

MINUTES

City Council Parks, Trails, & Recreation Committee

Wednesday, October 18, 2017, 3:30 PM
Administrative Conference Room at City Hall

Members Present: Gary Daniel, Chair, Council Member
Ann Hollingsworth, Vice-Chair, Council Member
Jim Fatland, City Manager
David Lutz, Public Works Director
Daniel Cobb, Planning Director
Colin Izzard, Citizen Member
Cody Owen, Citizen Member
Keenan Smith, Citizen Member
Gregory Copeland, At-Large Member

Staff Present: Aaron Bland, Planning Department
Nicole Owenby, Administrative Assistant

Special Guests: Kevin Betts, General Manager College Walk
Sally MacMillian, College Walk Resident
Jacob Dinkins, Contractor

Media: Matt McGregor, Transylvania Times

Absent: Carleen Dixon, Ex-Officio Member

Welcome & Call to Order

Gary Daniel, Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM. Mr. Fatland asked to amend the agenda. Ms. Hollingsworth motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Fatland. Agenda was accepted as presented.

Certification of Quorum

Nicole Owenby, Administrative Assistant certified that a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes from September 17, 2015, August 17, 2016, December 14, 2016, and September 20, 2017 Meetings

Mr. Fatland motioned, seconded by Ms. Hollingsworth, the September 17, 2015, August 17, 2016, December 14, 2016, and September 20, 2017, meeting minutes be approved as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Sidewalk and Bike Path Priorities

Mr. Cobb sent an updated list of sidewalk and bike path priorities to the committee members via email. This list was compromised by the members. Mr. Cobb stated that the committee would need to assign priorities for the project. Ms. Hollingsworth stated that there has been extensive talk about the Neely Road sidewalk and the connectivity to Brevard. Mr. Betts has stated that he would be willing to pay for their part of the sidewalk by his house. Ms. MacMillian stated in her letter that the residents of College Walk want to make the Neely Road sidewalk and bike path a top priority for the city (Exhibit A). Ms. Hollingsworth and Mr. Izzard would like a representative from the Department of Transportation (DOT) to come and talk with the committee. Ms. Hollingsworth motioned to meet with DOT about the Neely Road Project, seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

Bicycle Friendly Community Action Steps

Mr. Bland stated that there is an application window in February and before the application can be completed there are some policies that can be done quickly. The list was talked about and the members of the committee each picked actions steps that can be done quickly.

Skate Park

Mr. Dinkins had to leave due to another appointment, so it will be deferred to the next meeting.

Art Sculptures

Three new art sculptures will be placed throughout the city. There will be two sculptures placed on Brevard College property, which a lease has already been drafted. The lease shows the new locations for the sculptures. Mr. Fatland made the motion to take the approved locations to City Council, Mr. Copeland seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Set Date for Next Meeting.

The next City Council Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee Meeting will be Thursday, November 15th, 2017 at 3:30 PM.

Adjourn.

There being no further business, Mr. Daniel motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Owen. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 5:17 PM.

X 

Gary Daniel
Chair, Council Member

X 

Nicole Owenby
Administrative Assistant

Exhibit A

Thank you for allowing for public input at today's meeting.

Back in 2006, Neely Road was third on the priority list for a sidewalk. Here we are 11 years later with the other two sidewalks which were ahead of Neely on the list having been completed. It is my understanding that Neely is now number one on the list if the city were to adopt the new map. I am here not only to ask you to adopt the new map but also to urge you to make the Neely Road sidewalk and bike path a top priority. Why? Because I see persons trying to walk or cycle daily on Neely Road, often putting their lives at risk. Please picture this... I recently saw a man using one hand to push a child in a stroller with another child being held in his other hand, WALKING IN THE ROAD because there was no sidewalk, with cars and trucks whizzing by. I decided I had to do what I could to advocate for a safer road for pedestrians and cyclists.

