

Meeting Notes
February 14, 2019
SARA Board Room, 100 E Guenther Street

ATTENDING

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES:

Scott Baird, Marilyn Bradley, Bob Cordo, Jerry Geyer, Mark Penner, Deb Bolner-Prost, Stella Tenorio-De La Garza, Benjamin Perry

STAFF & CONSULTANTS: Carrie Brown, Lindsey Campbell, Denise Blaz, Steven Dean, Steve Graham, Jeff Mitchell, Austin Snell, Anamaria Suescun-Fast, Chad Yount, Abigail Bush, Kerry Averyt

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Richard Garcia, Anthony Cortez, Yvonne Cordova, Rosemary Geyer, Robert Ramirez, Nota Shever, Don Matthis, Jenna S., Belinda Gavallos, Kathleen Trenchard, Charles H.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jerry Geyer, co-chair, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. Mr. Geyer reviewed subcommittee business and then asked for the subcommittee members and audience to introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES FROM January 10, 2019

There was no quorum at the February 14, 2019 meeting; therefore the January meeting notes could not be approved. Notes will be considered for approval at the next San Pedro Creek subcommittee meeting on March 14, 2019.

SUBCOMMITTEE BUSINESS

Meeting Format

Mr. Geyer referenced changes in the meeting format aimed at increasing attendance and participation. Changes include a later start time, trying to keep the meeting to less than 1.5 hours, moving subcommittee business to the top of the agenda and limiting the time of each briefing. Ms. Trevino-Ortega noted that she added a timeline to the agenda.

Meeting Notes

In regards to the meeting notes, Mr. Geyer noted he would like the meeting notes to continue to err on the side of being very detailed. Mr. Baird expressed his appreciation for the notes being available early online. Mr. Geyer asked whether any of the decision makers and funders at Bexar County read the minutes. There was no one from Bexar County available to answer this question.

Mr. Geyer asked about the calendar items – Ms. Trevino-Ortega responded that they were included in the end of the agenda.

ART UPDATE

Carrie Brown, San Antonio River Authority, provided the following updates:

Events

- San Pedro Creek Culture Park is hosting its first big event of the year, Get Fit, on Saturday, Feb. 23 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Get Fit event will include free exercise classes, healthy food and fitness demonstrations, vendor booths, giveaways and information about community resources. Get Fit will take place on Camaron St. between Travis St. and Martin St. with classes on the boardwalk
- Art program information will be presented to Commissioners Court on Feb. 26
- Regular yoga classes will resume in March
- Working with freelance writer Don Mathis to create a Writers Take a Walk event on April 13
- SARA team is looking into what the one year anniversary celebration in May will entail
- Planning is underway for regular monthly tours and workshops for Phase 1.1 including photography workshops, drum circles and more

- Information about San Pedro Creek Culture Park events is available on the spcculturepark.com and disseminated through the e-newsletter
- Working with the city on Camaron St. construction schedule to ensure there will be no disruption to events along Phase 1.1

Questions

- Mr. Geyer asked what art program information will be brought to Commissioners Court on Feb. 26 – Ms. Brown responded that the tricentennial artwork would be presented to Commissioners Court.
- Mr. Geyer asked whether Feb. 26 will be the date that the artist selected to complete the tricentennial artwork will be announced – Ms. Brown responded yes, that is the plan; Mr. Canez agreed.
- Mr. Geyer asked whether the subcommittee will see what the tricentennial artwork will look like – Ms. Brown responded that the tricentennial artwork selection will be shared at the next subcommittee meeting
- Mr. Geyer noted that Scott Huddleston at the San Antonio Express-News has had Bexar County and Commissioners Court added to his duties and has been following San Pedro Creek Culture Park, so he imagines information about the tricentennial artwork will come out in the media

