

New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting of July 12, 2012

(Present: Kent, Goebel, Healy, Welch, Brendan Moore, Helen Youngblood, Helen Fischer, Bo Howes, Alan Dippy)

- (1) Chris Berndt had sent an email noting that the Chapel Hill Open Space and Trails Plan was not complete and there would be public meetings on it in September. The NHCCAC will invite Bill Webster to present on it at our August meeting. [NB. This has been arranged] Chris also said that CH 2020 Comprehensive Plan had been approved and that it incorporated the 1994 New Hope Plan.
- (2) Healy said that (with much effort by John Kent) the NHCCAC comments on the TTA light rail route through the New Hope corridor had been submitted on June 18 as part of the EIS “scoping process”. This process is intended to raise issue for TTA to study. In addition to our comments, adopted at the August 2011 and June 2012 meetings, we submitted extensive suggestions by John as to how a light rail line could be constructed parallel to 15-501, rather than in the vegetated corridor to the south, as well as our letter to state Natural Heritage director Linda Pearsall and her response to us.
- (3) Sandy Creek Park. Goebel reported that a 275 water capture cube (fed by gutters of restroom building) had been installed to irrigate plantings. Outline of new butterfly garden has been market and mulch and other soil improvements will be incorporated next week. 1 cu yard of “biochar” has been obtained from a doctoral student at NC State. This pelletized charcoal seems to have great promise as a long term soil additive.

Work on wildlife viewing platform will begin as soon as permit is obtained from the city. A group of Duke students has been lined up to work Aug. 14, 15,16, 17. We have sufficient funds for the lumber for the platform, but will need \$2000 or so for other park improvements. Keep Durham Beautiful <http://www.keepdurhambeautiful.org/> has agreed to accept (tax deductible) contributions made through their web site (Paypal and credit cards can be used) that can be directed to Sandy Creek projects. Bo Howes said that Triangle Land Conservancy may agree to provide the same service for Hollow Rock project contributions, though TLC does not want to handle large numbers of small donations.

Healy visited the park with Ken Coulter’s widow, Marlene, and son Martin. They chose a large stone next to the bridge, which will be moved to the sign shop on Hillsborough Rd. and inscribed with:

Kenneth R. Coulter

Landscape Architect

“His monument is all around you”

(a version of the famous epigram on the tomb of Christopher Wren in St. Paul's cathedral, London)

The unveiling of the stone is scheduled for October 6. We will also have various environmental education activities for the public (birdwatching, water quality testing, hiking).

Cost of inscribing the stone is \$200. Friends of Ken Coulter are encouraged to make contributions through the Keep Durham Beautiful web site. Total need for all Sandy Creek Park improvements envisioned thus far and not yet built, less the funds made available by Department of Parks and Recreation, are approximately \$1200.

Park users should be warned to check for ticks when they get home, a chronic problem in Durham. There is a need for some stepping stones to connect the westernmost part of the Sandy Creek Trail to the Good Shepherd Church parking lot.

Youngblood distributed copies of the new bike/ped plan for Durham. Additional copies will be available from the Planning Department or at Durham Farmers Market. She also had a display map of the New Hope planning area. She asked that members review it and see if the staff captured everything that is in the adopted New Hope plan. Healy suggested that unimproved trails (not shown on this map) be mapped. Youngblood said that only official DOST trails are mapped.

- (4) **Patterson Place development.** Youngblood said that a site plan has been submitted for a development (322 apartments on 81 acres along Watkins Rd. north of Githens Middle School) on the east side of Patterson Place that had been part of the mixed use development approved in 1998. Despite the passage of time, all that is required is approval by the Development Review Board. The plan, done by the John McAdams Company, has quite a bit of impervious surface and is close to the bottomlands. Comments are due by July 23. Project is # D1200137 and Danny Cultra is the planner in charge.

- (5) **Discussion of interpretation in Sandy Creek and Hollow Rock Parks.** Healy said there will be a second archeological survey of Hollow Rock this fall. He would like to bring a geologist to the park to both interact with the archeologist and to mark major geological features that could be interpreted when trails are built. It was noted that Maribeth Carr, landscape architect for Orange County, brought a geologist to Little River Park to do a geological inventory for the master plan. Healy observed that new QR bar code technology will allow us to erect small signs that can be read by a smart phone and lead the user to whatever material we wish to post on the Web, including film and sound. Fischer said that there is a state forest in eastern NC with "talking trees" and "talking rocks".