

Meeting Notes

August 9, 2018

SARA Board Room, 100 E Guenther Street

ATTENDING

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES:

Scott Baird, Bob Corbo, Cathey Meyer, Jerry Geyer, Patti Radle, Lourdes Galvan, Stella Tenorio-De La Garza

STAFF & CONSULTANTS:

Kristen Hansen, Lindsey Campbell, Anamaria Suescun-Fast, Denise Blaz, Monica Trevino-Ortega, Chad Yount, Carrie Brown, Steve Graham, Kerry Averyt, Tommy Mitchell, John Chisholm, Abigail Bush, Suzanne Scott, Steven Dean, Jim Ruiz, Tony Canez, Marianne Kumley

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Carol Cieszinski, Lori L. Jones, Robert Ramirez, Ken Erfurth, Chris McKnight, Marianna Lujan, Rosemary Geyer

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jerry Geyer, Co-chair, called the meeting to order at 8:39 a.m. and reviewed calendar items. He then asked

Mr. Geyer reiterated the revision in meeting protocol allowing for presenters to control when they want to take questions from the subcommittee. Questions from members of the public are limited to a Q&A session at the conclusion of the meeting.

CALENDAR ITEMS

- a. Tricentennial Artwork Information Session, August 9 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) offices
- b. Sivananda Yoga, August 13 from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the San Pedro Creek Culture Park
- c. Sivananda Yoga, August 20 from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the San Pedro Creek Culture Park
- d. Westside Creeks Oversight Committee, August 21 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) Board Room
- e. San Pedro Creek Subcommittee meeting, September 13 at 8:30 a.m. at the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) Board Room

APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES FROM June 14, 2018 and July 12, 2018

There was no quorum at the August 9, 2018 meeting; therefore the June and July minutes could not be approved. Minutes will be considered for approval at the next San Pedro Creek Meeting on September 13, 2018.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY UPDATE

Kerry Averyt, San Antonio River Authority, reported the following:

Design Update:

Phase 1.1 Update

- Construction team is working to complete punch list items by August 31 ... Items include adding additional rails for safety and improving the inlet lighting
- Installation of the terrazzo benches has been completed
- Work on arsenal pump station is scheduled for completion this week
- Mr. Averyt shared photos of the completed terrazzo bench installation at the manantial area and the limestone veneer that was added to the arsenal pump station
- The Santa Rosa pedestrian crossing has been identified as an area of concern due to the high speeds that vehicles come around the corner and the elevation of the Christopher Columbus Society parking lot that obstructs pedestrian views of oncoming traffic

- SARA is working with the city to address the Santa Rosa concern, signage has already been installed and teams are looking toward additional cautionary measures including rumble strips and a continuously flashing beacon in the area prior to the crosswalk
- Improvements to Camaron St. are being made as part of a city bond package – SARA is working to ensure improvements help make Camaron St. more pedestrian friendly and provide additional parking for the San Pedro Creek Culture Park

Phase 1.2 Update

- Utility relocation work is ongoing in Calder Alley as part of early work package 11
- Archeological mitigation is continuing in Calder Alley – crews are currently uncovering large volumes of artifacts and have dug down to a clay-like substance which slows the excavation process
- Drilled pier construction is ongoing on site of the former Dollar General building as part of early work package 12
- Construction has begun in Penner’s parking lot – parking for Penner’s customers has been relocated next to the Alameda Theater
- Mr. Averyt shared photos of construction at the site of the former Dollar General building

Commerce Street Closure

- Full closure of Commerce Street began on June 25 and will continue for three months
- The south half of the Commerce Street bridge has been demolished
- Additional signs and maps are being created to assist with pedestrian wayfinding during the closure
- Mr. Averyt shared photos of the Commerce Street area closure and what currently remains of the Commerce Street bridge
- Construction team has encountered issues with utilities – currently working around manholes that need to be relocated by AT&T
- Mr. Averyt shared a map that has been made available on the spcculturepark.com of the upcoming closures for Phase 1.2
- Overlap with the Commerce St. and Dolorosa St. closures is anticipated as well as overlap with a full closure of Houston St. and partial closure of Dolorosa St.
- Team is working to address concerns and minimize the impacts of the upcoming traffic closures

Phase 1.2 Design

- The 100 percent design plans were submitted on July 31
- Design review meetings with the subcommittee, Bexar County and the City of San Antonio are being scheduled
- Guaranteed maximum price submittal is set for September 25
- Presentation of design and guaranteed maximum price to Bexar County Commissioners Court will be in October

Partner Coordination

- Mr. Averyt shared photos of the new construction fence screening with San Pedro Creek Culture Park branding and partner logos
- The executive committee is scheduled to meet again on August 17, 2018

