



DRAFT

Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee (WCROC) Meeting May 12, 2009 – 6:00 PM

Meeting Notes

Attendees: **Members and Alternates** – Robert Ramirez, WCROC Co-Chair; Henry Flores, St. Mary’s University; Santiago Garcia, Jr., Westside Development Corporation; Roberto Hinkson, San Antonio Conservation Society; Jose Jimenez, University of Texas at San Antonio; George Martinez, Woodlawn Lake NA; Theodore Ozuna, Donaldson Terrace NA; Rod Radle, San Antonio Alternative Housing; Catherine Rainwater, Our Lady of the Lake University; Joann Walsh, Downtown Residents Association; and Dianna Esquivel, Avenida Guadalupe Association. **Elected Officials** – Roberto Rodriguez, SARA Board Member. **Staff and Consultants** – Suzanne Scott, SARA; Steve Graham, SARA; Rudy Farias, SARA; Jim Boenig, SARA; Lydia Kelly, SA-BC MPO; Richard Mendoza, City of San Antonio; Ed Garza, AECOM; Andy Rooke, AECOM; Rudy Rivera, RJ RIVERA Associates, Inc., and Linda Vela RJ RIVERA Associates, Inc. **Members of the Public** – Arturo Herrera, Jr., VIA Metropolitan Transit; Dan Gonzales, and Kamela Platt.

1.0 Welcome & Introductions

Robert Ramirez opened the oversight committee and welcomed members of the oversight committee and the public. He also introduced new members to the oversight committee including Joanne Walsh representing the Downtown Resident’s Association and Dianna Esquivel representing the Avenida Guadalupe Association.

2.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes (4/14/2009)

Mr. Ramirez then called for approval of the April meeting minutes. Linda Vela, with RJ RIVERA Associates, Inc. mentioned that she had received a change asking for the attendance portion of the meeting minutes to include a slot for elected officials. The oversight committee then approved the minutes with the change.

3.0 Subcommittee Reports

Mr. Ramirez then called for subcommittee reports.

Martínez Creek

Roberto Hinkson began by providing an update on the Martínez Creek Subcommittee. He stated that the focus of the last subcommittee had been discussion about the proposed VIA Bus Rapid Transit project along the Fredericksburg Road corridor. He said that the subcommittee had a Letter of Support that they wanted to present for consideration but that he had questions regarding the process and protocol for interactions between the subcommittee and oversight committee. He said that as a representative of the San Antonio Conservation Society he cannot support anything without board approval. He asked that the oversight committee discuss the issue of process and how the group will express support for various projects. Mr. Ramirez said that he was present at the Martínez Creek subcommittee and was not sure

why the issue regarding process was raised. He said that the subcommittee chose to express support for the project and that as co-chair he thought they were the most appropriate group to take that action. He further said that if the issue had come up at the oversight committee it would most likely had been assigned to the Martínez Creek Subcommittee for consideration. At this point, Suzanne Scott, General Manager with the San Antonio River Authority, asked to address the oversight committee. She said that the way recommendations have worked on other committees is that the subcommittee will make a recommendation to the oversight committee and then the oversight committee acts by consensus to support or not support the recommendation for consideration. She said that subcommittees typically do not act independently of the overall committee but rather it is the oversight committee that takes action and that the SARA Board, the city council, and commissioner's court have respected this process in the past.

Mr. Ramirez said that the reason the issue was voted on by the subcommittee was that they felt there was some urgency to take action because there was a VIA public meeting being held on the issue that week. He said the group had since found out that there is sufficient time to submit comments.

Mr. Ramirez then called for a motion that any item that comes up to a subcommittee for action must be brought forth to the oversight committee. Rod Radle moved for the motion and Henry Flores seconded the motion. Mr. Ramirez then called for any additional dialogue about the motion. He clarified that the committee is essentially saying that all actions must come from the oversight committee. Mr. Ramirez said that the subcommittee is the closest organization to the issue and their opinion would obviously carry great weight. The motion on the action would come from the subcommittee but other members of the oversight committee, staff, and the public would be allowed the opportunity to comment.

