



**Westside Creeks Restoration
Oversight Committee Meeting
San Antonio River Authority
100 E. Guenther
November 20, 2018
6:00 pm**

Committee Members Present

Robert Ramirez, Co-Chair
Skye Curd, Co-Chair
Matthew Purdy, Beacon Hill Area NA
Anne Parrish, Bexar Audubon Society
Joanne Walsh, Downtown Residents
Association
Stella Tenorio-De La Garza, San Antonio
Conservation Society

Carmen Vazquez-Gonzalez, SAISD
Abel Ramirez, San Antonio Wheelmen
Juan Ocampo, St. Mary's University
Kamala Platt, TexasTejano.com
Al Salgado, UT- San Antonio
Veronica Lopez, W SA Chamber
Charles Olsten, Woodlawn Lake NA

SARA, Consultants, and Public Present

Lourdes Galvan, Precinct 2
Kerry Averyt, SARA
Richard De La Cruz, SARA
Carrie Brown, SARA
Daniel Leal, COSA

Tomas Guadiano, Jr., WEHA
Rich Acosta, My City is My Home
Sonia Jimenez, Ximenes & Associates
Hillary Lilly, SARA

I. Welcome

Skye Curd opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She then invited new committee members to introduce themselves and say a few words. Juan Ocampo with St. Mary's University introduced himself as an assistant professor in the mechanical engineering department. He said he has lived in San Antonio for 12 years and considers it home. He said he looked forward to seeing trails through the St. Mary's University Campus. Next, Veronica Lopez introduced herself as the Communications & Partnerships Specialist with the West San Antonio Chamber of Commerce. She said she calls San Antonio home and looks forward to learning as much as possible. Then Al Salgado introduced himself with the Institute of Economic Development at UTSA. He said he primarily works with small businesses. He also talked about planned improvements at the UTSA downtown campus and talked about their interest in the student quality of life and development in the downtown area. Robert Ramirez noted that UTSA is also now a member of the San Pedro Creek Subcommittee. He also said Mr. Salgado is replacing Dr. Jude Valdez. SARA Board Member Lourdes Galvan introduced herself to the new committee members and welcomed them to the committee.

II. Citizens to be Heard

Cosima Colvin thanked the committee for moving the citizens to be heard to the top of the agenda so that citizens did not have to wait until the end of the meeting to speak. She said she represents the Linear Creekways Advisory Board District 1.

Rich Acosta introduced himself as the President of My City is My Home. He said he is a real estate agent, subcontractor, and president of a non-profit. He said his non-profit is new and

the only organization that helps people protest their property tax for free. He said his group would also be helping people with section 8 vouchers find homes and would be building homes for under \$100k for homeowners facing displacement due to gentrification. He said he started the non-profit because of the San Pedro Creek Project. He said he was attending city meetings and heard from the community about gentrification concerns. He said that before an area is improved, properties should be assessed to see what the property values are in compared to the median income and if the property values are low, consider ways to provide protections for those property owners. He said this is important because as soon as investors find out about improvements, they will be knocking on doors trying to buy properties. He said Austin has preservation zones and said this may be worth considering for San Antonio. He said he was in favor of the improvements but said protections needed to be afforded to those residents already living in the area.

Tomas Guadiano with the West End Hope in Action out of the Frank Guerra Community Center. He said he is concerned about the connection to Lombrano Street. He said the trail was great but that he expected a connection to Culebra from the trail. He also expressed concerns about the Martinez Creek trail. He said a connection to Farias Park is desired but that he had not heard what was happening or planned. Mr. Ramirez encouraged him to stay for the presentation on proposed improvements that will be starting soon along Martinez Creek.

III. Calendar Items

Mr. Rodriguez then reviewed the calendar items. The calendar review included:

- Monday Night Yoga, 7:30 P.M. & 9:00 P.M. through November 2018, San Pedro Creek Culture Park Boardwalk
- River of Lights, December 1, 2018 6:00 P.M. Museum Reach
- ILLUME Holiday Celebration, December 8, 2018 6:00 P.M. San Pedro Creek Culture Park
- San Pedro Creek Culture Park Holiday Programming December 11 & 18, 2018
- San Pedro Creek Sub-Committee Meeting, December 13, 2018 8:30 A.M. 100 E. Guenther St., San Antonio, TX 78204
- San Pedro Creek Sub-Committee Meeting, January 10, 2019 8:30 A.M. 100 E. Guenther St., San Antonio, TX 78204
- San Pedro Creek Sub-Committee Meeting, February 14, 2019 8:30 A.M. 100 E. Guenther St., San Antonio, TX 78204
- Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee Meeting, February 19, 2019 6:00 P.M. 100 E. Guenther St. San Antonio, TX 78204

IV. Approval of Minutes – May 15, 2018 and August 21, 2018

Ms. Curd then called for approval of the meeting minutes for May 15, 2018 and August 21, 2018. Ms. Lopez moved to approve the minutes and Stella Tenorio-De La Garza provided a second. Ms. Curd then called for approval and the minutes were approved as drafted.

