



**MEETING NOTES**  
**OCTOBER 8, 2015**  
**SAN ANTONIO RIVER AUTHORITY**  
**100 EAST GUENTHER, BOARD ROOM**  
**8:30 A.M.**

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Jerry Geyer opened the meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves. Scott Baird is the new alternate for the Bexar County Historical Commission.

**CALENDAR ITEMS**

Michael Cortez reviewed the calendar items.

- a. Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee (WCROC) meeting- Tuesday, October 13, 2015, 6:00 p.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Board Room
- b. San Pedro Creek Subcommittee meeting, Thursday, November 12, 2015, 8:30 a.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Board Room

**APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES FROM SEPTEMBER 10, 2015**

Mr. Cortez asked for a motion to approve the notes as presented. Ed Cross made the motion and Andi Rodriguez seconded it. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

**GRUPO DE URBANO (GDU) TO CONSULT WITH DESIGN TEAM**

Suzanne Scott, SARA General Manager, presented this agenda item. Before she went into the details, she announced that Dr. Russell Persyn, SARA Manager of Watershed Engineering, has tendered his resignation effective at the end of October. Kerry Averyt will be the SARA project manager of San Pedro Creek going forward. Bexar County Manager, David Smith, has been informed and the transition should be smooth. The co-chairs requested the property owners be notified and assured that the agreements made to date will remain in effect, and negotiations and progress will continue.

Ms. Scott continued by briefing the subcommittee on the background and selection of Grupo de Diseño Urbano (GDU) as the landscape architect consultant. The media, public comment, and this subcommittee influenced Bexar County to bring in a consultant at this time, to allow for integration and implementation of the design as opposed to having a landscape architect simply conduct a review of it. GDU will be involved throughout the design and construction.

For more information, contact Bridget Hinze at 210/302-3257 <bridgeth@sara-tx.org>

Mario Schjetnan, internationally-renowned landscape architect, will represent GDU. Ms. Scott went on to present several examples from Mr. Schjetnan's professional portfolio, stating that his body of work links nicely with the project goals. His works include an ecological park with urban habitat with economic development objectives; an urban canal that emphasizes pedestrian connections; a park rehabilitation; and master planning that included environmental, hydraulic, and historic restoration and involved vendors and property owners. One project that is an important reference is Mr. Schjetnan's Cornerstone Gardens in Sonoma, California. It is a tribute to immigrant field workers and tells a meaningful story.

Mr. Schjetnan will be in San Antonio on October 14, 15, and 16 to meet with various Bexar County and City of San Antonio officials as well as with the design team to finalize his scope. His main contribution will be on the creek segment from Houston Street north and the Tree of Life area. The landscape integration into the design, the user experience, and the landscape palette will be considered. He has been sent quite a bit of information about the project to date and is familiar with the challenges, design goals, and other aspects of the project.

After a request for clarification regarding GDU's role, Ms. Scott stated that Mr. Schjetnan will be reviewing the 70 percent plans to suggest ways to integrate the landscape component with the design, show how it will work and include the human element as well as placemaking. Steve Tillotson let the committee know the landscape architect hired by Muñoz was still involved and the way in which GDU will be working with Muñoz has not yet been determined. Mr. Tillotson reiterated that Mr. Schjetnan will not be the architect of record. Ms. Scott said there is no time to start over and the ultimate decision to incorporate GDU's suggested modifications will be made by Commissioner's Court. The timing of the completion of the design may be pushed back. The ultimate build out date for phase 1 will remain at May 5, 2018. Mr. Tillotson concluded by stating that some of the results of the effort and the impacts of the value engineering will be presented at the November meeting.

Committee members suggested having Mr. Schjetnan present his ideas and the overall design changes, to the committee prior to going to Commissioner's Court. The subcommittee members who will be part of the review process will be the co-chairs, the members that are property and business owners (Trey Whiddon, Ed Cross, Mark Penner) along with James Lifshutz and Weston Urban representatives. Commissioners Court has asked that Weston Urban be involved in the discussions. Marilyn Bradley requested to be included as a neighborhood representative who is part of the committee. She also inquired about the increased property taxes and Betty Bueche, Bexar County, informed the committee that Bexar County Appraisal District is independent of Bexar County.

Ms. Scott also informed the committee that the conveyance of City owned parcels for the project will be made next Thursday. At that City Council meeting, Mr. Schjetnan will be introduced to the City.

With regard to the public art funding, Ms. Scott informed the committee that the County has removed the public art component from the project and is exploring ways to fund it. The San Antonio River Foundation has been approached and discussions have begun. The public art may be a combination of permanent and rotating installations. The storytelling component is still part of the design team's work and will be considered during the public art process.

#### **PROJECT ACTIVITY UPDATE**

Jeff Mitchell, HDR Engineering, presented the budget and phasing update, summary of cost reductions, and the associated design changes. He also indicated the team should have a revised timeline for design and construction at the November meeting. For specifics, please refer to the presentation.

