



**Westside Creeks Restoration  
Oversight Committee (WCROC) Meeting  
San Antonio River Authority  
100 E. Guenther  
Tuesday, February 9, 2016  
Notes**

**Committee Members Present:**

Robert Ramirez, Co-Chair  
Theodore Ozuna, Donaldson Terrace NA  
Joanne Walsh, Downtown Residents Assoc.  
Cary Guffey, Our Lady of the Lake University  
Stella de la Garza, SA Conservation Society  
Abel Ramirez, San Antonio Wheelman

Evelynn Mitchell, St. Mary's University  
Kamala Platt, TexasTejano.Com  
Jude Valdez, University Texas San Antonio  
Skye Curd, West SA Chamber of Commerce  
Karen Weehler, Woodlawn Lake NA

**Staff and Public Present:**

Suzanne Scott, SARA  
Kerry Averyt, SARA  
Jeff Tyler, SARA  
Rudy Farias, SARA  
Bridget Hinze, SARA  
Sonia Jimenez, Ximenes & Assoc.  
Amanda Onochie, SA Metro Health  
Nicholas Tello, St. Mary's University

Dave Stafford, Downtown Residents Assoc.  
Charles Bartlett, Linear Creeks Parks Advisory Bd.  
Perla Alacron, COSA  
Veronica Mendez, COSA Metro  
Phoebe Gonzalez, Community Member  
Gianna Rendon, Esperanza Peace & Justice Center  
Gloria Almaraz

**I. Welcome**

Robert Ramirez, Co-Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He asked that committee members and the public introduce themselves. Mr. Ramirez also informed the group that his co-chair, Olga Lizcano, was unable to attend due to a family emergency.

**II. Calendar Items**

- San Pedro Creek Subcommittee Meeting – February 11, 2016 at 8:30 a.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Boardroom
- Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee Meeting – April 12, 2016 (changed to April 19 – agenda item VII) at 6:00 p.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Boardroom.

**III. Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 8, 2015**

Mr. Ramirez asked if there were any objections to approving the minutes as drafted. Noting there were none, the minutes are approved by consensus.

**IV. Update on San Pedro Creek Improvements Project**

Kerry Averyt, San Antonio River Authority (SARA), provided the updated. The full presentation was distributed to all committee members. Mr. Averyt reminded the committee of the design team members. HDR is the lead, Muñoz is the architect of record, and Pape-Dawson is leading the civil engineering design component.

Mr. Averyt went on to state that Bexar County Commissioners Court, on December 8, 2015, gave approval for the effort to move forward. On December 15, SARA returned to Commissioner's Court to provide the updated project schedule and information on the

alternative delivery method, construction manager at risk (CMAR). Subsequently, on January 26, 2016, Commissioners Court was presented and approved the advertisement and Request for Proposal (RFP) related to awarding the CMAR construction contract.

With regard to the project design status, Mr. Averyt stated the goal remains to have as much as constructed as possible by May 5, 2018. The CMAR will work with the design team and identify ways to save money and regain some time. By using the CMAR approach, construction can commence before design is 100% complete. The CMAR will be on board by May of this year. There will be a series of guaranteed maximum price estimates provided for each design submittal. Construction is slated to begin this summer and the entire project will be under way by the end of the year.

A committee asked what makes the CMAR process faster and will there be a groundbreaking. Mr. Averyt responded by explaining that the design does not have to be complete for construction to begin and there will be a groundbreaking.

Mr. Averyt continued explaining the CMAR award process involves two steps. The first step is to issue a request for qualifications (RFQ). Responders, that are determined to be qualified, will proceed to step two and submit a response to the request for proposals (RFP). The selection committee will choose a CMAR from the pool of RFP applicants. The selection committee will be comprised of three (3) representatives from Bexar County and two (2) SARA representatives. The number expected to submit is unknown but 10 different firms have requested the plans. The RFQ responses are due March 4, 2016. Thereafter, SARA will go to Commissioners Court to recommend the shortlist and get approval for the RFP advertisement. The RFP responses and interviews will occur in April. In May, SARA will return to Commissioners Court and recommend the CMAR selection and scope of work for approval. Mr. Averyt concluded this portion of the update by explaining the RFP evaluation criteria and stating that SARA will be the construction administrator. He then went on to update the committee on the public art program.

The San Pedro Creek Public Art Program will be a coordinated effort with Bexar County, the City of San Antonio (COSA), the San Antonio River Authority (SARA), and Public Art San Antonio (PASA). The kick-off meeting was held on January 12 and a detailed presentation will be made at the San Pedro Creek meeting on February 11.