V. Status Report on Westside Creeks Improvements Projects and Elmendorf Lake Park Pool

Ms. Curd then called Richard De La Cruz, with SARA, to present on the Westside Creeks. Mr. Ramirez said he is the new project manager. Mr. De La Cruz said he has been at SARA for 3 months and took over project management for the Westside Creeks hike and bike trails. He

said he would also be presenting on the Elmendorf Pool. Mr. De La Cruz pulled up a map of projects and outlined the location of each. He said the construction phase started in October 2018 and the completion should be May 2019. He said the Elmendorf Pool improvement is funded through the City of San Antonio and SARA is managing the project. He said it has several features including a beach entrance, 3 - 25 ft. meter lap lanes, and over 5,000 square feet. He said there is a building in the middle with restrooms and changing stalls. He said the project is currently at 10% completion and showed pictures from the construction site.

He then talked about Zarzamora Creek. He said he expected to award a bid in December with a January 2019 start date. He said some of the trail details include 10 ft wide hike and bike trails, eight street connections and two water crossings. He also said there would be a trailhead at San Ignacio. He then showed a rendering of the bridge at 29th Street and of the San Ignacio trailhead. Mr. Ramirez asked if that was the bridge that goes from the new trail to the park. Mr. De La Cruz said that was correct that it goes along Rosedale. Mr. Ramirez said this bridge was an important connection from Rosedale Park to the Westside Creeks Trail.

Mr. De La Cruz then talked about the Alazan Creek Trail. He said it is at 100% design with a bid award in early 2019 and construction to begin soon after. He said there are still some pending approvals needed from Union Pacific, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Texas Department of Transportation before the project can be advertised. He said the trail is 2.9 miles long with 10 ft. wide concrete hike and bike trails. He said this project includes 7 street connections and a railroad crossing. He said Martinez Creek also ties into Alazan Creek Trail at Farias Park. Mr. Guadiano said the connection from Lombrano is great, but his concern is that there is not another connection until Woodlawn Lake. He said he wanted to see a connection to Culebra or Waverly. Daniel Leal, with COSA Parks, said they tried to make a connection to Culebra but the owner of a business in the area was not willing to sell to allow for access to the creek. Mr. Leal said there are many streets that they could connect but they are constrained by budget and the availability of land. He said they tried to focus connections in areas where SARA or the City already owned land. Ms. Colvin said she was not sure what happened at Waverly. Mr. Guadiano said there are two potential connections to Culebra and one of the property owners was not willing to sell but there was another opportunity. Ms. Colvin said she would look into it and get back to Mr. Guadiano. Mr. De La Cruz then showed a rendering of the Arbor Street connection and what it would look like.

Mr. De La Cruz went on to present on Martinez Creek. He said this project was on hold waiting for some SAWS work to finish. He said it would be bid by late 2019 with construction starting in the early part of 2020. He said there is a pending approval from the USACE on this one as well. He said the project is 1.5 miles long with a 10 ft. concrete hike and bike trail. He said that on the north end it will connect to the existing trail at Cincinnati and on the south end it will connect to the Alazan Creek Trail at Farias Park. He showed a rendering of the Sabinas Street trailhead. He said the trailhead provides wayfinding, parking, access to the trails, and areas for rest. He then showed the University Avenue trailhead. He then pointed out some of the amenities along the trail such as water fountains, emergency phone, and seating, along with signs and wayfinding.

Mr. De La Cruz then provided some information on the Creek Debris Collection System. He said it was installed by SARA to help improve the water quality downstream and also keeps the streams more aesthetically pleasing for visitors. He said some of the challenges include being able to empty it regularly, especially after rain events. He said also said it is difficult to collect debris during normal flows and it impacts mowing. Ms. Curd said it was her understanding that this was still a proof of concept or pilot. Mr. De La Cruz said that was accurate. Ms. Colvin asked if this is the same one as the one near Tafolla MS. The response was that it is the same. Ms. Lopez asked what the purpose was of the black pipes. Mr. De La Cruz said it was to ensure it does not float away. Ms. Colvin asked if there is a barrier to keep kids from climbing on it. Mr. De La Cruz said it is difficult to prevent people from getting near it because of the size and location. He said it sits out in the open without fencing. He said the device is very sturdy. SARA staff said they have also been working with Tafolla MS to talk with students, teachers, and parents to educate them on what it is and why it is there. The hope is that through this education they can prevent anyone from messing with it or getting hurt.

