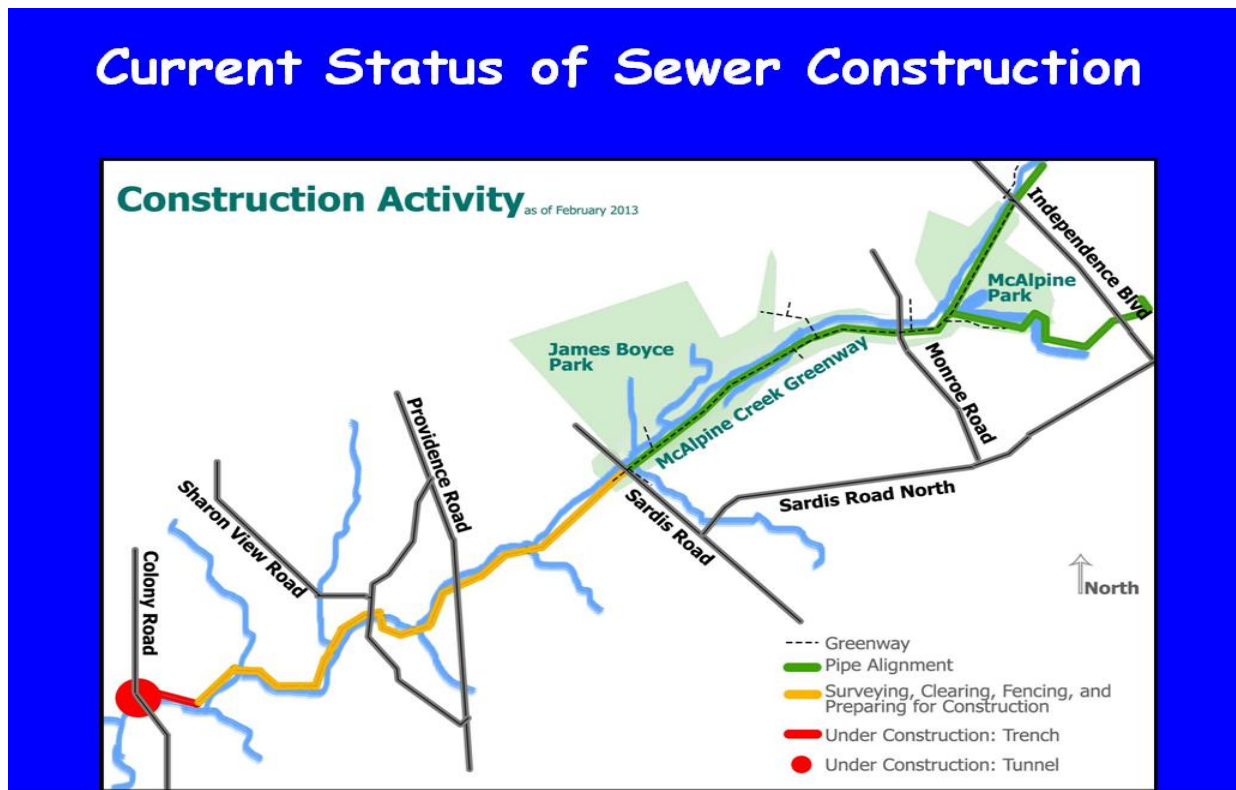
Lisa Costa
Tom Deming

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPATION

1. Presentations – McAlpine Creek Greenway Focus Group Meeting
Ed Barnhart opened the meeting by introducing the Park and Recreation Commission members present and the role they will play in the McAlpine Creek Greenway Relief Sewer project. Gwen Cook made a PowerPoint presentation and aerial maps of the project site, prepared by McKim and Creed, were reviewed. Question and comments were received from approximately 10 focus group members who attended. The Charlotte Mecklenburg Utility Department (CMUD) project extends from Colony Road to Independence Blvd. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2015. A CMU construction progress map current one is below) will be on the Park and Recreation website and updated monthly to show the completed portion of the relief sewer. The link will be placed on the construction signage which should be installed at greenway entrances during March.



