

New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting of April 12, 2018

(Present: Goebel, Fowler, Healy, Kent, Schreiber, Howes, Korest, Harrison)

- (1) Sandy Creek Park Report. Creek Week was very successful. The cleanup involved 17 people, who picked up 400 lbs. of trash, 2 wheels and tires, and 107 (!) golf balls. The same day, Goebel supervised 50 volunteers from a local LDS congregation, who weeded and spread mulch. Goebel said that after 2 ½ years, and very considerable expense, volunteers have finally received a building permit from the City of Durham for the boardwalk between the bridge and Garrett Rd. Goal is to finish by mid-July. Goebel said there is a social trail starting in the parking lot of the La Quinta and connecting to the social trail around the “far pond”. Many users, who park at La Quinta, seem to be birders.
- (2) There is a new study of Rt. 15-501, starting with a bus tour. Harrison will represent the NHCCAC.
- (3) Hollow Rock Environmental Park. Brendan Moore sent message that there is nothing new to report. Still working on proposal for accessible trail.
- (4) Healy said that he had been approached by Duke environmental education prof. Nicki Cagle to be part of a large NSF proposal that would include \$5000 grants to local groups. With the help of Moore and Korest, a proposal was submitted for interpretive signage along the New Hope Bottomlands Trail. Korest said that this is an idea with merit, with or without this funding. Kent suggested Harry LeGrand and Steve Hall as good information sources. Healy said that Ed Harrison also knows the area well. Kent said that he saw evidence of bicycle use on the trail today. There was a useful discussion of excluding dogs from parks, where they can be very destructive to wildlife. Schreiber showed a leash that could be offered free to dog owners as a reminder and incentive.
- (5) There was a lengthy discussion of the new site plan and grading plan for the apartments along SW Durham Drive near Patterson Place. The committee was disappointed with the changes that had been made to protect steep slopes and the associated forest. There was also concern about whether the disturbed area would be replanted in native species. The committee

agreed that we should try to get Durham's steep slope ordinance for new development more in line with what Chapel Hill has had since 1973. Healy will contact Jeff Smith of Terwilliger Pappas, the developer.

(6) We identified future issues for the committee. Among them were:

- changes in the steep slope ordinance, especially as it relates to the slopes on the north side of 15-501;
- culverts that will be constructed for Sandy Creek as part of the LRT;
- wildlife impacts of LRT construction along the 15-501 bridge;
- updating of the Durham greenways plan as it relates to types of trail—paved vs. natural. Schreiber offered help from a student to do GIS that would help implement any vision we come up with;
- lack of environmental expertise and institutional memory among Durham Planning and Parks and Recreation staff;
- co-ordination with Bike-Ped/Dale McKeel;
- trail impacts of changes in the 15-501/Garrett Rd. intersection;
- connections to Chapel Hill