Mr. Ramirez said there is a segment of the Apache Creek from 19th Street to Cassiano Park that was on hold while SAWS finished some work. Mr. De La Cruz said he met with SAWS about this and they are at 40% complete. Mr. Ramirez asked if that is the project that was supposed to be done by May and Mr. De La Cruz said it was. Mr. Ramirez said Apache is one of the first projects they started developing but it is not open to the public until SAWS finishes their work which they hope will be in May 2019.

Ms. Galvan pointed out that sometimes there is very shallow water. She said it is primarily effective when there are heavy rains. It can then capture floatables but usually it is not moving. Then a representative of the Bexar Audubon Society asked if the water moves through it. Mr. De La Cruz said the water can go through it depending on the water levels. She then asked if there was also education about not throwing tires into the creeks. Mr. De La Cruz said there is. Ms. Lopez asked if this is the only device of its type. Mr. De La Cruz said there is a pipe collection system on Zarzamora Creek that catches floatables. Ms. Lopez asked if there have been any studies done to determine the impact of the device. Mr. De La Cruz said that is part of what is being done as part of the pilot. He said SARA collects the debris and weighs it. He said they could bring back more data and information to future meetings. Then Mr. Guadiano asked the cost of the band-along system. Mr. De La Cruz said he was not sure but could find out. Mr. Ramirez asked for the order of projects in 2019. Mr. De La Cruz said it would be Zarzamora Creek, Alazan Creek, and Apache Creek followed by the swimming pool.

VI. Status Report on San Pedro Creek Culture Park – Kerry Averyt, SARA

Kerry Averyt said he did not have many additional updates since his last presentation to the committee. He showed them an updated phase map and said Phase 1.1 is complete all the way to Houston Street. He said they are currently working on 1.2 between Houston and Nueva. He said 1.3 and Phases 2, 3, and 4 are currently being planned. Mr. Averyt said there are a few remaining items in Phase 1.1.

Mr. Ramirez asked if there were any updates on the status of the Frost Building. Mr. Averyt said it was scheduled to open in June 2019 and the Cameron Street construction is

expected to be complete by the opening. He said to meet that goal, COSA asked SARA to add the Cameron Street project to the SARA contract. Mr. Ramirez then asked if there is a parking agreement with Columbus Society. Mr. Averyt said they did have this contract in place to allow people to park in their lot when visiting the park. He said SARA had crews out there repaving the parking lot so that it can be done and ready by December 8. Mr. Ramirez asked if the parking spots set aside for the park would be marked. A SARA representative said they would be marked and that there would be signage and ongoing coordination with the Columbus Society.

Mr. Ramirez said there had been an algae issue when the park first opened but this committee had not been updated on it. Mr. Averyt said there was a major algae issue. Any time the water was off in 100-degree weather the algae just flourished. He said crews have used hydrogen peroxide to help stabilize the area and keep the algae under control. He said it is not an issue now that the temperature has cooled down, but that SARA staff would look to have a plan in place before next spring and summer. Ms. Colvin asked what other type of wildlife was being seen along the creek. Mr. Averyt said they have had quite a few ducks, a tremendous amount of fish and bugs that are being seen. She then asked if this was being documented and he said it was not but that he could look into this.

Ms. Colvin asked if there is any kind of water quality testing being done. Mr. Averyt said they are doing weekly testing and that any time it rains the E. coli count spikes and then it dissipates after the rain stops. He said they kept the pools closed for most of September and October and they were finally able to open the pools the past weekend for the first time in a long time. Someone asked how the hydrogen peroxide works. He said he did not know the chemistry behind it, but he could bring something for the next meeting. He said his basic understanding is that it starves the algae of the food it needs to grow.

Ms. Colvin asked if they knew the source of the E. coli. Mr. Averyt said they have to wait until it gets below 300 before they can open the pools. He said there are 44 acres emptying runoff into this segment of the river which is likely what causes the spike.

He then talked about the remaining items in Phase 1.1. He said the tunnel inlet lighting has had some issues with water getting into the fixtures. He said there are some issues between the vendor and the design team. He said the biggest item is the Santa Rosa Pedestrian crossing. He showed an image of the pedestrian crossing and explained that traffic coming off of I-10 and drivers cannot see pedestrians crossing. He said they are adding a rapid rectangular flashing beacon. He said they would also be adding a mirror closer to the crossing, so pedestrians can see approaching traffic. Ms. Lopez asked if that was near the parking lot, they would have shared use of and Mr. Averyt said it was.

Mr. Averyt then talked about Phase 1.2. He said all the demo was complete and they were currently working on electric splicing at Commerce. He said the water line work is going on at Dolorosa near the Plaza de Armas. He said the archeological work at Calder Alley has been completed. He said there were three trenches opened up and they discovered numerous items. He said they would still have an archeologist on hand during excavation work needed for the project.

