



**Westside Creeks Restoration
Oversight Committee Meeting
San Antonio River Authority
100 E. Guenther
September 19, 2017
6:00 pm**

Committee Members Present

Olga Lizcano, Co-Chair
Robert Ramirez, Co-Chair
Theodore Ozuna, Donaldson Terrace
Joanne Walsh, Downtown Residents
Cary Guffey, OLLU
Kathy Krnavek, SA Conservation Society
Evelyn Mitchell, St. Mary's University
Jude Valdez, UTSA
Karen Weehler, Woodlawn Lake NA

Staff and Public Present

Suzanne Scott, SARA
Kerry Averyt, SARA
Jaime Taylor, SARA
Carrie Brown, SARA
Sonia Jimenez, Ximenes & Assoc.
Hilda Bustos, Ximenes & Assoc.
Daniel Leal, COSA
Cosima Colvin, COSA LCPAB
Arrie Porter, SAHA

I. Welcome

Ms. Lizcano convened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Mr. Ramirez reminded the committee that San Pedro Creek decisions are made at the subcommittee level. The subcommittee meets monthly. Mr. Ramirez urged everyone to participate in the subcommittee meetings, if they want their ideas considered.

II. Calendar Items

- San Pedro Creek Subcommittee Meeting – October 12, 2017 from 8:30 a.m. -10 a.m. in the SARA Boardroom at 100 E. Guenther
- Alazan Creek Trail Design Public Meeting – November 14, 2017 at 6 p.m. tentatively at the Mexican American Unity Center, 2300 W. Commerce St #200, San Antonio, TX 78207
- Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee Quarterly Meeting – December 19, 2017 at 6 p.m. in the SARA Boardroom
- Martinez Creek Trail Design Public Meeting - Date is to be determined and tentative for January 2018. The date will be announced at the next WCROC meeting.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The approval of the March 2017 and June 2017 meeting notes was postponed due to the lack of a quorum.

IV. Status Report on San Pedro Creek Improvements Project

Mr. Ramirez initiated the presentation and then turned it over to Kerry Averyt, SARA's Project Manager. Mr. Averyt informed the group that the rough order of magnitude (ROM) cost estimate from Sundt/Davila was received August 15th. Mr. Averyt reported that the ROM reflected a large increase compared to last year's estimate. He explained the majority of increased costs were due to competition with a lot of construction projects affecting market rates. There are a limited number of contractors creating competition and driving costs up. The team is re-examining means and methods to reduce costs. Under consideration to reduce costs are design revisions and/or postponing amenities placement. Mr. Averyt reported that the team was rigorously scrubbing the numbers for possible reductions while also keeping in mind the main project goals of flood control and developing a linear park. After the estimates are revisited, Mr. Averyt will return and present it to the committee.

Suzanne Scott, SARA General Manager, added to the discussion by informing the group about feedback received at the August 4, 2017 San Pedro Creek public meeting. Ms. Scott explained the meeting summary and noted its importance in providing guidance to the team as it considers possible design and budget changes.

Ms. Scott went on to state there were three main takeaways that came out of the public meeting. (*See Summary of Design Workshop handout for more details.*)

1. Focus on visitor comfort and ease of access. Keep focus on creek being natural and an enjoyable experience.
2. Don't try to do it all now and try to limit.
3. Keep it fresh. Allow for temporary art and artists to rotate through the years.

Mr. Averyt continued with the update and reported the project is working towards a 90% design submittal by December 2017. He would like to start construction in March 2018 and provide crews with construction continuity to maximize value. The team may accelerate the civil engineering of the Phase II design to 90% as well.

For Phase I – Segment 2 (Houston to Cesar Chavez), Mr. Averyt stated that one option is to only complete construction of Phase I to Dolorosa Street. He added that discussion is happening around postponing the completion of Segment 2 due to budgetary constraints. Funds are available for Phase II with focus on flood control around Santa Rosa.

In terms of Phase I, Segment 1, Mr. Averyt was pleased to announce that construction is going well. The project is on track to be completed by May 5, 2018. Crews are working on the pumping system to create a feed for cascading pools and are also preserving original retaining walls. Mr. Averyt cited the unique situation that allows for fill materials to be used to cover the walls during the construction effort to protect them. When construction is finished, the crew will remove the fill materials to expose the historic retaining walls.

Mr. Averyt concluded his presentation by informing the group of upcoming activities. Activities include constructing the footings and walls throughout this segment and installing limestone veneer at the Tricentennial Plaza. The crew found artifacts like an old wood revolver pistol and an axe head. These artifacts are being catalogued and may be exhibited at a later date.

Ms. Lizcano requested that locations be added to the construction progress slides and possibly directions for clearer understanding.

