

New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee Minutes of Meeting of December 10, 2009

(Present: Bridgwater, Fowler, Goebel, Healy, Edeburn, Welch, Kent, Greg Schuster, Bo Howes, Jeff Fisher, Chris Smith)

(1) Hollow Rock Plan. The plan is being submitted to the four participating local governments for approval by their governing bodies. In Orange County, it has already gone to a Commission work session and will be taken up by the full Commission in February. In Chapel Hill it is being circulated to various advisory boards for comment and will go to the Town Council in January. The Plan has been approved by Durham City Council and will come to the County Commission Dec. 14. There is still no guarantee of closure of Pickett Road to through traffic.

(2) Hollow Rock implementation. It was noted that Hollow Rock trails might be paid for by a future state Park and Recreation Fund application. Jeff Fisher said he had talked with Julie Elmore at the Piedmont Conservation Council. She gave permission to create the "Partnership for Creative Cooperation" as a platform for collaboration in the Hollow Rock area. The partnership vehicle would raise funds to move and restore Hollow Rock store. It will have a website for volunteering and accepting donated funds. Fisher said he has filmed B.B. Olive and will film others who have had long experience with Hollow Rock. Schuster said that volunteer trail building could be done in the area on the Durham side in early spring. Emphasis would be put on re-reouting parts of the existing informal trail that have the potential to cause erosion.

(3) Githens Trail. Schuster showed photos of the Githens Loop Trail, which was very heavily flooded by the recent rain. He noted that boardwalks can change an area's hydrology and block wildlife movement, a fact relevant to several of our trail projects. Edeburn suggested that a raised boardwalk might be suitable for some areas, and that gravel would be good in others. Healy suggested that in some cases we might want to build trails so that the trailhead would be the first place flooded and the last to drain, so that people are discouraged from using (and damaging) the trail until it has had a chance to dry out.

(4) Kent said there is already graffiti on Turkey Farm Road bridge. He also mentioned the desirability of buying the lot along 15-501 that would have been next to the easternmost border of the abortive "auto dealership" land assembly. Securing it would eliminate the need to build an access road along the back of the several lots. It was noted that this lot, zoned commercial, could be quite expensive even though it is partially unbuildable.

(5) Howes noted that the Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count will take place in Durham on Dec. 20 and in Chapel Hill on Dec. 27. Part of the count will take place at New Hope locations.