

New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting of July 11, 2013

(Present: Edeburn, Goebel, Healy, Welch, Kent, Mike Waldroup, Helen Youngblood, Ed Harrison, Brendan Moore, Helen Fischer, Reynolds McFarlane (TTA), Tanner Adamson (TTA), Michael Clark (TTA), Jeff Weisner (URS/TTA consulting team), Bill Huppermans (URS/TTA) Gregg Northcutt (TTA), Andy Henry (DCHC-MPD), Brad Schulz (TTA), Juanita Shearer-Swink (TTA), Patrick McDonough (TTA)

(1) Sandy Creek Park. DOST matching grant (\$10,000) has been approved. It will be used to pay for a fence to prevent automobile damage to the “meadow”, finishing the wildlife observation deck, trail improvements, and more benches and picnic tables, with particular emphasis on making the park even more usable by people with disabilities. We will be needing a very large amount of volunteer labor over the next few months. We now have over 100 “friends” on the Sandy Creek Facebook page.

(2) Report on volunteer work day at Old Chapel Hill Rd. Park—Moore supervised a very successful day of adding stronger sections to the boardwalk and tying them down so they are less likely to wash away during storms. Many thanks to the hard working participants.

(3) Hollow Rock park—nothing new to report

(4) Patterson Place Apartments and I-40 widening—Kent and Healy are working on this. Healy will write a letter to developer seeking relocation of trail connecting apartments with Chapel Hill Rd. Park bottomlands so as to limit tree removal on the apartment property.

(5) Report on progress of environmental assessment by consultants to Triangle Transit Authority. (Bill Huppermans) Huppermans said the purpose of the presentation was to fix within 2 months on exact alignments that will be evaluated for environmental impacts. Most of what he said was regarding the alternative corridor paralleling 15-501, which the NHCCAC had identified as likely to have fewer environmental impacts than the original “cross country” route. Huppermans said that TTA is subject to many NCDOT requirements. In particular, DOT wants to reserve right of way along 15-501 for an additional lane on each side (even though this expansion is not in the long term local transportation plan, going out to 2040). URS is proposing to study an LRT corridor that would have an 18 foot setback from the new NCDOT lane, rather than the 22 ft. preferred by DOT. At this distance, a crossing parallel to 15-501 would have to be on stilts to avoid impacting slopes and wetlands. Huppermans showed 3 alternative alignments along 15-501. Healy said that adding a lane to 15-501 would have a substantial negative impact on LRT ridership—only if traffic is allowed to get congested will many people shift from cars to LRT, giving the system more ridership and justifying the planned transit oriented development. Healy asked that TTA’s analysis provide a specific figure on the cost difference between putting the LRT outside the 1 lane expansion area, and putting the LRT where the additional lane would go.