



**Minutes of the
Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee (WCROC) Meeting
February 12, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm in the San Antonio River Authority's Boardroom, 100 East Guenther Street, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas.

Elected Officials Present:

Mr. Roberto G. Rodriguez, San Antonio River Authority Board Director, District 2
Mr. Hector R. Morales, San Antonio River Authority Board Director, Member-At -Large

Committee Members Present:

Olga Lizcano, Co-Chair
Abigail Kinnison, Beacon Hill NA
Patti Radle, San Antonio ISD
Abel Ramirez, San Antonio Wheelman
Erwin DeLuna, United San Antonio Pow-Wow
Theodore Ozuna, Donaldson Terrace NA
Edward Hinojosa, Los Bexarenos Genealogical Society

Robert Ramirez, Co-Chair
Gabriel Velasquez, Avenida Guadalupe
Ray Flores, Westside Development Corporation
Jude Valdez, UTSA
Joanne Walsh, Downtown Residents Assoc.
John Shaver, San Antonio Alternative Housing
Sue Ann Pemperton, San Antonio Conservation Society

Staff and Members of the Public Present:

Suzanne Scott, SARA
Rudy R. Farias, SARA
Gloria Rivera Rodriguez, SARA
Marianne Kumley, SARA
Charlotte Kahl, Old Spanish Trail Centennial
Christopher Perez
Jeff Tyler, SARA
Walter Heard, Terra Design
Gabriel Rosales
Tracy Hammer
William Long, RJ Rivera Association
Narciso Cano

Andi Rodriguez, Kell Muñoz
Brice Moczygamba, Pape Dawson
Russell Persyn, SARA
Steve Tillotson, Kell Muñoz
Sonia Jimenez, Ximenes & Associates
Fred Blumberg
John Carlos Garcia
Shiva Sandrana, Bexar County
Theresa Gold, Bexar County Historical Commission
John Espinoza, Brown & Gay Engineering

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Welcome

Mr. Ramirez welcomed everyone. Mr. Roberto Rodríguez thanked everyone for being there and recognized Mr. Hector R. Morales, San Antonio River Authority Board Director, Member-At-Large.

Mr. Erwin DeLuna, United San Antonio Pow-Wow, Inc. invited everyone to the 16th Annual Native American Pow-Wow to be held Saturday from 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. at the Alzafar Shrine Auditorium. This Pow-Wow will be dedicated to the late Mike Gonzales, employee of SARA and Board Member of the San Antonio Pow-Wow. Mr. DeLuna also invited everyone to the Native American Church Service the following Sunday from 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Robert Ramirez welcomed Ms. Patti Radle, San Antonio ISD and Mr. John Shaver, Executive Director of the San Antonio Alternative Housing as new members to the committee. Ms. Radle expressed her delight to be a part of this committee whose work is bringing wonderful enhancements to the aesthetics of west side and downtown area.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Approval of Minutes for December 11, 2012

Mr. Ramirez presented the minutes to the Committee and asked if there were any corrections. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as presented.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Update on US Army Corps of Engineers Feasibility Study

Ms. Nova Robbins, Project Manager for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District, referenced the December Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee meeting and reminding the Committee members that the Vertical Team (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Fort Worth District, Dallas Division, and Washington D.C. Headquarters) requested additional information regarding the feasibility study's plan formulation. Ms. Robbins indicated since December, the Fort Worth District has been gather additional data and re-verifying existing data with assistance from SARA. The revised schedule is to have an In Process Review (IPR) meeting with the Vertical Team by late February and then conduct a Decision Point 2 meeting in March to select the tentative plan for the Westside Creeks.

Ms. Robbins indicated interaction amongst the Vertical Team has been ongoing regarding the additional information and plan formulation to ensure all the bases are covered and that Headquarters will have the necessary information to make an official decision on the tentatively selected plan. Ms. Robbins invited questions.

Since there were no questions, Mr. Ramirez thanked her for the report.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Update on San Pedro Creek Preliminary Engineering Report

Mr. Ramirez called on Mr. Brice Moczygemba. Mr. Moczygemba briefed on the Cultural Resources Study and indicated the study had been submitted to the Texas Historical Commission for review and comments.