I understand now that there is a proposal on the table for DOT to slightly widen Chestnut and Neely, which will most likely put the sidewalk and bike path on hold for many years to come. I would hope that we all share the nationwide concern regarding struggling state budgets and wanting to save taxpayers' monies. The cost to the city for said sidewalk and path is estimated to be \$1,716,000 and a good portion of Neely Road is already wide enough to allow for a sidewalk and bike path (see photos). If DOT is to widen the road and do the sidewalk/path work, the estimate I heard was at least \$17 million. We can save over \$15 million dollars with the city plan which seems to make much more sense than the DOT plan. Why is the widening of these roads even being considered? It would take away property in front of residences and would encourage more traffic and speeding (practically no one adheres to the 25 -30 speed limit as it stands now). Why widen both Chestnut and Neely when the latter must taper down into Park View which will only lead to congestion at that point since Park View is not planned to be widened? Tractor trailer trucks already use Chestnut and Neely Roads, probably relying on GPS, so widening these roads would only exacerbate the problem. Just today as I left to play tennis in Cedar Mountain, a 53' tractor trailer turned from 276 onto Park View at the light. I will share another example from the other day when we were stopped at the Neely Road/Old Hendersonville red light. A 53' tractor trailer truck driver discovered he could not make the turn from Old Hendersonville onto Neely without waiting for us and three other cars behind us in line to back up so he could negotiate the turn. I will share more thoughts regarding trucks in a minute.

I read recently that a sidewalk is now being planned because Dunkin Donuts is going in, yet we are a high-density residential neighborhood having now waited 11 years for our sidewalk. I like to think that I represent not only myself and my husband, but the 200 plus College Walk residents, the 600 plus Brevard College students often seen cycling or running on our local roads, Brevard College faculty, residents of Neely Road homes and the newly developed residents of the Brookside Community where sidewalks have been installed which can now be termed the sidewalks to nowhere since they sadly terminate on both sides of their street at the intersection of Neely Road where no sidewalk exists (see photos). We all want so desperately to be a walkable community IF we had the Neely Road/Chestnut sidewalk and bike path so we could walk or cycle to Silvermont, the Farmer's Market, Chestnut Square shopping plaza or anywhere in town for that matter.

I will return now to my concerns with traffic, trucks and noise due to the use of unmuffled compression brakes on Neely Road. I understand that by-pass routes already exist yet signage appears to be absent which would not only direct but make drivers aware of said routes. For example, if an overhead sign at the Lowe's light had an arrow with 276 by-pass on it, traffic would then take Ecusta Road to Wilson to

avoid town instead of Neely Road. The same signage should direct drivers to the 64 by-pass. Without signage, how are drivers to know the by-pass exists?

Regarding tractor trailer trucks on Neely Road, a simple sign as we saw yesterday when driving to Leicester would do the trick once the pump station is completed – "Trucks over 30' prohibited".

Regarding unmuffled compression/jake brake noise, other communities such as Fletcher and Hendersonville have passed ordinances banning compression brake use on residential roads and have simply posted signs such as "No Compression Brakes Ordinance 0-13-6 Henderson County". Please pass such an ordinance and post signs. We now hear jake brake noise day and night and the problem is only going to get worse if action is not taken. We realize this is a macho action on the part of truck drivers to intentionally disturb quiet neighborhoods when signs are not posted. When signs are in place, the hope is noise would subside.

Thank you for listening and please know that I am here to advocate for the safety and enjoyment of all fellow Brevard residents because I love this community with the focus on healthy lifestyle. We would really love to be able to access the wider community by foot or by bicycle but without the Neely Road sidewalk and bike path it is impossible. My mother ~~was~~ lived at College Walk in 2006 and she passed away 6 years later, never seeing the sidewalk that was planned come to fruition. I am now a College Walk resident 11 years after the original sidewalk plan for Neely Road was planned and I honestly wonder if I will live to see the day it actually materializes if the project is transferred to DOT rather than being completed by the City of Brevard.

Therefore, I urge you to adopt the new map and complete the sidewalk and bike path that we have now been waiting 11 years for which saves millions of taxpayer dollars in state budget money while more importantly saving lives and preventing accidents.

I want to thank all of you for your community service and I particularly want to thank Ann Hollingsworth and Daniel Cobb for their responses to my e-mails and the information they provided. Thank you for listening.

Sally MacMillan

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