



**Westside Creeks Restoration
Oversight Committee (WCROC) Meeting
San Antonio River Authority
100 E. Guenther
Tuesday, June 20, 2017
Notes**

Committee Members Present

Olga Lizcano, Co-Chair
Robert Ramirez, Co-Chair
Theodore Ozuna, Donaldson Terrace
Joanne Walsh, Downtown Residents
Kathy Kranvek, SA Conservation Soc.
Abel Ramirez, SA Wheelman

Evelynn Mitchell, St. Mary's University
Jude Valdez, UTSA
Erwin De Luna, United SA Pow Wow
Skye Curd, West SA Chamber
Karen Weehler, Woodlawn Lake NA

Staff and Public Present

Lourdes Galvan, SARA Board Member
Suzanne Scott, SARA
Kerry Averyt, SARA
Dustin Moore, SARA
Jamie Taylor, SARA

Carrie Brown, SARA
Therese Kenner, SARA
Steven Dean, Pape-Dawson
Sonia Jimenez, Ximenes & Associates

I. Welcome

Ms. Lizcano convened the meeting with greetings for everyone present. Mr. Ramirez asked committee members to go around and introduce themselves. Committee and staff did self-introductions by name and organization.

Ms. Lizcano announced Jamie Taylor is replacing Dustin Moore as lead Watershed Engineer overseeing the Westside Creeks initiatives and projects. She also noted Therese Kenner is leaving to work at SAWS and Gloria Rodriguez will assist with Therese's duties until her position is filled.

Ms. Lizcano also recognized committee members Skye Curd's promotion and Ms. Curd will still serve on the committee.

Mr. Ramirez recognized SARA Board Member Lourdes Galvan. Ms. Galvan invited the committee to attend National LULAC convention which will be held July 4-9 in San Antonio. She expressed positive comments after having participated in the San Pedro Creek tour.

Mr. Ramirez also thanked Ms. Galvan for her advocacy and nominations of projects including the Elmendorf Lake Parks project. The project received the American

Public Works Association award for Project of the Year 2017. It competed with Yellowstone National Park and Appalachian Mountain projects in the category of Environment (\$5M to \$25M). SARA General Manager Suzanne Scott informed the group that the award-winning video is posted on SARA's website on the Media page. Mr. Ramirez expressed how proud he was of everyone's work that made the award possible and thanked everyone.

II. Calendar Items

Ms Lizcano announced the following calendar items:

- San Pedro Creek Subcommittee Meeting - July 13 at 8:30 a.m. at SARA Boardroom, 100 E. Guenther.
- Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Quarterly Meeting - September 19 at 6:00 p.m. at SARA Boardroom, 100 E. Guenther.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Lizcano asked members for approval of the March 21, 2017 meeting notes. She asked the committee for any corrections/additions to them. Mr. Ramirez commented that the notes mentioned Jesse Treviño as one of the muralists for art projects and wasn't sure if that needed to be corrected. Suzanne Scott concurred with the notes as drafted explaining that at the March 21st meeting Treviño had actually been approached but not committed to participate. Since then, Mr. Treviño has indicated he is unable to participate.

Ms. Lizcano then stated that there was not a quorum to approve the meeting notes.

IV. Status Report on San Pedro Creeks Improvement Project

Kerry Averyt, SARA Project Manager provided the updates. Mr. Averyt reported that the Bexar County Commissioners Court had approved scaling back construction completion goals for segment 1 from the tunnel inlet to Houston Street instead of to Dolorosa Street. Currently, the cost is prohibitive to go past Houston Street. The schedule for segment 1 completion is still May 5, 2018.

Mr. Averyt continued his presentation by stating the 90% design plan submittal for segment 2, from Houston Street to Cesar Chavez Blvd, is dependent on final approval by Commissioners Court of the interpretative art elements. Approval is slated for July 11. Once the 90% submittal is approved, the initial cost estimate is due from Sundt/Davila in mid- August with a full guaranteed maximum price due eight (8) weeks after the 90% submittal is approved. Once Phase I is fully constructed, the balance of the remaining budget will be used for Phase II design and construction.

Phase II design has been halted but property acquisition is proceeding. Design will resume after Phase 1 design is complete and the guaranteed cost of construction is approved.

With regard to construction activities, Mr. Averyt reported Sundt/Davila engaged a drone videographer and presented a series of construction photos. The photos included images of the Cypress tree planters that will be placed in the wetlands. Mr. Averyt pointed out where the cascade fountain will be located that symbolizes the springs and paseos. He also stated all of the storm water and utility relocations are complete at the inlet.