Mr. Hinkson asked what his options would be for voting if he still had not received his board's approval one way or the other. Mr. Ramirez said the options are to vote for an issue, vote against an issue, or to abstain from voting altogether. He asked Ms. Vela to add this to the group's Process & Protocol document.

George Martínez, with the Woodlawn Lake Community Association, asked if there was a way to vote via email for time sensitive issues that come up. Mr. Ramirez asked if he would like to propose an emergency protocol. Mr. Martínez then moved to amend the motion to allow for voice voting if an emergency vote was required. This amendment failed due to lack of a second.

Mr. Ramirez then called for a vote for the motion. Nine members voted in favor and no one opposed. The motion passed.

Dr. Catherine Rainwater also expressed concern about having time for her organization to review and approve the materials she is voting on. She asked that items requiring a vote be presented with more time prior to the meetings so that she has time to understand the issue and secure the appropriate approvals from within her organization.

Mr. Ramirez then asked of the Martínez Creek Subcommittee had a motion to put forth regarding the VIA BRT Project. Henry Flores motioned to support the Huisache Avenue station location for the BRT project. Joanne Walsh seconded the motion.

Mr. Hinkson said the subcommittee wanted to support the Huisache location because it is closest to the creek. The committee then heard from Arturo Villarreal, the Interim Project Manager for the VIA BRT Project. He said that VIA is considering two locations for the 8th BRT Station. He then showed the committee the Calaveras station location and the Huisache station location.

Ms. Walsh said that the Beacon Hill Neighborhood Association which is just to the east of IH 10 has adopted the Huisache location as their preferred location. She said this location would provide better access to any trails built along the creek. She also pointed out that the sidewalk conditions between the creek and the Calaveras location do not allow for good connectivity.

Lydia Kelly, with the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization said that hike and bike trails are a part of the transportation system and that it would be really wonderful if the Martínez Creek trails could hook up to the BRT.

Mr. Ramirez amended the motion to allow for the letter of support to be mailed out. Ms. Walsh seconded the amendment. Mr. Ramirez then called for a vote. Nine voted in favor of the motion and the amendment, no one opposed, and two members abstained.

Alazán Creek

Mr. Martínez then presented on the Alazán Creek Subcommittee. He said there was a lively discussion regarding security on the northern end of the study area. He said there were two views expressed. One was that it was not wise to proceed if there is not substantial security. The other view was to work with the community to increase security and that increased foot traffic would increase security. He also said there was some concern about lack of participation on the northern end of the creek in the Lincoln Courts and St. Agnes areas.

4.0 Presentation on Outcomes of Workshop #1

Next, Ed Garza presented on the outcomes of the first workshop. He thanked everyone who was able to attend and recognized the volunteers that helped make the workshop a success. He then went through the results of Station 3: Visual Preferences. He said he wanted the oversight committee to see how people rank these. He also encouraged members of the oversight committee who had not had the opportunity to participate in this exercise to take the time to add their dots to the boards. Some of the things that he highlighted included an emphasis on local art, having a more natural feel along the creeks, and the importance of cultural and recreational centers. With regards to the infrastructure and hydrologic components, he said people at the workshops wanted to see a medium level of water control with mixed-use neighborhoods and increased opportunities for open space and parks. He said this information would be used during the development of a vision for each of the creeks. He said the consultant team would now work to develop two distinct alternatives for each creek. Ms. Scott commended the consultant team. She said she attended and thought it was very well organized and well done. Mr. Roberto asked if there was a date and time for the next workshop. Ms. Vela said the study team was considering a September date but that a location had not been determined. Mr. Ramirez asked that they look at possible dates available at the Progreso Community Center since it was supposed to be the original location for the first workshop.

