

**Meeting Notes  
June 13, 2019  
SARA Board Room, 100 E Guenther Street**

**ATTENDING**

*SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES:*

Marilyn Bradley, Cathey Meyer, Jerry Geyer, Deb Bolner-Prost, Stella Tenorio-De La Garza, Eddie Aaron Romero and Josh Gerken

*STAFF & CONSULTANTS:* Kerry Averyt, Steve Graham, Kristen Hansen, Monica Trevino-Ortega, Marisa Andrade

*MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:* Rosemary Geyer, Mark E. Liberatore, Belinda Gavallos, Jen Enfurth, Robert Ramirez, Nita Shevar

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Jerry Geyer, co-chair, stated at 9:00 a.m. that a quorum was not present but Stella Tenorio-De La Garza arrived so Mr. Geyer called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Mr. Geyer reviewed subcommittee business.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES FROM March 14, 2019 and May 9, 2019 (There wasn't a meeting in April due to the construction tour – so no meeting minutes to offer for April. )**

Comments: spell check is needed to be done (Deb Bolner-Prost)

***Motion was made by Deb Bolner-Prost and seconded by Cathey Meyer to approve meeting notes from March 14, 2019 and May 9, 2019. The motion carried unanimously. 1***

**SUBCOMMITTEE BUSINESS**

- Slight change in agenda – UTSA design and construction presentation moved up.

**Briefing on UTSA Downtown Expansion - Master Plan**

*Josh Gerken from UTSA, provided the following presentation:*

- Established in 1969, starting with 9 degree plans now 180 programs with 32,000 students with 2028 projection of 45,000 students.
- Local assets for downtown campus: I-10 and San Pedro Creek.
- Partnerships and collaborations needed to strengthen relationships since UTSA feels responsibility in growing Downtown. Rendering of vision: need to continue to partner, community outreach with SARA, SA City and TxDot.
- Westside Crossing – vision to create open and inviting campus (using Paseos, local art and culture) that is developing and evolving.

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

For more information, contact: Monica Trevino-Ortega at [mtrevino-ortega@sara-tx.org](mailto:mtrevino-ortega@sara-tx.org)

### **Questions**

- Ms. Meyer asked the estimated number of students/residents of the downtown campus – Mr. Gerken responded that is it around 15,000 students (ongoing increase with more grad students living on campus). Steve Graham with SARA: SARA is working with UTSA and their design team so there's a seamless design and Suzanne Scott (SARA General Manager) wrote a letter to UTSA President to encourage green infrastructure.
- Ms. Bradley asked how vehicles are being handled in the area with parking and traffic – Mr. Gerken and his UTSA colleagues answered that they are working with the City on creating parking structures which result in pedestrian friendly/slow traffic lanes.
- Ms. Bradley stated her concern about how expensive downtown parking will be for students' budget - Mr. Gerken and his colleagues stated that UTSA has a partnership with VIA (San Antonio city bus system) to provide lower fares to students. Marketing campaign will begin in the fall.
- Mr. Romero asked for details of the community engagement process – Mr. Gerken stated that the Master Plan will have several sessions to engage with the National Latino Community Builders and set aside 2 months to work with groups.
- Mr. Geyer mentioned that UTSA has a long term relationship with San Pedro Creek and speaking on behalf of the community, not as a SPC committee co-chair, he is hoping that the streets around the UTSA campus will not be heavily dependent on cars, trucks and buses and connect the Westside (especially around the hemisphere).
- Mr. Geyer asked Mr. Gerken and his UTSA colleagues if their draft phase is willing to accept any changes because interaction between the two groups is important. Mr. Gerken was in agreement and the Master Plan is currently not in its final stage to proceed.

### **DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY UPDATE**

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

- Mr. Averyt shared the updated phase map as Mr. Geyer stated the protocol of allowing the presenter to speak, then ask questions between the break of the current design and the future concept.
- Mr. Averyt announced Chad Yount, from Sundt-Davila, was promoted to Area Manager But will continue to be involved in the planning phase. Ryan Silbernagel, who was part of the Project from the beginning, will now be the Project Manager for construction. Will be a seamless transition and Chad is still involved in the higher level Phase 1.3 and Phase 2 moving forward.

### **Phase 1.1 Update**

- Not much to report, couple of activities – a lot of the concrete tile at the manantial and benches have become delaminated. All concrete tile at the manantial have been removed and the wall has been painted blue. Testing tiles for cause then replace.
- Positive feedback on the installation of the floating islands anchored with cinder blocks – add color and helps with water quality (especially downstream).

### **Questions**

None

### **Phase 1.2 Design and Construction Updates**

- Concrete pours have been impacted by all the rain fall.
- Took tour with UTSA to show progress on the design (west bank above Alameda and then around Commerce street).
- Commerce Street will be fully closed beginning July 29 through mid-September. We will complete work in October, but the street will not be fully opened because the Commerce Street Bond Project will begin work as soon as we are finished.
- Dolorosa street bridge – traffic is reduced to one lane until Fiesta 2020.
- Houston/Commerce block and Alameda gardens – not a lot done but design is taking shape. Will start again next week due to rainfall.
- North of Nueva Street – demo of old channel wall, starting to see shape of park.