The initial 70 percent cost estimate, with the full scope for all phases including the art, was \$206.8 million. For Phases 1 and 2 with complete build out the budget was \$128.9 million. The currently approved funding amount is \$125 million with \$97.8 million available for construction. The construction phasing was developed in response to this shortfall and to take care of the majority of flood control elements. Phase 1, from the tunnel inlet/Tree of Life to Cesar Chavez Boulevard, will impact the urban landscape and create a high impact on amenities and floodwater conveyance. It will be delivered on schedule for the May 2018 opening. Phase 2 is from Guadalupe Street to about 500 feet (railroad track) south of S. Alamo. Flood control horsepower is in the Phase 2 area with initial construction to be completed by 2018. Phase 3, when funding is identified, will complete the flood control elements and include the segment where Phase 2 ends to the project limits under I-10. Phase 4 will take some time to finalize as property and daylighting the creek in this area has presented some challenges.

To overcome the \$31 million deficit for Phases 1 and 2, the design team applied value engineering and has reduced the deficit to \$391,815. Changes include modifications to the Tree of Life, the Alameda performance area is smaller as well as the water plaza between Travis and Houston streets, removal of the Salinas Bridge shade structure, and art treatment on the Merodeo bridge was removed as well as the public art element and some architectural finishes. The value engineering of Phase 2 includes only completing the channel and engineering work (flood conveyance) with no amenities or pedestrian connections beyond South Alamo. If additional funds are identified storm water treatment devices will be included in Phase 2.

Committee members inquired about the *paseos* and the funding opportunities for Phase 3. Phase 2 will have *paseos* on both sides to South Alamo. As for Phase 3 funding, the City has been asked to explore the possibility of paying for it through the 2017 bond. It was also suggested that the Westside Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) be explored as a funding option. Phase 4 funding will be delayed but the County is looking at ways to fund it.

Mr. Mitchell continued with the details of the current value engineered design. From Travis to Houston Street will have much narrower right-of-way than originally shown and the team will be working with Weston Urban to coordinate their effort with the new Frost Tower. The outdoor performance space will be reduced near the Alameda. The segment from Houston Street to Commerce Street is the location where the creek will widen. It will include a deck to connect to surface parking and the east and west banks will be combined to form a high bank *paseo* about 100 feet from the stage area of the outdoor performance area. The Dollar General property will now be available to increase the right of way in this area and open up the south façade with a small plaza. The Alameda will also have an entrance from this area connected to the small plaza. This area will be changed dramatically from the 70 percent design. The outdoor performance area will be relocated to the east side of the creek. The team is consulting with the Alameda architect.

The area from Commerce Street to Nueva Street will include a footbridge but not as it appears in the 70 percent design. It will be coordinated with the Araña property owners. A low bank *paseo* will be created to connect to the ongoing *paseo*. Stair access will be changed from the east low bank to the west high bank. In the segment from Nueva Street to Cesar Chavez Boulevard the low bank *paseo* will be eliminated until Phase 4 is completed. The high bank *paseo* will remain in the design. As much as possible, the *paseos* will be above the 2-year floodplain.

Changes to Phase 2 include eliminating the low bank *paseo* until Phase 4 is completed. The bridge will be reconstructed and there will be a transition between the channel reconfiguration at an angle with a temporary wall. Access to the Judson Lofts property along the high bank and access to the creek will be maintained. The wall will be rebuilt with some outlook areas from the street. A pavilion by the Pace property was removed. At Camp Street, a high bank *paseo* will continue and terracing is being reworked and coordinated with the museum designers. The encroachment of the terraces will not be allowed because the hydrology and hydraulics (H&H) evaluation does not permit it. South Alamo will be the end of the formal pedestrian experience and will have only flood control improvements. The sidewalks/*paseos* will be part of Phase 3 and will be vegetated area until funding is identified.

The storytelling drafts have been furnished to SARA and the County and will be made available to the subcommittee in the near future.

#### **OTHER ITEMS**

Frank Monaco with the proposed Little Italy San Antonio project, informed the committee about a showing of artifacts that will be at Columbus Hall this weekend as part of the annual spaghetti dinner. He also mentioned the City has granted some funds from the 2015-16 budget and some additional money will be contributed from the Westside Development Corporation to continue the master planning effort.

Tony Cañez, Bexar County, announced that the jailhouse near Casa Navarro is to be relocated to free up this area by the creek. A resolution of support was completed earlier this week and is being advanced through the channels for approval. The County is exploring an opportunity for a public-private partnership or significant development in this area.

Jerry Geyer mentioned there is a congressional coalition to advance the federal courthouse project on the creek.

Finally, Centro San Antonio will be making an announcement regarding the *Zona Cultural* during the October 21 timeframe.

**ITEMS TO PRESENT TO THE WCROC**

Not covered due to time constraints.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no comments from the public.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:01 a.m.