The question was raised about the 1% funding for the public art. Suzanne Scott, General Manager of SARA, informed the committee that the current design effort still has art components and the COSA's one-percent art component does not apply to this project as it is funded by Bexar County. The County is committed to public art and asked for several models from around the nation. Ms. Scott concluded by stating the County is most interested in best practices and exploring the idea of revolving art to attract funders and allow more opportunity for local artists.

Mr. Averyt wrapped up his presentation with next steps. These steps include final comment from external stakeholders and issuing the RFQ for the CMAR at the end of January; the CMAR contract award and 70% design resubmittal in May; the first guaranteed maximum price (GMP) and potential early release package due in August and a second one in October; the 100% design is due in November; the final GMP from the CMAR is slated for December; and the balance of the construction documents will be made available in January 2017.

The question of cost and the CMAR ensuring the 100% design will be built as shown was posed to Mr. Averyt. He replied the total cost of the project for all four phases is \$175M. The team is accessing the changes and will have a better idea at the next committee meeting. As for the CMAR delivering the design, there will be a series of GMP's to gauge the cost as the construction is being completed. The CMAR approach better ensures the design is delivered.

## **V. Status Report on Westside Creeks Improvements Project**

### **Westside Creeks Linear Creekway Trails**

Jeff Tyler, San Antonio River Authority, provided the update and briefed the committee on each of the construction projects.

Apache/San Pedro – Mr. Tyler reported the entire effort is about 3 miles total and 55 percent complete. The trail runs from Cassiano to Nogalitos. He showed some progress photos of the completed work by the future Boys and Girls Club near Ralph Street. The stretch from Ralph to Nogalitos will be complete in May 2016.

Alazan/Martinez – Mr. Tyler reported each trail is about a half mile long and both are approximately 50 percent complete. The furnishings and signage will be installed after the trail itself is fully constructed. The Martinez trail will run from Fredericksburg to Woodlawn. The Alazan Trail will connect from Lombrano Street to the Woodlawn Lake Casting Pond. Mr. Tyler showed progress photos of both trails.

### **Elmendorf Lake Park**

Mr. Tyler continued the update. He reminded the committee that three contractors are completing the improvements. The project is approximately 65 percent complete. The bridges and islands are complete. The basic amenities are the same as the original design but the footprint is different. The playground has been upgraded with rubberized surfaces and the splash pad and future swimming pool will be in the same area. The splash pad will be part of this effort. The existing pool has been removed and a new pool will be part of the COSA 2017 Bond package. The existing pool would have cost \$1.2 million to repair and the funding was never identified. Mr. Ramirez stated he met with SARA Board Member Lourdes Galvan, SARA General Manager Suzanne Scott, and Councilwoman Gonzales. He believes the park improvements will be much better with the new approach. The pool will be designed for swim meets, have a beach/shallow entry and will be state of the art. The committee asked for an updated design illustration.

Mr. Tyler went on to remind the committee there are six aerators, three diffusers, and a number of best management practices (bioswales, rain gardens, etc.) to help with water quality and storm runoff. He then showed the progress photos. The trail at 19<sup>th</sup> and Commerce will tie into the "Radle" trail that is being refinished in concrete.

Lourdes Galvan, SARA Board Member, thanked the SARA staff and COSA Parks for the funding. She also believes the Councilwoman's vision is very nice and appreciates the Co-chairs staying on top of everything. She will make sure the community gets what is deserved and praised the committee for fine job.

Mr. Tyler was asked if the walls would be an opportunity for a mural. He replied the park walls have veneer and the trail walls will be 2-4 feet concrete walls. The trail walls may present a better opportunity since they are longer and smoother. All walls are being treated with anti-graffiti finish. [The decision to do murals is outside the scope of the current improvement effort.]

Mr. Tyler then took a few questions from the committee regarding the birds, plantings, and Apache Creek restoration. He replied Rookery [Bird] Island has not been disturbed and the habitat is protected. The plantings include native and water varieties to reduce pollutants. They will be planted with a three-foot buffer for safety. He also informed the committee that Apache Creek is partially concrete lined and the grass areas may be modified with the USACE's restoration efforts. Furthermore, to mitigate trash, SARA is funding a device just west of General McMullen to collect floating trash. The Elmendorf Lake watershed is fully developed and geomorphology is not as natural. SARA maintains downstream channel and looking at approaches to mitigate trash even more. Mr. Tyler stated SARA takes water samples twice a year to monitor impacts of improvements. Dr. Guffey volunteered his equipment and labor at Elmendorf Lake.