Mr. Moczygemba also reported the San Pedro Creek Subcommittee members received an orientation on the project and toured the Creek on January 18, 2013. The Subcommittee then held their first meeting on February 7, 2013 and received a briefing on both the engineering and design aspects of the project. Visuals were shown sharing ideas for walkways, bridge crossings, pooling water, and creating linkage opportunities to other downtown attractions.

Mr. Moczygemba then introduced Mr. Steve Tillotson. Mr. Tillotson gave an update on the study pertaining to the design as it complements the engineering aspects of the project. He indicated there is a significant flood control aspect that could be resolved by deepening and/or widening the creek channel. The proposed design anticipates channel work to address the potential flooding while at the same time creating an accessible and pleasurable means for moving people upstream and downstream.

The concepts at this point are intended to provide a visual showing what the character of the creek could be. Based upon the engineering and visuals, a scope and corresponding cost estimates will be prepared. The consultant team is preparing a cost range to address the flood control issues, linear park concept, and added enhancements that will improve the experience and surrounding area.

Mr. Tillotson then described the concepts developed for the project. The concepts were based upon the creek character which includes concrete and stone retaining walls, as well as an earthen channel, its cultural landscape, history and physical attributes. From this, six character areas were developed:

1. Campo Abajo – Lower Fields
 - Located at the south end of the project extending from Alamo Street to the tunnel outlet at Guadalupe Streets
 - Historically, area was predominately irrigated farm fields
 - Channel is approximately 30 feet wide
 - Portions of the creek are either earthen channel or consist of concrete retaining walls
2. Canal Principal – Main Canal
 - Located north of Guadalupe Street to Caesar Chavez Boulevard
 - Majority of the creek is in an underground culvert.
 - Culverts were constructed by the railroad in the early part of the 1900s.
 - Two ideas are proposed for this stretch:
 - Create a surface walkway and day-light a portion of the creek
 - Day-light the creek for the entire length
3. Merodeo – Meander
 - Located north of Caesar Chavez Boulevard to Dolorosa Street
 - Creek flows by the U.S. Courthouse Project and vacant City annex property
 - Idea is to meander the creek through this section
 - Channel is constructed of rock retaining walls
4. Agua Antigua – Ancient Water
 - Located north of Dolorosa Street to the Alameda Theater
 - Creek is tightly constrained with buildings adjacent to the Creek on the west side
 - Creeks runs adjacent to Calder Street on the east side behind the Spanish Governor’s Palace
5. Salon de Alameda
 - Located at the Alameda Theater and extends north to Travis Street
 - Creek is adjacent to City owned parking lots on the east side
 - Theater is undergoing an expansion

6. Villa Laguna – Town Lake

- Located north of Travis to the Inlet Tunnel by Fox Tech High School
- Opportunity to create a lake affect
- Camaron Street runs adjacent to the creek on the east side
- On the west side are primarily apartments

Mr. Narciso Cano asked about the double decker culvert concept found in the Westside Creeks Concept Plan where the lower deck carries stormwater runoff during rain events and the upper deck carries the daily flow. He also asked where the water would come from.

Mr. Tillotson answered stating the double decker concept had been looked at but would not work due to the projected expanded flood plain. Mr. Moczygemba answered the water question stating water would recirculate through the tunnel system and during periods when there was no flow entering the tunnel, reuse water would be used from the San Antonio River.

Mr. Rodriguez complimented Mr. Tillotson & Mr. Moczygemba on the study and asked if this was a blue print for moving forward or was it the next step to ascertain the feasibility. Mr. Tillotson said it was to determine feasibility of the project.

Mr. Ramirez asked assuming we get a go decision from Commissioners Court, would there be a follow up study iteration?

Ms. Scott said the next step would be a detailed design phase and if the County felt it was feasible, the County would authorize that design. She said she thought that would be the next funding commitment of the County and then the design team would hone in on the cost and design. She said this is a preliminary engineering/feasibility phase.

Mr. Edward Hinojosa asked if the funding is just from the County or other sources.