5.0 Committee Feedback

Mr. Garza then said the consultant team would like feedback on other topics for future oversight committee meetings as well as possible stakeholders for interviews to be conducted

Solicit Presentation Topics for Future Meetings

Possible topics for future discussions recommended by the oversight committee included:

- Different concepts for security
- Cross-connections to neighborhoods
- Natural conservation, environment, plants
- Hydrology and hydraulics
- Fluvial geomorphology
- Watercraft – Are there any sections that can be navigable?
- Are there any other creek restoration projects that would overlap?
- Overview on linear creeks project
- Presentation on the philosophy “No Child Left Inside” and trying to get natural areas to be more part of children’s background

Discuss Stakeholder Interviews

Possible stakeholders for the interviews mentioned by the oversight committee included:

- Presentations to the MPO Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Advisory Committee
- Discussion with Segway tour operators
- Outreach efforts with area churches such as Guadalupe

Dr. Rainwater said she appreciated the stakeholder meeting that was scheduled with Dr. Estes at Our Lady of the Lake University. She said he was very pleased and felt like he learned a lot.

6.0 Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Ramirez then announced two upcoming meetings – one for the Apache Creek Subcommittee and one for the San Pedro Creek Subcommittee.

7.0 Miscellaneous Items

The following comments were collected during this portion:

- Rod Radle – Mr. Radle said he was glad to hear from Mr. Garza’s report that a log of the things that SAAH is planning to do along the Apache Creek linear park fall in line with people’s hopes and desires. He said that the TIRZ authorized \$600,000 for the project and that they currently have \$430,000 available for this project. He said they will be able to start in the next 60 days. He further said that he has a bird and butterfly expert who is conducting an inventory of the animal, bird, and insect life along that portion of the creek. He said this would be used to provide signage on different plant and wildlife. He also said security is a big issue for them and that they are putting in a significant amount of lighting. He said they had a lot of discussion on what kind of material to use and finally decided on a 12 ft wide path with 8 ft of concrete and 4 ft of crushed granite. He said the trail would be ADA accessible and would have five points of entry. They are currently working to try to get a loan from the city to make up the \$175,000 in funding lacking to start construction since the project is bid out at today’s cost.
- Roberto Rodriguez expressed his excitement for the project and was very happy to support their efforts.

- Mr. Radle said that there are a lot of issues regarding egress issues and that they are having to erect a 6 ft fence to make sure creeping of the ROW line does not continue. He also said they had met with SAWS regarding the property they own and the possibility of pocket parks but that this is still under discussion.
- Mr. Martínez requested 300 flyers/information pieces by June 6, 2009 for distribution at an upcoming community event.
- Santiago Garcia asked if it would be possible to make the next meeting dates more prominent on the website.

8.0 Public Comments

Once all committee members had an opportunity to speak during the Miscellaneous Items agenda item, Mr. Ramirez called for public comments. The following comment was made by Kamela Platt, a member of the public and an active San Pedro Creek Subcommittee Member.

- Ms. Platt asked if there have been any environmental impact statements or site inventories conducted for the Apache Creek linear park under development by SAAH? There is a colony of egrets at 24th and Commerce – and I am particularly concerned about protecting that colony.
- Mr. Radle responded that as far as he was concerned the egrets are sacred. He said his project is further down from the egret area in question. He also said that one of the goals of the project was to make it a place where children can come see nature in middle of San Antonio and that great care was taken to ensure it was environmentally sensitive.
- Ms. Platt also raised concerns with the addition of impervious cover to the area.
- Mr. Radle said that from the very beginning SAAH met with the city and the engineer who does the design of linear parks. He said one of their initial requirements was to add a 10 ft wide concrete path. He said they were able to secure an exception allowing them to reduce the impervious cover to 8 ft by adding the 4 ft of crushed granite which would be a pervious cover.

9.0 Adjourn

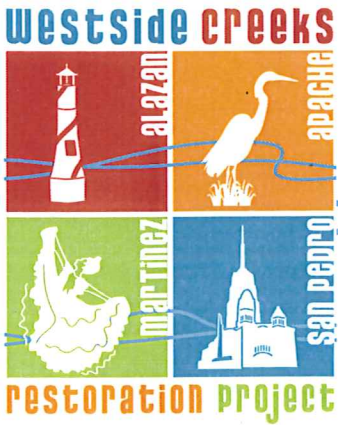
After this, the meeting was adjourned and no further business was discussed.

