



**MECKLENBURG COUNTY**  
**A Meeting of the Upper McAlpine Creek Greenway Focus Group**

**MINUTES**

March 27, 2013

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

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Joe Pata

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT**

Gwen Cook, Planner

Kevin Brickman, Planner

Karen Weston-Chien, Project Manager, Asset and Facilities Management

Greg Clemmer, Park Superintendent

Patricia Poteat, General Manager/South Region

Preston Buckman, Recreation Coordinator and Supervisor (Athletics)

**FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT**

Lisa Costa

Larry McAfee

Andrew Swistak

Joe Vignolini

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting began at approximately 6:05 P.M. and introductions were made.

**DISCUSSION**

1. MCPR has decided not to pave the greenway trail through the 5K race area of McAlpine Creek Park. The CMUD contractor will work to return the site to its previous grades and provide a new/replaced pit gravel trail. Further grooming may be needed by Park and Rec.
2. The greenway trail will be paved from the existing wooden pedestrian bridge in McAlpine Creek Park south to the Old Bell Road parking lot. This will enable visitors seeking the paved greenway

trail the opportunity to use either entrance from the parking lot to connect to the greenway trail heading south. The granular loop connecting start and finish areas will remain unpaved.

3. MCPR will proceed with providing, as much as possible, 10' wide grassed shoulders along the paved portion of the greenway trail. There is a pinch point at the railroad trestle where there will be no shoulders.
4. MCPR has received cost information from the consultant for lowering existing manholes to a flush condition and relocating vents toward the creek to remove obstacles from the 5K race area to improve safety for runners. Final decisions on project scope have not been made, but this seems a likely improvement.
5. Staff has walked the Boyce Road Park Trails. Improvements to existing trails on the north end of the County property seem doable. The existing trails would be upgraded to an approximately 6' wide granular trail, similar to the existing main trail. This work would have to be done over time as staff is available to do this work. It is anticipated that this trail addition would provide approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile improved trail to the existing granular trail in Boyce Road Park.
6. It was requested that MCPR explore the possibility of connecting a natural surface trail to the sidewalk on Sardis Road to the woodland trails in Boyce Road Park to enable people to access the trails during construction and beyond. Property ownership will need to be considered.
7. A trail parallel to the creek on the south side was discussed again. This potential trail location was considered early in this planning process, but the area is too wet with many tributaries for a trail.
8. It was suggested that a paved trail route between the bridge to Campbell Creek Greenway and McAlpine Creek Park (northwest side of McAlpine Creek) be considered as an amenity to continue a paved greenway corridor which would be usable even during events. Property ownership will need to be considered.
9. MCPR plans to turn the existing weirs into bridges with 5 tons loading, standard to our greenway system. The new bridges will be raised to the approximate level of the trail.
10. A fifth bridge is being considered to replace the existing pedestrian wooden/steel structure in McAlpine Creek Park. This proposed bridge would support H2O loading needed for race event set-up and provide a T-intersection to access the 5K area. The location of landfill cells may impact the ability to use this location, but H2O access to the event start area will be provided. The connecting paths in McAlpine Creek Park between parking/park entrance drive and the 5<sup>th</sup> bridge would be paved. Service vehicles headed for the 5K area would be routed to avoid driving through the parking lots.
11. The triangle between Irvins Creek and McAlpine Creek Greenways is wet and low. If that area could be filled/regraded it would be beneficial for race staging.
12. MCPR would welcome donations for a new awards stage. This may not be in the available budget for the project. The wooden stage was installed in 1985. The new stage size should accommodate about 24 students, no less than the existing stage size - perhaps 15' x 30'. When the area is wet, the runners use the stage for warm up. Tables with awards are set across the back of the stage and the

runners receive their award and face the crowd. The new stage wants to remain near creek with a possible roof. Different building materials were discussed such as wood, wood composites and concrete. MCPR must consider long-term maintenance and appearance.

13. Electricity is needed for both the stage area and the clock at the finish line. Electricity should be provided for both sides of the finish chute. Power lines are attached to the existing bridge/wood structure. Generators not recommended because they would create noise/fumes. MCPR will engage Larry McAfee and others as needed to insure that location of electricity appropriately serves the event needs and meets current codes.
14. The race starting area must be level and as wide as possible. The existing dirt pile will be removed. Chris Matthews, Natural Resources Manager has agreed to select some trees that can be removed at approximately the ¼ mile point. This work will be done at staff direction, probably with in-house staff.
15. Larry McAfee wants to rework the finish shoots to have all equal spacing. He is willing to look for private funding. MCPR will request that CMUD remove the existing pipes within their easement area. Larry McAfee committed to replace the pipes as needed for the race events. The telephone poles (once used by MCPR for movies) are not needed for race events and will likely be removed.
16. CMUD cannot finalize a schedule for the sewer construction. Weather has not been favorable this winter. They will update the map on the website [www.parkandrec.com](http://www.parkandrec.com) under greenways/active projects/Upper McAlpine Creek Greenway. There is a three step process, all dependent on weather and rock. It begins with tunneling or boring under road crossings, then trenching and installing pipe, and then tying in the lateral sewer pipes from both side of the creek. The last step allows activation of the sewer lines and it is the most controllable aspect of the construction for the contractor. Choosing the timing of lateral tie-ins allows the contractor to keep on working and adjust the schedule accordingly.
17. There was much brainstorming about ideas for the extended area around McAlpine Creek Park and the greenway. Some ideas involve land acquisition, but there is a general consensus that a master plan effort is needed for the larger area, with properties and activities connected through a network of greenway/natural surface trails and sidewalks. MCPR must focus on the 2008 bond projects at this time, but will consider how this planning effort might be accommodated in the future. The current effort is focused on the relief sewer project to maximize improvements and minimize the impact of the project.

A few items to consider in the master plan:

- Natural surface trail from Sardis Road into Boyce Road Park trails
- Improved/expanded restrooms for the park
- Paved greenway trail between McAlpine Creek Park creek bridges and the beginning of the Campbell Creek Greenway Trail
- Provide a left turn exit lane from the park onto Monroe Road
- Consider the triangular property south of Monroe Road and the rail corridor but north of the creek, currently undeveloped, as a roughly grassed parking area for overflow parking during events. Pedestrian access to the park would be north by public sidewalk to the park entrance.

- Consider repurposing the soccer field if the fields are underutilized for passive recreation amenities, lawn areas, playgrounds and picnic shelters. These elements would be assets to the park.
- Additional parking could be considered but the park must not be dominated by it. The condition of the existing entrance/exit park drive will not support unlimited parking.

There were no further or items for discussion. MCPR expressed appreciation for all who have participated in the process with their time, caring and knowledge. Additional focus group meetings or public meetings will probably not be called. The website is available with updates from CMUD at [www.parkandrec.com/greenways/](http://www.parkandrec.com/greenways/) active projects. Minutes and any future information items will be distributed to the focus group, particularly if questions arise. The greenway construction documents will be complete in about 5 months. Anyone is welcome to contact Gwen Cook at [Gwen.Cook@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov](mailto:Gwen.Cook@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov) or 704.432.1570.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting ended at approximately 7:30 P.M.