He went on to say the Plethora sculpture is going to be placed at the split at Santa Rosa. The effort is requiring a lot of excavation and fill to be removed before building up the sculpture's base. Looking down stream, the recirculation pumps were efficient and the crew was able manage creek flow to expedite construction tasks. The historic walls, dating back to the 1780's-mid 1800's, are being buried to preserve them during other construction activity until it is time to stabilize them.

Mr. Ramirez asked if the human remains found near Santa Rosa created any issues with the SPC project. Mr. Averyt informed the committee that early in the excavation, some bones had been discovered between Dolorosa and Commerce. They were analyzed and determined not to be human. He continued by saying artifacts being discovered are being sent to a curator and if any historic structures are found, work will be directed away from them until an analysis and determination is made. While there are no current plans to display the artifacts, Ms. Scott suggested an exhibit at the Witte's Center for Rivers and Aquifers may be a suitable partnership to pursue.

Mr. Averyt also let the committee know that the initial upfront costs for storm event management paid off. The mitigation worked successfully during recent rain events and construction crews were able to keep working.

Mr. Averyt concluded his presentation by stating two construction tours were conducted. Tours included Bexar County Commissioners, SARA Board, and others and they provided positive feedback. He invited committee members to the next tour in early September.

Responding to questions regarding the closure of Commerce Street, Mr. Averyt informed the committee that partial street closures will occur for three plus (3+) months due to utility relocation and demolition work of the bridge. Sundt/Davila is determining the best time to complete the work. They will gather feedback from those directly impacted such as residents, businesses, COSA and Bexar County. He went on to say partial lane closures during this effort but bridge will be closed for the entire three months. Mr. Ramirez recommends members keep up with construction details and street closures on the email updates or by visiting the project website.

Carrie Brown, SARA SPC Art Curator, presented the San Pedro Creek art program update. Ms. Brown presented information on the permanent artwork opportunities beginning with the Tricentennial Plaza. The artist, Jorge Rodriguez-Gerada, has been

working with local fabricators on the redesign of the foundation. It was discovered that a sewer line is located directly beneath where the 60ft *Plethora* sculpture would be placed. The scale of the sculpture has been resized to 45 ft to accommodate the new foundation. Ms. Brown stated the new height of the sculpture and the size of the plaza is a better fit and will reduce budget for materials. The revised plans are scheduled for approval by Commissioners Court in July. The installment is still on track for the May 5, 2018 unveiling.

Abel Ramirez expressed safety concerns about kids climbing on sculpture. Ms. Brown explained the foundation goes up about 5 feet and the framework is vertical so it will be difficult for anyone to grab a hold. Robert Ramirez asked if there were plans to illuminate the sculpture. Ms. Brown said yes they are working with design team to fine tune angles and locations for night lighting. Another committee asked about whether the sculpture has a theme that fits with the historic storytelling of the other art elements. Ms. Brown explained the artist developed a universal human face with a number of facial features to represent one's self in the image and depict the future. She also reminded the committee that the artist was selected through an international search and represents a signature art piece that was approved by Bexar County Commissioners Court.

Subsequently, Ms. Brown presented updates on the public art being incorporated on the bridges at Santa Rosa, Martin Street, and Travis Street. Diana Kersey's ceramic art inserts will be installed on each of the three bridges. The concepts are related to the history of the street names. The tiles will scale the bridge railings and are a couple of feet tall and wide.

Ms. Brown went on to present the concepts for the retaining walls and benches throughout the project. The artist, Michael Menchaca and John Phillip Santos, are developing tile patterns and historic word art based on the presidio design. The word art will be sand-blasted letters on limestone walls.

In addition, there will be four mural artists using paint and photography to transpose to ceramic tile. All four murals are by local artists. The first by Adriana Garcia is themed "All Roads, We Are One" is 120' long and the concept is east meets west. It will be located between Santa Rosa Street and Martin Street. The second mural, by Kattie Pell, is smaller in scale and the theme is "Lost Wildlife". It represents original flora and fauna. The location for this mural is between Martin Street and Travis Street. Alex Rubio is the third artist. His work will be installed on a curved wall at Travis and Houston Street. Rubio's theme is "Water Flow." His design is under development. The mural will be about 50' by 6' tall. Finally, Artist Joe Lopez's mural will be located closer to Houston Street, across from Alex Rubio's, and his theme is the "Alameda Theater Community". The work will capture the life and culture of the Alameda Theater. Ms. Brown noted that all mural tiles, if damaged, can easily be reproduced and replaced.