Questions and Comments

- Question was asked about what the speed limit on Santa Rosa is and whether SARA can work with the city for the speed limit to be lowered – speed limit is thought to be 35mph currently
- Question was asked about the possibility of adding a crosswalk specific stop light – SARA is working with the city to understand the feasibility of implementing this suggestion
- Mr. Geyer noted that himself, Mr. Averyt and SARA General Manager Suzanne Scott initially elevated the concern about Santa Rosa pedestrian crossing to Bexar County – as a result, Judge Wolff drafted a letter to the city identifying the crossing as an urgent problem and requested immediate action be taken
- Question was asked about whether there is a full closure of Dolorosa planned – current plan is for Dolorosa to be closed only partially

- Mr. Geyer suggested pushing traffic to Nueva during the street closures for better traffic flow
- Question was asked about planned Nueva St. improvements – Nueva St. improvements are scheduled to be included in Phase 1.3
- Mr. Geyer inquired about whether the delay in design is impacting construction – Mr. Averyt responded that due to the delay an additional early work package would likely be needed that would focus on the decking for the Commerce St. bridge and the Penner’s parking area
- Question about who was involved in the archeological excavations – excavations are being conducted by Raba Kistner in cooperation with San Antonio City archeologist Kay Hinds and the Texas Historical Commission

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE UPDATE

Tommy Mitchell, San Antonio River Authority, provided the following updates:

Plaza de Fundación Update

- Recent rain events have caused the bacteria levels in the creek to spike
- Water to the Plaza area is currently off as a result of bacteria levels - operations team will shut off water to the Plaza area as long as the bacteria levels remain high
- SARA team is using the conversation about wading in the Plaza to educate the community about storm water runoff and the importance of low impact development
- Plaza water is being managed for water quality sampling – samples are taken more frequently to determine if the bacterial levels are in an acceptable range
- Typically samples are taken every Wednesday and recorded on the SARA (sara-tx.org) and San Pedro Creek Culture Park (spcculturepark.com) websites
- Mr. Mitchell shared a graph of the recent bacteria levels
- Team is tracking trends – currently finding about a week between rain events and the dissipation of bacteria back to acceptable levels

Algae Management

- Team continues to treat isolated spots of algae with hydrogen peroxide through granule and liquid applications
- Aluminum sulfate will be the long-term solution to reduce the phosphorus levels and eliminate algae
- Initial application of aluminum sulfate was successful and has reduced the overall prevalence of algae
- SARA environmental science team pulled pre and post aluminum sulfate application readings to measure the effectiveness of the treatment
- Maintenance staff continue to physically remove algae from isolated areas
- Mr. Mitchell shared photos of staff applying hydrogen peroxide and how the aluminum sulfate treatment solution is being implemented

Motorized Vehicles

- SARA has been part of public stakeholder meetings regarding the use of motorized vehicles – including dockless scooters – on the paseos
- Park police will support city code sec. 22-4-1 which states that motorized vehicles are not allowed in city parks or on trails – including the San Pedro Creek Culture Park
- SARA sent a letter to local Segway companies reiterating the motorized vehicle ban in San Pedro Creek Culture Park which led to a great reduction of Segway traffic – exploring similar options with the emerging dockless scooter companies
- Ongoing coordination with dockless scooter companies to utilize geofencing to mark out the San Pedro Creek Culture Park – this would result in scooters slowing to a stop if they’re operating in a prohibited area
- Mr. Mitchell shared photos of tire marks from motorized scooters on the paseos – tire marks were cleaned by maintenance staff

Litter Management

- Redesign of the Houston Street grate inlet as discussed last meeting has been tabled and design will remain the same
- Reduction of algae has helped to mitigate the concern about the build up of debris on the existing Houston St. grate inlet
- SARA and partners are discussing opportunities for trash management in either the tunnel or pump pit

Questions and Comments

- Question about whether there is signage explaining plaza closures – operations team implements temporary signage measures in the Plaza area whenever water is turned off ... this information is also shared on San Pedro Creek Culture Park social assets and the website
- Question about whether similar spikes in bacteria are also observed in the San Antonio River – similar spikes are observed, but the recreational standard for the river is different because it is paddling only so it is not monitored as closely as San Pedro Creek
- Question about whether the public concern about algae has abated – concern is less prevalent due to the addition of signage and staff actively monitoring the algae
- Question about whether there is signage letting tourists know motorized vehicles are not allowed – this information is included in the existing park rules signs but there may be opportunity for additional signage
- Question about why motorized scooters would not be allowed on the paseos when bikes are not prohibited – enforcing a speed limit on the paseos for motorized vehicles would be difficult to enforce
- Question about where bikes are allowed on the River Walk – bicycles are currently allowed at both the Museum and Mission Reach