Artwork Opportunities

- Planning to do a second temporary artwork installation in celebration of the one year anniversary – the call will go to local artists on the prequalified list
- Call to artists for Phase 1.2 opportunities will be released soon, these opportunities include the water wall in March and the murals in May
- The interpretive plan will be completed in May and will guide the scope of work for the mural opportunities in Phase 1.2

Questions

- Mr. Baird clarified that the call for artists for the Phase 1.2 opportunities will go to the existing prequalified list – Ms. Brown confirmed that was correct
- Mr. Geyer asked to be reminded of what the water wall opportunity entails – Ms. Brown responded that the water wall will include programmable LED lights with the opportunity for the artist to create an interactive component with the lights
- Mr. Geyer asked whether it would be possible to have audio elements as well – Ms. Brown responded there would be but the artist would need to be mindful of the sound of water
- Ms. Bolner-Prost asked whether the SARA team could be assured that the lights would work in the water environment – Mr. Averyt responded that SARA would get a confirmation in writing from the vendor that the lighting would be approved for an aquatic environment
- Mr. Mathis asked whether there could be a viewing platform at the outlet structure to allow people to see water rushing out – Mr. Averyt responded that the outlet structure is in Phase 4 and there is a basic design established but actual components are still a couple years down the road; Ms. Scott added that having a viewing platform at that location may pose a safety issue
- A member of the audience asked where the water wall is in respect to Casa Navarro – Ms. Brown responded that the water wall is next to Penner’s parking lot between Houston St. and Commerce St.

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Monica Trevino-Ortega, San Antonio River Authority, provided the following updates:

- Ms. Trevino-Ortega wished the subcommittee a Happy Valentine’s Day, noting that SARA loves and appreciates all the subcommittee members

Interpretive Plan

- The next interpretive plan committee meeting will take place on Feb. 27 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- Interpretive plan consultant Anne is conducting individual meetings for history, ecological, design team and interpretive signage

San Pedro Creek Outreach

- Judge Wolff and Commissioner Rodriguez will be joined by media on a tour of Phase 1.2 construction tomorrow
- Four spots along Phase 1.2 have been identified for photo opportunities and interview locations

- New personal protective equipment, including hard hats, was purchased for Phase 1.2 construction tours – Ms. Trevino-Ortega shared a photo of the new hard hat with San Pedro Creek Culture Park branding
- A Phase 1.2 stakeholder mixer will be scheduled sometime in early March
- A public meeting for Phase 1.2 will be scheduled sometime in late March, in coordination with Bexar County
- Phase 1.2 construction tours will begin in March, with public tours occurring quarterly
- Ms. Trevino-Ortega shared the San Pedro Creek Culture Park rack brochure cards that will be distributed to area hotels and attractions
- Ms. Trevino-Ortega shared the Phase 1.2 fact sheet that will be used for construction tours

Social Media Metrics

- Social media metrics have been strong over the third quarter, including an increasing in following on Facebook (131 new followers), Twitter (45 new followers) and Instagram (83 new followers)
- Ms. Trevino-Ortega shared a user post from Illume that had nearly 5,000 engagements

Questions

- Ms. Bolner-Prost noted that she loved seeing the rack brochure cards and the fact sheet and asked whether they are already in print, since there is now parking available at the San Pedro Creek Culture Park – Ms. Trevino-Ortega noted that parking information is included on the collateral materials
- Ms. Bolner-Prost asked for metrics regarding the mobile app, noting that it is a fantastic educational tool that needs more promotion – Ms. Trevino-Ortega responded that she could include app statistics in her next update
- Ms. De La Garza asked where the brochure rack cards will be made available – Ms. Trevino-Ortega responded that they would be available at all hotels and tourist attractions with brochure racks and that subcommittee members can pick some up at the SARA offices or request delivery through her office
- Mr. Geyer asked whether there is still a visitors center in Alamo Plaza – Ms. Bolner-Prost responded that there is – Mr. Geyer suggested the brochure rack card should be available there as well
- Mr. Geyer suggested setting time to connect with downtown stakeholders, including tour guides, to ensure that San Pedro Creek Culture Park is included in the downtown tours – he noted, that the subcommittee does not want the park filled with tours as it is intended for the San Antonio community, but it doesn't hurt to have the exposure – Ms. Trevino-Ortega responded that she is in talked with the World Heritage sites about their tourism ambassador program
- Mr. Geyer commented that Bexar County's Betty Buche had put together a group of historical site representation in the inner city in an effort to promote historical sites in groupings rather than individual opportunities to maximize exposure, noting that there are a lot of opportunities for San Pedro Creek Culture Park to be a part of – Ms. Trevino-Ortega noted that this is just the kick off and there is a lot more in store as part of the campaign for continuing promotion
- Ms. Bolner-Prost asked whether there is an estimated number of people who have visited San Pedro Creek Culture Park over the past year – Ms. Trevino-Ortega responded that she is working on determining that number.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY UPDATE