Status Report of San Pedro Creek Art

Carrie Brown, San Pedro Creek Art Curator provided the update. Ms. Brown stated there are a number of public art projects going on at the same time in Phase I, Segment 1. She focused her update only on the tile art murals. There are four (4) murals and the artists have essentially completed their work. Photos have been taken of the mural designs and Ms. Brown is currently getting tile samples. Ms. Brown presented information on each of the four murals for the committee.

Mural # 1 is by Adriana Garcia and the theme is 'Out of many. We are One.' This mural captures the story of San Antonio and the coming together of cultures. The mural illustrates the community history with vibrant colors and dynamic composition. The mural size is 117ft long by 12ft tall.

Mural #2 is by Katie Pell. She has created two panels that are oddly shaped because they will wrap around tree wells. The title of the work is 'Lost Nature' which is the story of lost flora and fauna.

Mural #3 is by Alex Rubio and is titled 'Flow'. His art will wrap around the maintenance shaft, which is quite large. His focus is the organic flowing of water coming to the creek.

Mural #4 is by Joe Lopez. His mural will be on Houston Street, close to the Alameda Theater. The title is 'The Community of the Alameda Theater'. The art expresses what the theater meant to the community, the types of events held, and the diverse audience it attracted. This mural is 50ft long by 8ft tall.

Mr. Ramirez asked Ms. Brown her thoughts on the impact on art elements due to cost constraints. She responded that Phase I, Segment 1 construction cost reduction does not affect the art in Segment I. Once the effort for Segment 2 begins, there will be continued discussion on art priorities and possibilities. Segment 2 may require more collaboration with the community, the design team, and the artists. Mr. Ramirez asked Ms. Brown if there is more emphasis being placed on temporary art installations versus permanent art. Ms. Brown stated that seemed to be the direction of discussions but she believes there is an opportunity for a permanent art installation in Segment 2. There were no more questions and Ms. Brown concluded her presentation.

V. Status Report on Westside Creeks Improvements Projects

Jamie Taylor, SARA Project Manager, provided the updates for this agenda item.

Elmendorf Lake Park

Mr. Taylor reminded the committee that the park improvements construction has been completed. SARA is currently installing lights around the bandstand area with remaining funds. The project has been turned over to COSA for operations and maintenance. Mr. Taylor also reminded the group that a new aquatic facility/pool was approved as part of Proposition 3 and includes \$2 million in funding. SARA will likely manage the pool construction. Construction should be complete by spring of 2019 and open to the community in summer 2019. The design contract will be advertised by October 2017. The pool design is L-shaped with a combination of lap lanes and general swimming areas. Terra Design Group will design it. The pool will be 'L' shaped and be approximately 60-75 feet on the long end. Showers, changing rooms, the pump house, and landscaping will be included within the scope of the project.

Ms. Lizcano asked if additional barbeque grills will be added to the park, as only four currently exist. Mr. Taylor responded that remaining funds were given to electricians for bandstand lighting and there is no money for additional barbeque grills. Mr. Taylor concluded his presentation and asked for questions.

Mr. Ramirez asked if the pier is reopened yet. Mr. Taylor informed the group that the pier is now open. He also informed the group that SARA checked the water fountains, as requested by Mr. Ramirez. There is a five-second delay for the water fountains as well as the splash pad. The delay functions as a safety mechanism. Water is from below ground and five-second delay allows water to cool, before it comes out of fountain or onto the splash pad. Mr. Taylor indicated signage about the delay may be installed. Ms. Lizcano asked about concerns regarding the park entry signage on Shore Drive. She is concerned the aluminum sign is not easily visible from the street and the reflection of the sun makes it difficult to identify. Mr. Taylor said the barbeque grills and signage concerns had been brought up to and turned over to COSA.

Alazan Creek

Mr. Taylor continued the update by stating the preliminary engineering reports with initial design, cost estimates, and potential site issues have been received. Mr. Taylor informed the group the trails contract was awarded to RESPEC. Survey crews have been deployed for potential site constraints and to insure elevation will match for future connections to other trails.

Mr. Taylor went on to say that SARA applied for federal funding through the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO). The Alazan Creek Trail improvements have been awarded reimbursement funding for up to \$2.5 million. While the budget will be tight, this award will ensure trail completion. The requirements of this federal funding mandate TxDOT's involvement in the design review and bidding process, and thereby

affecting schedule, which now must be condensed by 3 months to qualify for reimbursement. Mr. Taylor stated the design must be completed by June 2018 to qualify for the AAMPO funding. Mr. Ramirez noted that the Martinez Creek Trail improvements project had also applied for the grant but did not get awarded. The Martinez Creek Trail application will be re-submitted in the next federal funding cycle to compete again for AAMPO grant. Mr. Taylor reminded the committee that applying for federal funds for Martinez and Zarzamora could be costly due the fact that these projects are already in the design phase. To comply and have TxDOT be involved in the design of these projects would require halting design and that could prove to be expensive. Mr. Taylor said SARA will discuss with COSA the potential of federal funding and conduct a cost/benefit analysis of re-submitting the Martinez Creek Trail improvements for federal funds.

