

New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting of May 14, 2009

(Present: Fowler, Healy, Kent, Welch, Greg Schuster, Helen Youngblood, Jeff Fischer, Bo Howes, Jesse Thompson Eustice, David Eustice)

(1) Turkey Farm Road bridge construction update. Kent said three spans are now in place. . Almost daily posts are being made to the U-Tube site. Fowler and Kent said that stream bottom looked good. Fortunately there have been no really heavy rains since construction began. In general, contractor seems to be taking care to limit erosion and to avoid dropping material into the stream. Has now covered debris piles with plastic. Bridge scheduled for completion in late summer. Kent noted that the bridge is very low compared with the old one, reducing possibility of wildlife passage. After completion would be the best time to have a review of our experience with this entire project, joined by Ryke Longest of the Duke Environmental Law Clinic.

(2) Update on Hollow Rock planning. Welch said final plans for first phase of park came in from Rich Shaw. First parking lot will be off Erwin Road. First step is for the 4 government bodies to adopt the plan and designate a management entity. No money available as yet.

Jesse Thompson Eustice was introduced. She serves on the DOST Trails Committee. Her parents were in the Hollow Rock String Band, which played at the store starting in 1964-65. There is a CD of their music available. It retails for about \$15, but could be purchased by the NHCCAC for \$4 each plus shipping. It could be a good fundraising tool for the restoration of the Hollow Rock Store.

Jeff Fischer told us that he has a 2 year option on the old Hollow Rock Store, now in a nearby back yard. Rich Shaw has a temporary place to store it if necessary. Preservation Durham would be the fiscal agent for costs. Fischer says the store is about 15' by 24'. The roof needs repair. He would like to have a website with a documentary history of the Hollow Rock Area. Healy suggested that for the time being this material could be posted the NHCCAC website www.newhopecreek.org

Fischer wants to approach the Center for Documentary Studies about making a film about the store and its restoration. He is talking with a professional film production team in Durham. He also expressed an interest in relating the Hollow Rock area to preserving land for local food production.

Healy and Welch reported on NHCCAC in various spring festivals. Duke Earth Day was a bust—high winds and inattentive students. Durham Earth Day provided an opportunity to hand out literature, but attendance was smaller than in past years. The Piedmont Wildlife Festival, held for the second time at Leigh Farm, was well attended and several useful contacts were made. Healy remarked that it was very

good to see Leigh Farm Park being put to a major public use.

(3) Clearing was observed along Mt. Moriah Rd. north of 15-501. Youngblood will find out what is going on. (Healy went to the site subsequently and found a wide dirt road leading from Mt. Moriah to a new stormwater pool behind Indigo Corners.

(4) DOST planning, with special attention to Sandy Creek. See Healy notes below.

Notes on Proposed Sandy Creek Trail

(1) Judd's informal opinion on the structural soundness of the existing bridge over Sandy Creek: the girders appeared sound and it looks plenty strong for pedestrian use except for the holes in the deck and possibly the lack of handrails. Replacing the whole decking would be a pretty expensive undertaking, but we might just erect a simple narrow footbridge, with railings, on top of the deck.

(2) There's a quite decent trail on the other side, starting at the bridge and ending in the parking lot of Good Shepherd Church. It seems very heavily used. Traverses a nice variety of terrain, half savanah, half pine uplands. It is very tick infested now. That, I am told, could be helped quite a bit if the savanah was mowed. Seems to me that this could be the "recreational trail" on our plan, which would then cross Garrett Rd., go down the sidewalk a short way, and go across the berm separating Garrett Farms and Alexan, then hook up with whatever Mud Creek trail we might build.

(3) The sewer easement along 15-501, a straight shot from the frontage road into the paved road at the park entrance, has an underlayment of rock. It may even be an old road. It looked initially as though it would be wet and muddy, but a bit more gravel and it might be the start of the "transportation trail." Of course a bridge (I estimate 25-30 ft. span) is needed over Sandy Creek, unless there is a detour to use the old bridge. I'm now bridge expert, but a couple of surplus girders with a wood deck and rail on top might serve for a while. Both Duke and NC State participate in yearly national bridge building competitions, and might be sources of help. With a bridge, one could bike safely on a combination of streets and sewer easement in a more or less direct route from Garrett Rd. to the Duke Campus. (Duke golf course trail is open to bikes). I know we need a trail easement at the Candle Shop, but a mostly road route could also serve, at least temporarily and would be a lot less dangerous than what we now have. And it would build up a needed cyclist constituency.

(4) It would be great if we (NHCCAC, DOST, BIKE/Ped) could agree on a set of routes, then update the Summer 2007 pamphlet. I'd be happy to do the writing part. We might prominently display a nice bird picture, since I think that birding could become a real feature of Sandy Creek Park.