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

- Mr. Averyt shared the updated phase map

Phase 1.1 Update

- Additional fabrication is needed on the additional railing at Travis Gatehouse – installation is anticipated to begin in late February
- Pricing has been received and approved for the tunnel inlet lighting, trash screen at the inlet pump station and the Santa Rose pedestrian crossing safety measures

Phase 1.2 Construction Update

- Water and gas work in Early Work Package 11 is ongoing on Dolorosa St. – as a result the three north lanes on Dolorosa St. will be closed for 6-8 weeks – the construction only necessitated the closure of two lanes, but in

coordination with the City of San Antonio the consensus was that it would be more disruptive to leave additional lanes on Dolorosa open, so Dolorosa will be restricted to one lane while the work is completed

- Heavy civil construction is ongoing in Early Work Package 12, including drilled shaft installations between Commerce St. and Nueva St.
- Concrete is currently being poured as part of Early Work Package 12 in the Houston St. to Commerce St. block
- Mr. Averyt shared photos of Phase 1.2, including photos taken from the Continental Building, in the channel and from Commerce St.
- Traffic is moving smoothly on Commerce St. – traffic seems to be opting to go around and avoid the work area
- Construction crews discovered a conflict on the west side of the bridge, which will necessitate another full closure of Commerce St. sometime in June – the temporary shoring that was installed for the Commerce St. bridge was put inside the footprint of a CES unit, so it will need to be moved in order for the CES unit to be installed
- The City of San Antonio requested that the full closure be pushed until after Father’s Day weekend
- During the full closure, construction crews will relocate temporary shoring and also take the opportunity to finish paving Commerce St.
- The conflict will not impact the schedule for the full opening of Commerce St., which is still anticipated to occur in October
- Mr. Averyt shared additional photos of construction activity in Phase 1.2 and Early Work Packages 11 and 12

Questions

- Mr. Geyer asked what the conflict does to the schedule for the replacement of the bridge itself – Mr. Averyt responded that the schedule will not be impacted and the full opening is anticipated for October
- Mr. Geyer asked where the conflict is – Mr. Averyt responded that the temporary shoring issue is on one side of the bridge
- Mr. Geyer asked where the CES unit footprint is and whether it is a large manhole – Mr. Yount responded that the excavation is on the west side of the bridge, which will allow teams to complete the CES excavation and installation work while the bridge is being built – the excavation for the CES unit is approximately 12 feet by 20 feet in size and 30 feet deep.
- Mr. Geyer asked what the purpose of the CES unit is – Mr. Averyt responded that it is a low impact development (LID) feature that removes trash from the creek – there are five CES units in Phase 1.1 and there are six or seven planned for Phase 1.2 – Mr. Yount added that the CES unit in discussion will be the second largest to date, the largest is the one on Houston St., which is the size of a small apartment
- Mr. Yount noted that pedestrian access will be maintained during the full Commerce St. closure to minimize the disruption