He said they are still drilling shafts near the Commerce Street bridge. He said that component of work is not impacted by rain, so it has been able to keep moving forward. He said the Commerce Street closure began at the end of June and was supposed to open in September, but this has been impacted by the rain. He said the project has encountered numerous underground conflicts. He said they also had issues with an electrical duct bank. They drilled into it and damaged it and had to repair it. He said the plan is to have the bridge fully open by October 2019. Mr. Averyt showed various images of the ongoing construction. He said one lane of Commerce Street would be opened by mid-December. He said CPS still needs to splice some of their lines and once they are done one of the lanes can open.

He said on Phase 1.2 design they received the 100% designs at the end of July and the guaranteed price by the end of September and it was higher than what they needed it to be. He said they did some value engineering to try to streamline the design and will be presenting the final cost to Commissioners Court. He then showed the committee the latest renderings. He said there were not any major changes, just minor reductions. He then walked through several of the renderings. He said one of the things they wanted to do is use the same materials throughout the paseos. He said they also want to open up the Spanish Governor's Palace to bring it into view. He showed the committee where the murals would go and indicated what is shown is just a placeholder. Ms. Galvan said this area should not have concrete. Mr. Averyt said this area will actually have limestone.

Mr. Averyt then discussed some of the partner coordination. He talked about meeting with the San Antonio ISD and a rendering they are developing of their new administration building along the project. He said SARA is also starting to coordinate with the UTSA expansion project. He showed how San Pedro Creek comes into the area where the campus plans to expand.

He talked about taking the project before the executive committee in December. Ms. Lopez asked when the lane on Commerce would be open. Mr. Averyt said by the middle of December 2018. She also asked when the whole project would be completed, and Mr. Averyt said by the end of October of 2019.

VII Update on Public Art for San Pedro Creek Culture Park – Carrie Brown, SARA

Mr. Rodriguez introduced Carrie Brown. She began with an update on Illume. She said it would be from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and will be an international holiday celebration along San Pedro Creek. She said this will also launch the temporary art installation program. She said there will also be food trucks and food vendors and will feature additional lighting along San Pedro Creek. For the event, Ms. Brown said they would be closing down northbound Santa Rosa which will allow them to use the bridge that goes over the creek. She said they would also be closing Cameron Street in order to be able to stage vendors and the stage. She said there would also be a large-scale digital LED sign that spells out Illume. She then pointed out the various parking areas for the event. She said they anticipate a larger crowd for this event. Sonia Jimenez asked if they would be using the Fine Silver parking lot for the event. Ms. Brown said they are not but that they are exploring this option. Ms. Brown then showed a rendering of the temporary installation. She said it is a series of LED light strings that are programmable and will float on the water. She says they are working closely with operations staff to make sure that it is maintainable for them. She then listed the food

vendors. She also mentioned that the Cristopher Columbus Society will be hosting a beer and wine garden. She said the food is meant to be very diverse. She said music will be provided by a DJ and performers will include flamenco dancers and a drum group. She also showed some of the lighting elements that are being made.

Ms. Brown then talked about the December 11 and 18 events. She said they are smaller events that will not include street closures. She said there will also be a closing event in January for the closing of the temporary light installation. Ms. Curd asked if the San Pedro Creek app has the capability to push out information about upcoming events. Ms. Brown said she does not know if there are push notifications but there is event information available in the app.

Ms. Lopez asked if SARA has been engaging with small business owners near the creek to let them know about the event. Ms. Brown said this is happening through the community relations team at SARA.

Ms. Colvin asked about the extent of the art installation. Ms. Brown said the installation will only be from the Santa Rosa Bridge down to the gate house. She said it is approximately two blocks.

Ms. Brown then provided an update on the tricentennial artwork. She said they are currently in the selection process for the artwork. She said they received 166 applications and the selection panel reviewed them and selected four finalists. Oscar Alvarado from San Antonio, the Bridge Project which is a team from San Antonio, Daily tous le jours from Montreal, and Madeline Weiner from Denver. She said the proposals from these artists will likely be very diverse and give the selection committee something to think about. One of the committee members asked if Oscar Alvarado's work is at Elmendorf Lake. Ms. Brown said he actually did the seating and panther at Hemisfair Park and that he does have other work around town. She then said the finalists will be developing proposals. She said they came together for a meeting to tour the site and to better understand the limitations of the project. She said proposals are due by December 5 and then interviews will follow on December 12. She said the goal is to get a recommended proposal to Commissioners Court in January 2019. Ms. Brown said that as part of the scope of work for this project, SARA staff told artists that they would like to be able to continue to program the site.

VIII. Miscellaneous Items

Ms. Curd thanked everyone for attending and participating in the meeting. Mr. Ramirez reminded everyone that the next meeting is February 19th and said he hoped to see everyone then. Both wished everyone a good Thanksgiving.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:21 P.M.