Attachments

- Sign-in Sheets
- Workshop Presentation
- Huisache Station Letter of Support

Distribution

- WCROC
- SARA Staff
- Consultant Team



May 12, 2009

RE: Letter of Support

To Whom It May Concern:

The Westside Creeks Restoration Project is a community-based planning effort initiated in 2008 by the San Antonio River Authority (SARA). Its mission is to 1) develop concepts for restoring the environmental condition of the Alazán, Apache, Martínez, and San Pedro Creeks, 2) maintain the current flood control components of these creeks, and 3) provide increased opportunities for people to enjoy these urban creeks. The Westside Creeks Restoration Project is led by an Oversight Committee comprised of two co-chairs and community leaders representing 20 organizations throughout the city and the city's Westside. The Oversight Committee facilitates the gathering of ideas, existing plans and community input into the Westside Creeks Restoration Project. The Oversight Committee has also created Subcommittees to address the unique characteristics of each of the creeks.

Through a visioning process, the Oversight Committee and the Martínez Creek Subcommittee have identified the importance of transit connections and multi-modal transportation to the Westside Creeks Restoration Project. We have also learned of VIA Metropolitan Transit's proposal to bring Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to San Antonio by 2012 and are excited about the possibility of providing a transit connection to Martínez Creek.

This letter of support is being submitted for consideration regarding the potential station location of Station #8. It is our understanding that VIA is currently considering two location options for this station. The first would place the station at Calaveras Street and the second would place the station at Huisache Avenue. It is our belief that the Huisache Avenue location will provide better access to Martínez Creek and would allow people from all parts of the city to utilize transit as a means of getting to the restored creeks. We urge VIA to consider this opportunity to link these projects and to provide an enhanced multi-modal system for the local community and to ultimately select the Huisache location for Station #8.


Thank you in advance for your consideration. If you have any questions regarding this project, or would like to speak to someone concerning this letter of support, please contact Linda Vela at (210) 785-0888.

Sincerely,


Robert Ramirez
WCROC Co-Chair

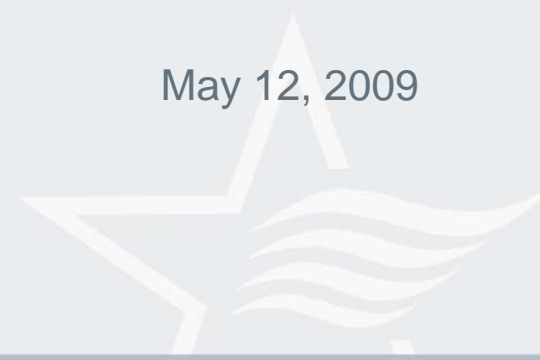


Olga Lizcano
WCROC Co-Chair

WestSide creeks
POSTCAPTION PROJECT



Imagination Station Outcomes

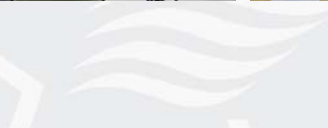


May 12, 2009



WestSide creeks
POSTCAPTION PROJECT

Outcomes

Saturday, April 18, 2009
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
158 participants





Station 3: Visual Preferences

Cultural and Historic Fabric

| Creek | Interpretation | Local Art | Gathering/ Event Space | Other Option: All are appropriate |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Alazan | 4 | 18 | 13 | 3 |
| Apache | 2 | 7 | 0 | 1 |
| Martínez | 0 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| San Pedro | 1 | 7 | 5 | 2 |
| Neutral | 2 | 23 | 18 | 9 |
| CUMULATIVE | 9 | 60 | 40 | 18 |