### **Questions**

- Ms. Bradley asked about the arsenic levels in the soil, where is it being taken – Mr. Averyt responded that all soil being excavated is classified as type 2 non-hazardous so the soil is taken to a landfill.

### **Phase 1.3 and Phase 2 Design Update**

- Phase 1.3 and 2 Renderings will be taken to Commissioner's Court this week.
- Includes Nueva Gate – gatehouse simple, cross over to high bank paseo, Graham street bridge was to be eliminated but US Marshals requested accessibility to Courthouse so it will be rebuilt.
- North bank – larger concrete area, parking garage will be repurposed on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor with a pedestrian connection).
- East bank – removing covered culverts – leaving that covered as a green space, acquired property (wetlands), pulling gate away from street.
- Camp Street – North view – paseo is coming along the east bank.
- Covered area to Guadalupe Street with observations deck.
- These areas are subject to change – basic footprint.
- Mr. Geyer reminded the audience that this is just the preview before the formal review of Commissioner's Court. There's still the ability to add, or to comment or provide recommendations. All allowed, which is a good thing. The Commissioners will give their decision on June 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Questions**

- Ms. Bradley – the Graham Street bridge, the floating islands – will the rocks create a slime problem? Mr. Averyt – Hope not, trying to work with the ecosystem.
- Ms. Bradley – will milkweed be planted along the water banks? Butterflies need a water source. Mr. Averyt deferred to the design team – Plant design is not done yet, milkweed is a desire and interest.
- Ms. Meyer – Guadalupe and South Alamo area – as development changes, will those business owners have access to the creek? Mr. Averyt – some requirements and developments are being done with the connections in order to accommodate.
- Tony from the County – committee is in place to give Commissioners some directions in the planning. The renderings are still rough. Eddie – the ramps will be fully accessible. Drawings look hot and not much shade but please keep in mind the renderings are not finalized.

- Mr. Geyer – where in 1.3 does it drop down to the creek? (Speaking on behalf of Casa Navarro – not as committee member) High level of granule, consensus that the space between the creek and the historical landmark – will the county infrastructure allow access and connectivity. Because if that changes, the Red Building will not be coming down for many years and UTSA will not be ready for years. So will be West bank construction to accommodate access. Has that changed? Mr. Averyt – The retaining walls will be removed and will impact the connections between businesses and public.
- Mr. Geyer – can the committee get a commitment from the city and/or the state (and any changes in legislations) even if not implemented in 4 years? Mr. Geyer reminded everyone that this is not a change but a refinement of 1.3 and 2 (flood control) guidance from the County.
- Any other questions from the committee regarding Phase 1.3 - none

## **Phase 2 Renderings**

Mr. Geyer – Should there be a formal statement from the committee to the Commissioners? He would not be able to attend but suggested that someone needs to make a statement.

Ms. Meyer – What kind of statement?

Mr. Geyer – Example: at this point in time, the committee feels the renderings are fine. Is that okay for the Committee?

Ms. Bolner-Prost – We did review the design and find it okay to make a statement. Do we need to meet with San Antonio River Authority regarding any issues? Can the committee provide feedback?

Mr. Geyer – doesn't seem to be any issues but we can identify any concerns and address as we go along. San Antonio River Authority could write up a paragraph and read to Commissioners.

Tony from County – the agenda item for SPC at Commissioner's Court will be time certain

Mr. Averyt – will Commissioners ask for a statement from the subcommittee?

Mr. Geyer – Judge will ask

Ms. Bradley – a written statement will take time to create

Ms. Tenorio – DeLaGarza – it could be a short written paragraph

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Mr. Romero – Any property or property owners that we are not seeing to cause any headaches? Future challenges? Mr. Averyt – there's a concern of Bill Miller's. Facing Santa Rosa Street, access on Graham Street and Milmo lofts. The outreach team, with Monica in late July and a Stake Holders meeting in Fall plus a public meeting next month (June) will hopefully address any concerns or challenges.

Mr. Geyer – Committee needs to send message to Commissioners. Steve – what is the status of the Federal Courthouse design?

Mr. Averyt – partner coordination with SAISD, Camaron Street Construction – the block of Travis to Houston Street is complete but remainder to begin in late 2019. Alameda Theater and Texas Public Radio – the coordination is ongoing. Commerce Street – start of construction is postponed until October. Work along UTSA is ongoing. Federal Courthouse design and construction coordination is still ongoing.

