

# **New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee**

## **Minutes of Meeting of October 11, 2012**

**(Present: Berndt, Goebel, Healy, Kent, Bo Howes, , Brendan Moore, Helen Youngblood)**

- (1) Sandy Creek Park. The October 6 bridge opening and dedication of the bridge and inscribed rock to Ken Coulter was a wonderful event, attended by about 80 people, including Ken's widow, his sons and a number of other family members as well as several elected officials. There was also a symbolic planting in the "butterfly garden" area just north of the bathroom building. Soil in the planting area incorporated a significant amount of "bio-char," a crushed charcoal product that conditions the soil, provides nutrients, and serves as a surface for microbial action. Goebel said site plan for the observation deck has been approved, and next step is to get a building permit. There will be plenty of need for volunteers on the deck project and several other park improvements during Fall and Winter.

Goebel and Healy emphasized the need for more contributions toward the cost of the park (e.g. water tank, bio-char, memorial rock). They can be made as tax deductible earmarked contributions through the Keep Durham Beautiful website. See

<http://keepdurhambeautiful.org/do-something/donate/>

- (2) Healy reported on a recent hike to Hollow Rock Park (both Durham and Orange County areas) with several Durham and OC land managers and Phil Bradley, a geologist with the state of North Carolina. Bradley pointed out many areas where evidence of both the Carolina Slate Belt and the Triassic Basin, which meet just above the park, can be easily seen. Bradley also discovered a large and beautiful section of a petrified log. Healy said he hoped that with the help of Bradley and other geological professional an educational trail could be laid out. There is a possibility that Bradley might write a report on the geology of the upper New Hope similar to the publication issued by the state a few years ago on the geology of the Eno River.

Moore said that several bridges would have to be engineered and built to adequately build permanent trails on the Durham side. Development of the park has been delayed by lack of parking. We were told that the parking lot off Erwin Rd. on the Orange County side is in the transportation improvement budget for approximately 2015.

- (3) Berndt said that comments are sought on the Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Plan and CH Greenways Plan. A link to the documents can be found at <http://www.ci.chapel-hill.nc.us/index.aspx?page=1726>

She also asked what the NHCCAC was doing to follow up on submitting comments to the Metropolitan Planning Organization with regard to the long term need to include a bike/ped element in any future revision to crossing of I-40 by Erwin Rd. and 15-501. This had been raised by Bill Webster in his recent presentation to the NHCCAC. It was also noted that our desired sidewalk along Erwin Rd. that would connect Hollow Rock Park with Forest View Elementary should be brought before the Transportation Advisory Committee.

- (4) Kent said that TTA had submitted its application for federal funds to do the EIS and design work for the proposed Durham-Orange County mass transit system.

- (5) Patterson Place Apartments site plan. Healy said that Linda Pearsall, of NC Natural Heritage Program, had told him in an email that she would have Allison Weakley talk with Helen Youngblood (Durham Planning) about the ecological values and extent of the NH Bottomlands. It was not clear if this has been done. Healy will forward copies of this correspondence to Youngblood and to Durham planner Danny Coultra, who is in charge of the project review. It was noted that more comments have been sent by Planning to the developer who will have to submit the site plan for a third time.

- (6) Kent said he would ask Brad Schultz, communications specialist at TTA, about any advisory group that might be set up for the transit system.

- (7) It was noted that a public meeting would be held on October 16 (one of a series) to get input for the Durham Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Healy said that he would attend.