

New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting of August 13, 2015

(Present: Crouse, Fowler, Goebel, Healy, Welch, John Kent, Brendan Moore, Ed Harrison)

- (1) Light Rail Project. Go Triangle will release the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in late August, with a 45 day comment period, two workshops, two public hearings and a goal of completion by the end of 2015. One issue we have found to date is the boundary of the station planning area for Patterson Place station, which seems to follow the trail and therefore comes too close to the creek. The location of the repair facility at Farrington Rd. remains controversial. Go Triangle will have a meeting to discuss it at Creekside Elementary on August 18.
- (2) Hollow Rock Park. Healy spoke with Rich Shaw this morning. All construction work is on track for an early 2016 opening. Moore said that bridges on the Durham side will be under construction in September 2015. Phil Bradley, of the state geologist's office, has volunteered to draft text for geological interpretive signs for this park and for Sandy Creek. He walked the site with Bob Healy, Kay Brown (of Central North Carolina Mineral Society), Brendan Moore and fellow state geologist Randy Bechtel. They hope to position signs in such a way that they create a "geological trail" (which will coincide in whole or in part with the main recreational trail). Bradley has already prepared draft copy and graphics for many of the signs. We might have one or two geological signs at the entrance ready by the park opening.
- (3) Sandy Creek Park. Goebel said that volunteers from Duke's Project Build did useful work weeding and mulching the planted areas. Two locally rare birds—the tricolored heron and the white ibis—brought quite a few new birders (and all the usual ones) to the park. A Monarch butterfly was sighted today, but it may be one released by John G., who raised and released 14. {NB Several Monarchs have been seen in the park and elsewhere since August 15} Amazing numbers of three types of swallowtails have been seen for weeks in the butterfly garden and nearby.
The October 10 Farewell to the Monarchs festival is getting lots of traction. Yamile Nazar, the Hispanic outreach coordinator for the Durham County Library has been very effective in getting the word out in the Hispanic community. John G. was asked by the public schools to order 30 larvae kits, one for each elementary school. Several people are working to advance our long term projects for Sandy Creek: the ADA loop around the parking lot and lower lake, improvements to the Garrett Rd. trail, and the loop trail around the upper pond.

(4) Development Proposals. No news yet on the intentions of the Candleshop property developer, whose proposal was turned down by the Planning Commission. [NB In late August, Healy received notice of a community meeting called by the developer for September 9 at 6 pm at the Jewish Community Center on Cornwallis Rd.]

(5) Chapel Hill report. Crouse said there will be a walk on the Bolin Creek Trail Sept. 3 at 5:30 pm for staff to explain the extension project. Harrison said that there will be an already approved development in the upper watershed of Old Farm Creek. The developer wants to build a hotel right on top of the headwaters.