Partner Coordination

- A kick off meeting was held for Phase 1.3 and Phase 2 design on Jan. 17 – design guidelines have been established and direction from Judge Wolff is to ensure that these phases are more naturalistic
- Value engineering efforts in the existing Phase 1.3 and Phase 2 plans is ongoing
- World renowned Mexican architect Mario Schjetnan will be engaged to review and consult on the design
- The desired timeline calls for design completion in October 2019, this timeline will be reevaluated following the design charette with Mr. Schjetnan
- The ultimate goal is to be in a position to complete San Pedro Creek Culture Park construction within the next 2 to 2.5 years
- Coordination with SAISD on their planned administration building is ongoing
- Camaron Street construction is ongoing – the City of San Antonio has provided the Sundt Davila team with plans at 95 percent
- The Travis St. to Houston St. block of Camaron St. is set to be completed in May in line with the Frost Tower opening – the remainder of Camaron St. has an anticipated completion date of late winter 2019
- Design coordination with the Alameda Theater is ongoing with some groundwater treatment activities
- Design coordination with Texas Public Radio is complete, the Sundt Davila team continues to coordinate with the TPR construction team on demolition and construction

- Construction proposals are under review for the City of San Antonio's Commerce St. project with an anticipated construction start date of May/June – the SARA team is working with COSA on planned construction activities in order to minimize the impact to the public
- SARA is ready for another coordination meeting with the UTSA downtown campus expansion team and will look to bring the design teams together in late February
- Coordination with the federal courthouse is ongoing – Sundt Davila is maintaining its existing GSA lease agreement to use the space adjacent to the courthouse for staging
- The Executive Committee will be meeting on Feb. 27 to discuss the path forward

Questions

- Ms. Bradley asked what Mr. Averyt meant by groundwater treatment activities – Mr. Averyt responded that investigations in the Alameda area uncovered contaminants in the ground water there, so it has to either be treated or caught in containers and hauled off the site, SARA engaged a company called Rain for Rent to bring in tanks and filtration systems and Abigail Bush worked with the TCEQ in order to get a permit for the groundwater to be treated and released in the creek; Mr. Averyt noted that this work will save millions of dollars in the long run
- Ms. Bradley asked for how long the groundwater treatment will be needed – Mr. Averyt responded that the groundwater will be treated through summer 2020, at which point the channel will be built up to be water tight through that area. Once the walls are up and the channel bottom is in, the contaminated water will be sealed off from the creek.
- Mr. Averyt noted that the City of San Antonio environmental department is continuously monitoring the groundwater treatment work – Mr. Geyer commented that by looking at maps from the 1800s and early 1900s there were a number of different buildings in that general location, including a power plant and it is something UTSA will have to look into as well for their downtown construction – Mr. Averyt responded that SARA will be happy to share the information they have from their investigations with the UTSA team
- Ms. Bradley asked whether the CES units improve water quality – Mr. Averyt responded that CES units have minimal water quality improvements and are primarily geared toward removing larger pieces of trash
- Mr. Geyer noted that it is going to be important that the SARA team take a much more active role with UTSA and that it is great to have a UTSA representative on the subcommittee as the partnership between UTSA and SARA will continue for some time
- Mr. Geyer asked whether there is a date for the ceremonial groundbreaking for the federal courthouse – Mr. Yount responded that he has heard they will have shovels in the ground around April or May and that the Sundt Davila team is in coordination with the GSA

CALENDER ITEMS

Mr. Geyer reviewed the following calendar items:

- a. Phase 1.2 Media Tour, February 15 at 10 a.m. at the San Pedro Creek Culture Park Phase 1.2 site
 - b. Get Fit, February 23 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the San Pedro Creek Culture Park
 - c. San Pedro Creek Culture Park Executive Committee meeting, February 27
 - d. San Pedro Creek Subcommittee meeting, March 14 at 9 a.m. at the San Antonio River Authority Board Room
- Mr. Geyer added that Casa Navarro would be celebrating the birthday of Jose Antonio Navarro on March 2 – a simple affair with some entertainment and snacks
 - Mr. Geyer also added that there will be a Bexar County courthouse event dedicated to the natives of San Antonio – the presidio families and Canary Islanders on March 9
 - Mr. Geyer asked whether anyone knew when the Ruby City Art Museum is supposed to open – Mr. Baird responded that he believes it would occur in October 2019
 - Mr. Geyer also noted that Mrs. Geyer would be celebrating a milestone birthday on February 20