Ms. Scott said possibly other sources. Once we go to the County with results of this study which they funded, then we would have to determine other funding options.

Mr. Ray Flores asked if the purpose of the study was to identify significant issues that could impede the ability to do the project and if so, was it safe to say there are no major issues that would impede implementation of the final concept.

Mr. Moczygemba addressed the question by explaining the studies that were conducting to identify potential fatal flaws of which there do not appear to be any fatal flaws. He went on to described how water flow has continuously been observed entering the tunnel even when San Pedro Springs is not flowing. When water is flowing through the Creek channel, it is either due to rain or from recirculating water from the tunnel.

Ms. Radle asked if the land required for the Creek meanders was private or public.

Mr. Moczygemba said the Federal Courthouse site, former City Annex Building site and between South Alamo upstream to Guadalupe Street is where meanders are shown. These properties are both privately and publicly owned, with the majority being publicly owned.

Mr. Hinojosa asked if HEB would be interested in putting money into the project and also asked what would motivate the County to invest.

Mrs. Scott said she can't speak for HEB or the county but listed some motivation and benefits:

- The project addresses flooding issues
- Creates economic development opportunities
- Has quality of life benefits
- Creates opportunities to connect the communities both east and west and north and south
- Enhances cultural opportunities

Mr. Ramirez commented that building on the south end would be profitable for the city.

Ms. Joanne Walsh said regarding the quality of life, this project could be more for residents than the downtown area which is more for tourist. There is a different emphasis on San Pedro Creek than the San Antonio River.

Mr. Ramirez said opening these conduits east toward the San Antonio River to downtown is opening up the near west side back to the downtown area again.

Mr. Gabriel Velasquez mentioned how close the near westside is to downtown San Antonio. He said he felt it was pulling the community together.

Ms. Walsh said she realized the scope of Westside Creeks ended before Fredericksburg Road but hoped that in the future the area at Fredericksburg Road at Five Points could also be connected.

When asked about the next San Pedro Subcommittee meeting and how notices are sent, Mr. Farias said the next meeting of the Subcommittee is scheduled for March 7, and notices are sent to everyone in the Westside Creeks database.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Update on Elmendorf Lake Park and Westside Creeks Hike and Bike Trails

Ms. Lizcano called on Mr. Farias for a report. Mr. Farias said the agreement with the consultant should be executed shortly. Also, the first public meeting which will be a design charrette is anticipated for the week of March 18. At this meeting, the community can give input on a concept previously developed and presented to the Oversight Committee and public back in June 2012 at Our Lady of the Lake University. Three design charettes are planned for the week of March 18, April 15, and May 13 which will be the final concept. The trails component is part of this effort and will have two separate public meetings. The Martinez and Alazan Creek trail segments meeting are being targeted for the week of May 6, and the trails on Apache and San Pedro Creeks is being looked at during the week of June 3.

Ms. Lizcano asked if there were any questions. Ms. Radle asked for an orientation as a new member of the Oversight Committee.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Citizens to be heard

Ms. Sonia Jimenez, Chair of the Basura Bash, apologized for not notifying the Committee about the Basura Bash press conference. Copies of the article from the Rivard Report were distributed. Basura Bash is scheduled for February 23. It was mentioned Ms. Kinnison was leading the Martinez Creek cleanup effort. Ms. Jimenez recognized the San Antonio River Authority as a supporter of the Basura Bash for the past 19 years.

Gabriel Rosales, District Director for the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) thanked the Committee for all the work they have done. He appreciated the quality of life improvements accomplished by the Westside Creeks Project.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Miscellaneous Items.

Ms. Lizcano called on Mr. Rodriguez. Mr. Rodriguez thanked everyone for their attendance and commented on the project's progress.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Next Meeting.

Mr. Lizcano announced the next meeting will be Tuesday, April 9, 2013.

Mr. Ramirez apologized for not introducing Sue Ann Cumberton, with the Conservation Society. Ms. Cumberton is a new Committee member and also serves on the San Pedro Creek subcommittee.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Adjourn.

Since there were no other comments or statements, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.