Mr. Taylor went on to say that additional costs associated with creek crossings and trail connections, not initially anticipated, have been identified. Crossings will be built from Lombrano Street to the SAHA property and at Arbor Place and a trail connection will be built at Poplar Street. Mr. Taylor noted the trail improvements will not require property acquisition and will be constructed within the existing publically-owned right-of-way.

Mr. Ramirez asked about the status of the trash collector at the Alazan Creek channel by Tafolla Middle School. Mr. Taylor stated the trash boom, which was destroyed by a major rain event, has been reported to the fabricator. It is under warranty and will be repaired or replaced.

Mr. Taylor informed the group that the design team is developing an ADA compliant trail. He also mentioned that concrete boxes or culverts that are designed for these types of streams, also act as a bridge. The public will view these floodwater features as a pedestrian/bike bridge.

Martinez Creek

Mr. Taylor informed the committee that Pape-Dawson was selected to lead the trail improvement efforts for Martinez and Zarzamora Creeks. The Pape-Dawson team is essentially at the same stage of design development as the RESPEC team.

Specific to Martinez Creek, Mr. Taylor stated the trail improvements will begin from the completed section at Cincinnati Ave. and continue to the confluence with Alazan Creek. There will be trailheads at University Ave., Sabinas Street, Laurel Street, Lombrano, and Delgado Street. Additionally, there are several street connections as well as connections to Ojeda Park and Farias Park. Mr. Taylor went on to say the trail improvements will all be at top of bank (not down near the channel). This approach is in line with the other trails, mitigates safety issues, and avoids potential conflicts with SAWS anticipated sewer work. SAWS and SARA will coordinate construction plans to avoid conflicts. The SAWS effort will start at same time as the trail work, in late 2018/early 2019.

Zarzamora Creek

Mr. Taylor informed the group that there seem to be no CPS easement issues and the construction of the trail .SARA will continue coordination with CPS and submit the 40% design plan to them for review and comment. The Zarzamora trail will continue upstream from General McMullen and under the bridge due to low water crossing and for public safety.

Mr. Taylor mentioned this project could be a candidate for federal funding. This topic will be discussed with the City as to whether it would be beneficial to put the design process on hold to apply for federal funds.

With regard to the design, throughout the CPS easement, trails will meander to keep bicycle speeds down and there will be benches for people to rest. The trail will terminate at Valverde Park at 36th Street. The Zarzamora trail is 0.7 miles long.

Mr. Ramirez recognized Cosima Colvin with City of San Antonio Linear Creekway Parks Advisory Board. He asked about the status of the adoption of the Westside Creeks Project. Ms. Colvin affirmed the board's adoption of Alazan and Martinez Creek trails were imminent. Ms. Colvin also expressed surprise related to SAWS construction sequencing at Martinez Creek. The Martinez trail has been delayed due to SAWS construction and leaking lines. Mr. Taylor reported that keeping trails high and away from any future infrastructure would ease delays.

Mr. Taylor concluded his presentation by stating the feasibility study conducted by the US Army Corps of Engineers calls for partial restoration of Martinez Creek.

VI. Miscellaneous Items

Mr. Ramirez acknowledged that once again there is no quorum. Mr. Ramirez and Ms. Lizcano would like to send a letter to three organizations that have not shown up for the last year. They also noted the at-large slot has been vacant for some time. Ms. Lizcano suggested that the letter attempt at not only getting a commitment from organizations, but also getting an alternate representative to ensure a presence at the meetings. Mr. Ramirez will put together a letter asking for committee attendance commitment and will give the organizations a couple of weeks to respond. The River Authority and SARA Board Member Lourdes Galvan will be approached regarding the at-large nomination of the SanAnto Cultural Arts organization.

VII. Citizens to be Heard

Arrie Porter, San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA) Senior Manager for Neighborhood Revitalization, reported that SAHA is going to apply for the Choice Neighborhood Program Grant. The application for the program grant is due by November 22, 2017 for the Alazan/Apache Courts property. If the grant is awarded, this area will be revitalized.

Ms. Porter expressed interest in working with SARA on the Alazan Creek improvement project.

Ms. Lizcano asked about the status of the veteran statue proposed for Elmendorf Lake Park. Mr. Ramirez stated the effort for the veteran's statue project is dormant due to lack of funding and is in the hands of COSA and LULAC. The Committee will send inquiries to Lourdes Galvan, SARA Board member and LULAC member.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:29 pm.