Rudy Farias, San Antonio River Authority, stated the schedule for Elmendorf Lake Park construction tours. They will be offered on Friday, 2/19 and 3/11 from 8:30-9:30 a.m. Additionally, SARA staff is out there and can make alternate arrangements if these times are not convenient.

Mr. Farias then provided an update on the motions from the last meeting. He stated that Nelson Elementary is closed and the school district is in talks with the archdiocese to use the space. All trail connections are in the public realm. The Alazan Creek trail connection for Nelson Elementary is in the public right-of-way behind the school off of Kentucky. With regards to the Apache Creek trail, Cooper Academy will have two access points, one at Potosi and the other at Navidad. The Alazan Apache Courts will have trail access just off Brazos as well as off of San Jacinto. The KIPP Academy will have access to San Pedro Creek trails and it will be coordinated as part of the improvements effort. The Calderon Boys and Girls Club will have access at Nogalitos and across from Ralph Street. Finally, Harris Academy will have access to the Apache Creek trail across the street at Cass.

As for security and lighting near the trails, Mr. Farias explained the trails will be open from dawn to dusk. Near the Lincoln Courts, on Alazan Creek, there are two utility poles, one at Laurel Street and the other at Henry Street. These utility poles may serve as possibilities to readjust the lighting so that it cast onto the trail. This would have to be coordinated with CPS Energy. The issue may not be resolved with this current trail improvements effort but the conversation will be initiated. There will be lighting under bridges/underpasses at Commerce and 24<sup>th</sup> as part of the Elmendorf Lake improvements. A member of the public thanked Mr. Farias for looking into the issue. She informed the committee there are several homeless camps and dark areas that attract negative activity. Mr. Ramirez thanked Mr. Farias for addressing the motions.

The trails update concluded with Mr. Tyler stating the new trails will be complete in April and in February, the COSA Linear Creeks Advisory Board will vote on which trail improvements will receive proposition funding.

The question of signage came up and Mr. Farias explained that for Alazan and Martinez Creek the history of the area will be highlighted. The Alazan Creek signs will focus on history of Woodlawn Lake and the history of the Art Deco District and flood control will be the focus on Martinez Creek signs. As for Elmendorf Lake Park and Apache and San Pedro Creeks, there is more information to review but there will be mile markers and maps included in the signage package.

A committee member requested a report on the budget, funding sources and allocations, and changes to the Elmendorf Park Lake improvements. Mr. Tyler informed the group that the budget was \$14.25 million and is now \$15.2 million.

A member of the public informed the group that COSA Parks and Recreation will be leading trail safety steward programs for the Westside Creeks. These creeks will be treated the same as other trail ways with SAPD patrol present within hours of opening.

#### **VI. Citizens to be Heard**

Phoebe Gonzalez, community member, stated her interest is in Elmendorf Lake Park. She is glad to attend the meeting knowing that things happen without community approval or knowledge. Specifically, she stated until now she did not know the pool was being taken out [of the current improvement effort]. The community did not approve the pool being removed from the current effort. She expressed her sadness and stated that it will lessen the sense of community because the children pack the pool all summer long. The decision to take it out is unconscionable. While she sees the benefit of what is coming later [pool proposed for financed through 2017 Bond], it is not what the community was promised and the community was let down. Mr. Ramirez explained the entire committee shared her sentiment and emphasized the committee's role in carrying forward community desires. He also made it clear the decision was not SARA's or the committees.

#### **VII. Miscellaneous Items**

Mr. Farias brought up the fact this committee meets every other month on the second Tuesday and the San Pedro Creek (SPC) committee meets every month on the second Thursday. Mr. Farias suggested the WCROC consider changing the meeting to the third Tuesday of every other month in order to keep up with the SPC progress. Joann Walsh made a motion to move the meetings to the third Tuesday of every other month. Skye Curd seconded. The committee had a short discussion about the importance of keeping up with the SPC progress especially once construction starts. The motion passed with ten in favor. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 19.

Sonia Jimenez, Planning Chair for the Annual Basura Bash River and Waterway Clean Up, invited the committee to participate in the annual event. It is scheduled for Saturday, February 20 from 8 a.m. to noon. She thanked Abigail Rodriguez for starting a new cleanup site along Salado Creek and informed the committee that District 5 Councilwoman Gonzalez's office will be leading the effort to clean up Alazan Creek near the Guadalupe Street Bridge.

#### **VIII. Adjourn**

With no further business to attend to Mr. Ramirez formally adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:45 p.m.