

New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting of October 3, 2019

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

- (1) Sandy Creek Park. Healy said there will be a Big Sweep cleanup at the park tomorrow, October 5. Goebel said he had had 200 volunteers working on the bridge, the swing arbor and other maintenance projects. He said that USDA will install the beaver water levelers in Fall. There has been a donation of large rocks that will be put around the new history grove and will replace rotten wooden bollards. He passed around the site plan for the new sidewalk and history grove (see attachment). An unknown water seep has been found near a bench at the bottom of the sidewalk. The city is investigating. Goebel said that a total of almost \$4000 has been paid in site plan review fees, with perhaps three times that for having the plans drawn up. He said that we should go to city officials to see if some of this money might be refunded, given that all this work is improving a city asset. There was discussion of the cell tower—garbage left by contractors, and the possibility of getting fee revenue when the 10 year permit for the tower is renewed.
- (2) Harrison spoke about the 20 acre forest tract adjacent to Eastowne, and bordering I-40. (see attachment) UNC plans to build 1.8-2.8 million square feet of medical offices at Eastowne. NCDOT has a long term plan for an interchange and access roads across the forest property. Harrison spoke to the great natural value of the site, which contains a dry mesic forest and a basic oak-hickory ecosystem, as well as steep slopes. Some of the trees are very old and very large. The property is downstream of a floodplain property that belongs to the town of Chapel Hill. Although partially blocked by I-40, Dry Creek can serve as a source of water and living material for the extensive New Hope area downstream. This is particularly important in order to revegetate the large area north of 15-501 on east side of I-40 that was extensively disturbed by clearcutting. The Committee voted to ask Bob Healy to draft a statement on the values of the property, its relation to the New Hope Plan and the need to protect it from buildings and roads. (see attachment)
- (3) Shreiber said that UNC is doing a 50 year campus plan that does not pay much attention to future parklands. She said that her husband is working with the City of Durham on a watershed improvement plan for New Hope Creek. Three Oaks Engineering is the firm in overall charge. They have not yet reached out to us for input. Korest said that we should ask them for a presentation at our November 7 meeting.