### **Questions**

- Ms. Bolner-Prost – concern about mitigating flood regulations  
Mr. Averyt – design and construction will help capture runoff (retention ponds with low impact development)

### **Questions from Audience**

- Nita Shaver – comment – With design around the university, thinking of the students, could the design of the creek have an outdoor area for students – sit in the shade and relax or a basketball court – up and around from the water. Mr. Geyer – please give feedback to UTSA
- Nita Shaver – With the bench on the walkway on slide 9, there is so little shade. Will trees be brought in? Also would be a great place for readers to have a place to sit in the shade. Mr. Geyer – San Antonio does provide super hot summers but in the new development: need to find types of trees to provide shade and don't "shed" into the creek water. Please give your ideas to Kerry Averyt.
- Nita Shaver – Will there be milkweed planted since the creek is a bird and butterfly destination. Mr. Geyer – the native plants in the project are chosen specifically for pollinating.
- Alyssa – comment – Thank you for time and presentation. Is there security around the creek? Hotels don't promote and haven't heard any conversations about it. Mr. Averyt – the Park Police do patrol the area every day.

### **ART UPDATE – Creek Lines at Plaza de Fundación**

*Stuart Allen, Artist with Bridge Projects, provided the following updates:*

#### **Plaza de Fundación Artwork**

- Mr. Allen - As a reminder, the project site for the artwork is the upper level of the Plaza de Fundación.
- Mr. Geyer – This is a gift from Bexar County, not a SPCC project. This is just a briefing to inform committee.
- Mr. Allen - Approval from Commissioners on June 4<sup>th</sup>. Received input and incorporated the design which resulted in a stronger plan than previous proposal. Net result is excellent.
- Mr. Allen stated that the general concept is that the shape of the artwork is the view of San Pedro Creek (line of the creek flow of where the park meets the river). It is 5 pieces and 30 poles to show each decade.
- Mr. Allen showed at the North end of the creek 5 profiles (each segment repeats 6 times), each straight piece has one angle that merges into another, another view shows unusual shape creating a moving and compelling dynamic.
- Looking west, the canopy creates a watershed with the rain which then drains through

- the cut into the Plaza. Water hits and drops into the ground plain not causing a pool.
- Mr. Allen stated that the ground plane uses the canopy as a watershed. Quartz material is used along the San Pedro Creek. Provides a nice color and quite visible from all points. The polished stainless steel will be resilient and last. Had a meeting with San Antonio River Authority, who had no concerns with the materials that will be used.
- Mr. Allen's renderings showed that on each of the poles there's historical information about that particular decade etched into the base of the pole. Educational component (with early feedback from SARA educational programming) will include an outreach education program.

**Questions**

- Ms. Bradley was inspired by the shade but had a concern about the use of concrete – it tends to reflect light and caught by the mirror in the canopy which could create a hotspot. Mr. Allen responded that the matte surface of the concrete surface will not cause a reflection, the only way the mirror surface will affect anything would be if the light becomes a direct light. The project at Hemisphere has the same concept and hasn't shown any problems.
- Ms. Bradley asked if the project will be lit at night. Mr. Allen – yes, power is there and they plan to purchase the fixtures of mixed colors (some cool and warm tones) which the green quartz will also reflect color. Light and the cut in the canopy will change throughout the day.
- Mr. Geyer asked what the timeline was to finish the project. Mr. Allen stated he hoped to wrap and install everything by August 2020 to coincide the opening with Bexar County events
- Mr. Geyer asked how deep will be poles be. Mr. Allen stated that the poles will be placed into 30 plates and need a leveling mechanism.
- Ms. Bradley asked if the project will be wind resistant due to concerns lately with high winds. Mr. Allen responded that the engineer accounted for that and met all the architectural standards resulting in no initial concerns.

**San Pedro Creek Culture Park - CreekFest**

- Ms. Trevino-Ortega mentioned that Ms. Carrie Brown was attending a conference as a representative of San Antonio River Authority.
- CreekFest was held on June 8<sup>th</sup> despite 100 degree heat, had about 200 attendees
- Theme of sustainability was warmly received.
- 13 exhibitors (Cibolo Nature Center, Edwards Aquifer, Alamo Heights Junior High DI Team, Botanical Gardens and UTSA among others), 3 food trucks and art making with kid friendly activities along with a live band and HEB provided recycling bins

**Questions**

- Mr. Geyer asked whether San Pedro Creek Culture Park would provide more shade for future CreekFests. Ms. Trevino-Ortega stated that there will be more shade accommodations for the following years.

**CALENDER ITEMS**

Mr. Geyer reviewed the following calendar items:

- a. June 18 – Commissioner’s Court Presentation
- b. June 21 – International Yoga Day at San Pedro Creek
- c. July 11 – Next Subcommittee Meeting

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND SUBCOMMITTEE**

- Mr. Geyer stated that San Pedro Creek won a national award in Washington D.C. in May and there was no coverage for that, noted that Scott Huddleston was in the audience today and will speak to Monica about this.
- A woman in the audience expressed concern about working downtown around the creek and if there was security present especially after hours – Mr. Geyer responded that park police currently patrol the area.

**ADJOURN**

***A motion to adjourn was not made due to lack of members. Meeting ended at 10:25 a.m.***