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND SUBCOMMITTEE

- Mr. Geyer asked the UTSA representative to provide an overview of what the UTSA downtown campus adjacent to the creek will look like, as well as an overview of the personnel involved in the UTSA downtown campus expansion
- Mr. Geyer noted that he attended a UTSA master planning session on Jan. 31 on Guadalupe St. Mr. Canez from Bexar County, Jerry and Belinda from Casa Navarro and Anita Shaver were also in attendance. Mr. Geyer noted the session allowed for great connections to be made with UTSA. UTSA Provost Dr. Espy is interested in getting involved in the downtown community and is working on putting together meetings with SARA.
- XX noted that Mario Schjetnan will likely be in San Antonio sometime in late February or early March to assist with the design process.
- Ms. Shaver asked whether the public will have the opportunity to sit in on the sessions with Mr. Schjetnan – Ms. Scott responded that the design team sessions will not be open to the public, but what has been done in the past is that Mr. Schjetnan will return later in the process to debrief and will meet with Commissioners Court and the subcommittee at that time
- Mr. Geyer commented that when Mr. Schjetnan came in on Phase 1.1 it was in response to a high level of interest in where the creek project was going and that he had a calming effect on the discussions and results. Mr. Schjetnan attended the grand opening and was happy with the results.
- Mr. Geyer asked whether the San Pedro Creek Culture Park still has a landscape architect – Mr. Averyt responded that Munoz has a landscape architect on staff who joined the team before Phase 1.1 was completed
- Ms. Trevino-Ortega commented that if Mr. Schjetnan’s schedule allows for him to be in San Antonio at the end of February there may be opportunity for a Phase 1.2 subcommittee tour with Mario, or the March subcommittee meeting could be substituted with a Phase 1.2 tour
- Mr. Ramirez commented that the Westside Creeks Oversight Committee would be meeting on the intended displacement on egrets next Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in the SARA Board Room – Mr. Geyer responded that he has personal observations on the egret displacement and that it is a subject that needs to be addressed.
- Mr. Geyer asked the Weston Urban representative what the opening date of the Frost Tower is – the representative responded that Frost’s lease starts on July 1
- Mr. Geyer asked how far along the Frost Tower construction is – the representative responded that the exterior of the building is near completion, the exterior of the garage is being worked on, as well as landscaping on the promenade along Houston St. and Frost is in the process of completing their interior finish out
- Ms. Shaver asked for clarification, noting that Highline architect Robert Hammond came to review Phase 1.1 designs and provided advice in a public session and asking whether Mr. Schjetnan was in San Antonio at the same time – Ms. Scott responded that Mr. Schjetnan was here later. Mr. Geyer clarified that Mr. Hammond visited San Antonio at the invitation of the design team to look at the design for San Pedro Creek Culture Park because Highline was so successful while Mr. Schjetnan provided advice from his perspective as a long practicing architect
- Ms. Shaver noted that she would like to see the public invited in to the sessions with Mr. Schjetnan in order to grow interest in and excitement around San Pedro Creek Culture Park – Mr. Geyer responded that the subcommittee will take it under advisement, but it is ultimately up to the county and that the subcommittee always advocates for full and open discourse

ITEMS TO PRESENT TO Westside Creeks Oversight Committee:

- The next Westside Creeks Oversight Committee meeting will be dedicated to egret displacement discussion

ADJOURN

Mr. Geyer adjourned the meeting at 10:10 a.m.