Station 3: Visual Preference

Community Design and Neighborhood Networks

| Creek | Connections across the Creeks | Destinations | Linear connections along the Creeks | Other: All are appropriate |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Alazan | 10 | 6 | 16 | 2 |
| Apache | 1 | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| Martínez | 5 | 3 | 6 | 2 |
| San Pedro | 6 | 1 | 8 | 1 |
| Neutral | 10 | 14 | 34 | 4 |
| CUMULATIVE | 32 | 26 | 69 | 12 |

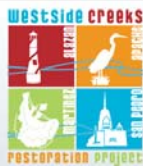




Station 3: Visual Preference

Social Fabric and Partnership

| Creek | Medical / Hospital | Daycare | Police | Other: All are essential for the surrounding population |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------|-----------|---|
| Alazan | 4 | 1 | 21 | 1 |
| Apache | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| Martinez | 0 | 1 | 7 | 0 |
| San Pedro | 2 | 1 | 9 | 0 |
| Neutral | 4 | 2 | 28 | 5 |
| CUMULATIVE | 10 | 6 | 69 | 6 |



Station 3: Visual Preference

Conceptual Approach Alternatives

| Creek | One place, one design, one character | Each Creek with its own character, design, and identity | A series of places and nodes interconnected by trails |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Alazan | 0 | 20 | 12 |
| Apache | 0 | 5 | 1 |
| Martinez | 0 | 4 | 9 |
| San Pedro | 0 | 1 | 14 |
| Neutral | 4 | 18 | 30 |
| CUMULATIVE | 4 | 48 | 66 |

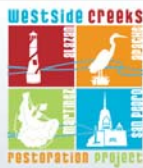




Station 3: Visual Preference

Restoration and Natural Systems

| Creek | Conservation with emphasis on natural environment | Conservation with interpretation | Public parks focused on sustainability |
|-------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Alazan | 17 | 13 | 6 |
| Apache | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Martinez | 8 | 4 | 0 |
| San Pedro | 8 | 5 | 1 |
| Neutral | 23 | 20 | 7 |
| CUMULATIVE | 60 | 43 | 16 |



Station 3: Visual Preference

Open Space, Parks, and Recreation

| Creek | Sport facilities | Natural areas/ passive recreation with fishing areas | Community parks or amphitheaters | Other: All are appropriate | Small neighborhood parks and playgrounds | Small plazas and civic gathering spaces | Community gardens |
|-------------------|------------------|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| Alazan | 6 | 26 | 15 | 4 | 1 | 16 | 7 |
| Apache | 0 | 4 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| Martinez | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| San Pedro | 1 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 7 |
| Neutral | 8 | 19 | 16 | 6 | 12 | 19 | 11 |
| CUMULATIVE | 17 | 62 | 43 | 14 | 17 | 51 | 28 |





Station 3: Visual Preference

Social Fabric and Partnership

| Creek | Libraries | Schools | Cultural / recreation centers | Other: All are appropriate |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Alazan | 7 | 6 | 13 | 0 |
| Apache | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| Martinez | 2 | 1 | 6 | 1 |
| San Pedro | 3 | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| Neutral | 10 | 7 | 21 | 5 |
| CUMULATIVE | 22 | 14 | 53 | 8 |



Station 3: Visual Preference

Infrastructure

| Creek | Low water control | Medium water control | Intense water control |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Alazan | 7 | 24 | 2 |
| Apache | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| Martinez | 12 | 4 | 2 |
| San Pedro | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| Neutral | 20 | 21 | 7 |
| CUMULATIVE | 48 | 58 | 18 |





Station 3: Visual Preference

Adjacent Land Use, Growth and Economic Sustainability

| Creek | Large commercial and industrial | Pedestrian-Oriented commercial district | Creek front commercial and offices | Mixed-used neighborhoods |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Alazan | 0 | 10 | 3 | 18 |
| Apache | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| Martinez | 0 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| San Pedro | 0 | 0 | 0 | 13 |
| Neutral | 0 | 5 | 6 | 30 |
| CUMULATIVE | 0 | 16 | 10 | 77 |