ART UPDATE

Carrier Brown, San Antonio River Authority, provided the following update about the art:

- Ms. Brown shared photos and information from recent conferences she attended focused on public art including the Americans for the Arts conference and the One Water Summit
- Ms. Brown presented information about the San Pedro Creek Culture Park at the Americans for the Arts conference in Denver
- Ms. Brown shared photos from the Picnic in the Park and Cool Jazz events that took place at San Pedro Creek Culture Park in July
- Monday evening yoga classes are continuing through August
- Heat has been a factor in planning and executing events – programming will be dialed back through August and will ramp up again when it gets cooler in the fall

Tricentennial Artwork

- Call to artists for Tricentennial artwork submissions is out – an informational meeting is scheduled for this evening, August 9
- Deadline for applications is August 30 at 2 p.m. – all professional artists are eligible to apply
- Artists on the existing prequalified list are eligible to apply, but applications are not limited to that list
- Total budget for artwork is \$425,000
- Up to three finalists will be selected to develop proposals
- Currently working on establishing the selection panel of art professionals from the community
- The selection panel will review all applications, select finalists, conduct interviews and make a recommendation of a final selection to Bexar County Commissioners Court
- The RFQ is posted on the sppculturepark.com and sara-tx.org websites
- Ms. Brown shared the artwork goals as listed in the RFQ, which include commemorating the celebration of the 300th anniversary of Bexar County and San Antonio while celebrating San Pedro Creek's history and culture
- Ms. Brown shared the schedule as included in the RFQ, which lists anticipated approval of the selected artist by Bexar County Commissioners Court in November

Holiday Season Programming

- Working to create a special event at San Pedro Creek Culture Park on December 8 celebrating multicultural holiday traditions
- Working with an artist to create a temporary art installation that would support the holiday event with light based artwork that will be on display mid-November through mid-January

Questions and Comments

- Mr. Geyer asked whether there is information about who is attending the events being held at the Culture Park – no formal information has been collected, but it is thought to be a mix of locals and tourists
- Mr. Geyer asked whether residents near Museum Reach attend the events held along the river – no formal information has been collected, but strong attendance from area residents has been indicated
- Mr. Geyer asked whether Bexar County will make the ultimate selection of the Tricentennial artwork artist – Bexar County will make the final selection of an artist taking into account the recommendation from the selection panel
- Mr. Geyer asked whether the RFQ includes any restriction on the size, specifically the height, of the artwork – there are no size restrictions or limitations listed in the RFQ

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Monica Trevino-Ortega, San Antonio River Authority, provided the following update about communications initiatives:

Community Recognition

- Engineering News Record recognized San Pedro Creek Culture Park among its 2018 Best Project awards – the park was recognized as having the best landscaping among 121 entries
- A photo of the San Pedro Creek Culture Park will appear in the August edition of Engineering News Record magazine
- San Pedro Creek Culture Park also received a Citation of Honor Award from the Texas Society of Architects after receiving a nomination from the San Antonio AIA chapter
- Ms. Trevino-Ortega reviewed the schedule for the Phase 1.2 subcommittee design workshop, which will be held August 28 at the SARA Boardroom from 12 to 2 p.m.
- SARA will also be distributing an electronic survey to all subcommittee members in August

Questions and Comments

- Question about the status of publicity programs – SARA and The DeBerry Group are continuing to do outreach focusing on app downloads, building social media participation and growing awareness of both the ongoing construction project and the open park
- San Pedro Creek Culture Park has also been generating interest from several local community groups – Institute for Texan Cultures and Brooks recently toured the site – the San Antonio Board of Realtors and the Junior League have reached out to schedule tours

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND SUBCOMMITTEE

- Carol from Casa Navarro inquired as to whether the city is getting comments indicating that tourists are finding the San Pedro Creek Culture Park – a city representative was not present to respond, but the SARA team is working with Visit San Antonio, San Antonio Tourism Council, the San Antonio Hotel & Lodging Association, Centro and the World Heritage Council to ensure information is being distributed to visitors
- Question from Ms. De La Garza about how the team is capturing increased social media activity around the San Pedro Creek Culture Park – content is being captured through tagging of the San Pedro Creek handles and hashtags
- Ms. De La Garza and Mr. Geyer requested periodic updates with metrics from the website and social media channels

ITEMS TO PRESENT TO Westside Creeks Oversight Committee:

- A subcommittee meeting recap will be provided to the Westside Creeks Oversight Committee.

ADJOURN

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:29 a.m. The motion carried unanimously.¹

¹ Text in bold italics indicates a decision made by the subcommittee.