- There were comments regarding the existing restroom facilities at McAlpine Creek Park are inadequate and in poor condition for daily use. Gwen mentioned there are restrooms proposed at Old Bell Road along with expanded parking, however the restrooms will not be built initially. Citizens pointed out that restroom at that location may be useful, but not for McAlpine Creek Park.
- It was discussed whether paving the greenway trail with asphalt was a foregone conclusion. Gwen stated the standard for all greenways in the county system are to be paved trails. The McAlpine Creek Greenway will connect to the overall greenway system. LUESA does want gravel for greenways moving forward due to sediment washing into the creek during storm events. Sediment is the primary pollutant in our creeks.
- For NCAA Regional races, a 150 meter (absolute minimum of 100 meters) wide starting area is recommended with a 600 meter total length. Gwen stated the existing earth berm will be removed allowing for more room for race starts. Spectators could be limited to the paved greenway with a permanent fence separation [allowing parking near Margaret Wallace to serve the large events.] There was focus group concern that the NCAA officials would see the paved greenway and pass on having an event at McAlpine.
- Gwen reviewed the proposed cross-section detail for the greenway trail being 10' asphalt with 10' wide grass shoulders on either side. Comments from the attendees indicated the grass shoulders would be worn down very quickly and the asphalt trail will buckle after the first flood event. McKim & Creed is considering an asphalt trail cross-section with recommended edge restraints to keep water from migrating under the asphalt to cause buckling, at least in locations most likely for storm water to get under the trail. The suggestion from the group was not to pave the 800 meters of the straight trail adjacent to the creek. NCAA races would not use the grassed shoulders or the paved trail for events. One citizen expressed concern that the NCAA officials would see the paved greenway and pass on having an event at McAlpine.
- There was a suggestion to put a gravel trail for running on the non-creek side of the proposed greenway. This would allow high school runners to use and keep them off the greenway trail, however new granular trail needs to be avoided within the floodplain due to environment and maintenance.
- There was a discussion regarding maintenance costs for asphalt paving versus gravel pavement. Gwen stated asphalt pavement is mostly maintenance-free but it costs the county about \$60,000 per year to refresh the existing 3 mile gravel trail after floods. Greg Clemmer stated these maintenance costs vary by year based on the amount of rainfall we receive.
- It was pointed out by Chris Matthews that there are 2 primary erosion problem areas closer to Bell Road. Years ago the existing concrete trails cracked and buckled due to storm water getting under the asphalt.
- Provide 20 ton vehicular bridge for direct access to race starting area by ambulances, crash truck, catering trucks, etc.
- A detour to the Boyce Park trails during construction was suggested. This is doubtful due to the existing weir bridge will be removed and the sewer construction activity severe the parks from the greenway side of the creek. We will confirm with CMU.

- Install new sewer manholes and retrofit existing manholes to be flush with grade and off-set vent pipes closer to creek. CMU will need to approve this approach/additional cost. Rubber mats could be laid on top of the manholes during racing events to avoid trip hazards if the soil around them is settled.
 - After much discussion by the group, a recommendation was suggested to keep the greenway section in McAlpine Creek Park unpaved and improve an existing running trail on the opposite side of the creek (Boyce Park/Cottonwood Trail). LUESA will need to approve this approach. The trail could be used for cycle-cross and high school runners. This trail would not meet the requirements for an NCAA race. The suggested trail improvements for the Boyce/Cottonwood trail are:
 1. Add bridge connection from greenway to Boyce/Cottonwood trail to the north.
 2. A 6' wide dirt trail is acceptable, gravel not required except to stabilize where necessary. Mud puddles will be expected and will not affect runners.
 3. Curves in the trail are acceptable since long, straight portions will not be possible due to topography/tree cover.
 4. Add signage to direct bikes to greenway trail. Most of them can be expected to comply.
2. The feedback received during the focus group meeting was very beneficial. The design change suggestions will need to require further due diligence and study by the County and McKim and Creed. It is likely another focus group meeting will be scheduled to review our findings and the recommended trail alignment/pavement design.
 3. Construction signs are to be installed by late February at the greenway/park entrances notifying the public of the coming CMU construction and the closing of the greenway trail.
 4. Gwen Cook stated that she will be in touch with the group. It will be determined if another meeting would be useful or if emails will suffice.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at approximately 8:30 pm.