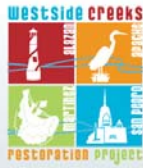


Station 3: Visual Preference

Adjacent Land Use, Growth and Economic Sustainability

| Creek | Residential | Open space and parks | Outdoor market | Senior housing |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Alazan | 8 | 16 | 12 | 6 |
| Apache | 0 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Martinez | 1 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
| San Pedro | 2 | 10 | 3 | 2 |
| Neutral | 6 | 26 | 11 | 4 |
| CUMULATIVE | 17 | 63 | 31 | 13 |

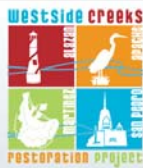




Station 3: Visual Preference

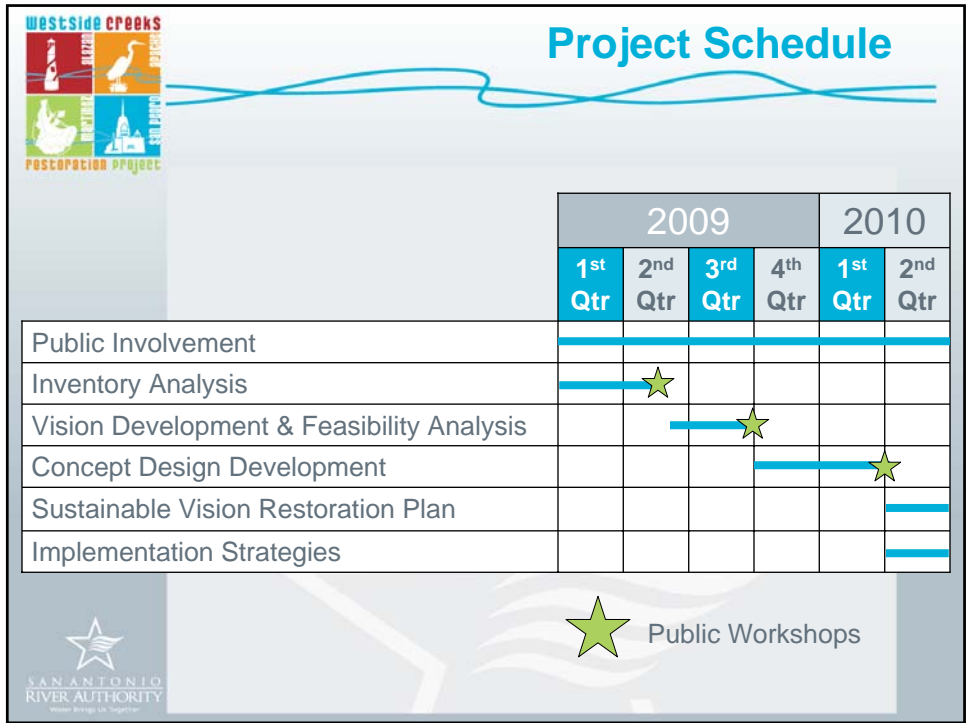
Multimodal Transportation

| Creek | Natural surface trail For recreation | Paved trail for bicycles and pedestrians | Larger paved trail for bicycles, pedestrians and small-scale transit vehicles (carts, shuttles) | Combination natural and paved trails |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| Alazan | 9 | 24 | 14 | 0 |
| Apache | 1 | 6 | 0 | 1 |
| Martínez | 5 | 6 | 0 | 3 |
| San Pedro | 3 | 8 | 3 | 3 |
| Neutral | 16 | 28 | 14 | 5 |
| CUMULATIVE | 34 | 72 | 31 | 12 |



Station 8: Kidz Korner





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- Next Steps**
- The next phase of the project will be the Vision Development and Feasibility Analysis. This portion of the project will include:
 - Preliminary Concept Alternatives
 - Preliminary Engineering Analysis
 - Preliminary Environmental Analysis
 - Refined Concept Alternatives
 - Public Workshop #2



Imagination Station Outcomes

May 12, 2009