Ms. Brown then explained the process for artists to be on the pre-qualified list. This list will be used to select the artists for the remaining permanent and temporary San Pedro Creek art installations. The deadline for submittals is June 30 2017. A panel of local and international artists will select the artists. Other calls for artists will be conducted in about a year to refresh the list. Ms. Brown stated local outreach to raise awareness of the effort has included reaching out to local committees like this one, City public art commission, Bexar County, websites (local, national, and international), handing out flyers, social media, individual artists, and universities and colleges. Ms. Brown, responding to a question, informed the committee that the pre-qualified artist may be selected for other public art projects outside of the San Pedro Creek project.

Ms. Brown concluded her presentation by notifying the committee of the next meeting of the Arts and Culture Alliance. This group is made up of local arts organizations and artists focused on San Pedro Creek art opportunities. The meeting will be held at SARA in the Boardroom on August 30, 2017 at 5:30pm.

A committee member asked if a history and document is being prepared to chronicle the process and how the selections were made. Ms. Brown stated that information is being collected and prepared. Ms. Scott added a website and smartphone app will be developed. The app will include audio tours to explain history as you walk down creek and have an “environmental” tour to explain water quality, flora, and other topics. It will also have an events calendar, information and background on art, artists, and the selection process. While, the website will provide more information with video and interviews.

Ms. Weehler asked if landscape architect, Mario Schjetnan from GDU, concepts are still part of the design. Ms. Scott replied that some of his designs have been modified but the big cypress trees and the two water features representing springs and an acequia are still in the design. She added the native landscaping is still included as are the aquatic plants.

Ramirez reminded the committee the WCROC quarterly meetings are updates of what has already been decided. This is a fast moving project with 11 months to completion of the first segment of phase 1. He urged committee members to go to the SPC subcommittee meetings and art alliance meetings to get information on progress and provide feedback. If you want to have your feedback heard, please feel free to attend the SPC subcommittee meetings, where decisions are made.

V. Status Report on Westside Creeks Improvements Projects

Elmendorf Lake Park

Dustin Moore, the outgoing SARA Watershed Engineer, presented the brief update. He stated all the punch list items have been completed and the park has been turned over to the COSA Parks and Recreation Department. He also noted the work is under warranty until January 2018.

Mr. Ramirez expressed concern about splash pad and kids have to use extreme force on the device that activates the water feature as well as on the water fountain. Mr. Moore indicated he would let Parks and Recreation know.

In response to the question of the swimming pool, it was noted that the recently passed COSA 2017 Bond included the financing of the new pool. The City will be leading that effort. It was suggested that signs be posted to let the public know.

Westside Creeks Linear Creekway Trails

Jamie Taylor, SARA's incoming Watershed Engineer, presented the update. He informed the committee the trails being funded by the sales tax initiative have been awarded two design contracts. The Alazan Trails was awarded to RESPEC and Pape-Dawson was awarded the Zarzamora and Martinez Creeks trails. It is expected that design permitting be complete by December 2018 and construction to commence thereafter with completion in December 2019.

Mr. Taylor went on to update the group on the MPO Trails Grant. Alazan Creek was ranked number 1, selected, and recommended for funding. It is expected the official award will be made at the June 26, 2017 MPO meeting. The addition of the MPO's \$2.5 million will increase the total for the Alazan Creek trail to \$6 million. The MPO allocation will pay for amenities and beautification. He concluded that the Martinez Creek trail has been nominated for the next round of MPO grants. The award will require online and in person comments to support it. When that times comes, the committee will be informed.

The question was raised as to why the trail design would take over a year. Mr. Taylor explained the work involves evaluation of property, topography, and ADA requirements. Each segment of the trail system is unique.

Ms. Weehler strongly suggested every park and trail should have the same native grass mix as Hardberger. Mr. Moore explained landscaping for the trail effort is minimal. The native grasses will be incorporated, similar to the Mission Reach, when the USACE does the channel restoration design and construction.

There was a question about SAWS leaks along Martinez Creek being resolved. SARA staff responded they would get an update for the next meeting.

VI. Miscellaneous Items

Brian Mast, SARA Government Relations, informed the committee that the funds for the new Federal Courthouse have been allocated. The project is in the design phase and construction is slated to commence in 2018 with completion in 2020. The new location is on San Pedro Creek and will have property setbacks for security reasons.

Finally, the committee discussed the repeated lack of a quorum and the inability to approve minutes. The co-chairs suggested revisiting the committee charter and

possibly taking action to remove and replace members who have not been attending.

VII. Citizens to be Heard

None.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:41 p.m.