



**Westside Creeks Restoration
Oversight Committee (WCROC) Meeting
San Antonio River Authority
100 E. Guenther
Tuesday, February 10, 2015
Notes**

Committee Members Present:

Robert Ramirez, Co-Chair
Gabriel Velasquez, Avenida Guadalupe
Theodore Ozuna, Donaldson Terrace NA
Joanne Walsh, Downtown Residents Assoc.
Dave Stafford, Downtown Residents Assoc.
(alt)
Jason Martina, Our Lady of the Lake University
(alt)

Stella de la Garza, SA Conservation Society
Patti Radle, San Antonio ISD
Abel Ramirez, San Antonio Wheelman
Pedro Balawag, San Antonio Wheelman (alt)
Evelyn Mitchell, St. Mary's University
Jocelyn Van Coney, Westside Development Corp.

Staff and Public Present:

Suzanne Scott, SARA
Jeff Tyler, SARA
Rudy Farias, SARA
Bridget Hinze, SARA
Austin Snell, SARA

Claude Harding, SARA
David Garza, COSA CCDO
Sonia Jimenez, Ximenes & Assoc.
Tomas Guadiano, WEHA

I. Welcome

Mr. Robert Ramirez, Committee Co-Chair, convened the meeting.

Mr. Ramirez introduced Jocelyn Van Coney as the new representative for the Westside Development Corporation, Pedro Balawag as the alternate for San Antonio Wheelman, Austin Snell with the San Antonio River Authority Real Estate Department, and Tomas Guadiano with West End Hope in Action

II. Calendar Items

- San Pedro Creek Subcommittee Meeting – February 12, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Board Room
- Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee Meeting – April 14, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Board Room

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 9, 2014

The motion was made, and seconded, to approve the minutes. The motion passed and the minutes were approved as presented.

IV. Update on San Pedro Creek Improvements Project, Steve Tillotson, Munoz and Company

Mr. Tillotson provided the committee with a presentation of the progress. The current effort is estimated at \$175 million with only partial funding identified at this time. The main effort is to resolve flood control and water quality issues. In April, additional design information will be available as well as a more refined cost estimate.

The presentation included information on the water character and quality elements. There will be three crest gates to define flood control and water character. Recirculation pumps will be used from the tunnel inlet to the outlet with an open streambed in between. The water level will remain constant from the inlet to the crest gate at Travis Street. From Travis Street to Dolorosa, there will be a 5-foot decrease in the water level. From Nueva to El Paso, there will be an active creek with a bubbling stream. From El Paso, the water character will flatten and be held back by the S. Alamo crest gate and recirculate into the tunnel outlet structure. Mr. Tillotson showed the committee the locations for the crest gates and described them as visually unobtrusive but fun design objects. He also noted the designated hike and bike trail will terminate near the gatehouse at S. Alamo. It is intended to have amenities at the gatehouse.

The second part of the presentation, Mr. Tillotson informed the committee about the associated art program. The selected artist to curate the public art component is Jorge Rodriguez-Gerada. The design team and the County have met with him and the scope is being developed.

The committee had discussion on the art program. There were several concerns about public art being created by local artist and keeping the San Antonio "flavor". They were pleased the art was being incorporated as part of the design and construction and not as an afterthought. The artist was identified by the Muñoz team and approved by the County. Mr. Tillotson stated the project's character needs to be established and the art program developed before specifics about the selection process will be finalized. The committee suggested using local artists and children. They also want the art to reflect the local environment and the history of the creek. It was further suggested that parameters be put in place to guarantee local talent creates a certain percentage of the art. Mr. Tillotson assured the committee that the budget would not allow for too many international artists and a good mix of locals will be included.

V. Update on Elmendorf Lake Park Improvements, Jeff Tyler, SARA

Mr. Tyler began the update by reminding the committee that the initial bid effort was conducted late last year with the bids exceeding the allotted budget. A new bid process was advertised with the project split into three-parts. The new process was a success with the bids coming in within the budget. The SARA Board will approve the contracts next week. The construction schedule is 400-days with a March 2015 start and completion slated for April 2016. The River Authority is in the process of meeting with the funding partners, the City and the County, to vet out the bids. The low bidders that are anticipated to get the construction awards are Mac, Inc., Jerdon, and Northern Journeyman Construction.

The committee asked a few questions related to Our Lady of the Lake University contributing to the coordinating the effort. The coordination has not been solidified and on-going discussions are occurring to determine the best way to contribute. The question of the construction being the same as the design was asked and a lengthy discussion ensued when Mr. Tyler informed the committee that the budget does not allow for a new swimming pool, playground, and interactive fountain as part of the current effort. The new construction will allow for these improvements at a later date when funding is secured. Mr. Tyler emphasized the primary goals of the project are addressing water quality and pedestrian connectivity. The existing pool will be slightly improved and the existing playground will remain.

The features included in the new construction are pedestrian bridges, water quality features including shoreline restoration and best management practices (BMP's). The current effort is estimated at \$12.27 million. With regard to trash, the contractors will include the trash boom by General McMullen as a value-added component. The River Authority will continue to work with the contractors and determine if any of the additive alternates (pool, playground, and fountain) can be part of the value added from the contractor. While the City is not happy about the additive alternates not being part of this effort, they did not want to delay the entire project while

seeking the additional funds. Suzanne Scott added that there may be some potential to secure funding if the City has any bond savings from the 2012 projects.

Gabriel Velasquez made a motion to send the City and County correspondence from the WCROC to come up with the funding to complete the project as it was presented to the public. Joanne Walsh seconded the motion. The discussion that followed the motion included a request for the design to be presented, as it will be constructed, now that the add-alts are not included. Patti Radle added the letter should include comments related to the risk of increased public perception of the government's commitment to the near Westside. The motion passed unanimously. The River Authority will draft the letter to be signed by the WCROC Co-Chairs. SARA Board Commissioner Lourdes Galvan will be asked to sponsor and sign the letter. The River Authority will also update the plans on the website as needed and plan to have a pre-construction meeting to present the new concept. They will also meet with Councilwoman Gonzales.

VI. Update on the Westside Creeks Linear Creekway Trails, Rudy Farias, SARA

Mr. Farias notified the committee of the latest news on trails for Alazan and Martinez. In late January the bid opening occurred. The low bidder was Mac, Inc. and the contract will be awarded at the SARA Board meeting next week. The construction includes a half-mile of trail for each creek. The schedule is 270 days with a start in mid-March and completion the early part of 2016. The Alazan Creek trail runs from Josephine Tobin Drive to Lombrano Street. The Martinez Creek trail is from Fredericksburg Road to Cincinnati Street.

With regard to the Apache and Sand Pedro Creek trails, the designs are complete and will be out to bid at the end of February or early March 2015. The construction schedule for both creeks is one year starting in late April/early May 2015 with completion slated for May 2016. The Apache Creek North trail runs from 19th Street to Cassiano Park near Zarzamora Street. Apache/San Pedro Creek South runs from Zarazamora Street to the San Antonio River confluence. Apache Creek North overlaps with SAWS work at Cassiano and will be joint-bid as one package. The bid package is being developed and will be advertised once approved by the City and SAWS.

Upon conclusion of the update, the committee had a couple of questions regarding public information. Mr. Farias informed them that the groundbreaking will be advertised and is going to occur sometime during the first two weeks in March.

VII. Update on the Signage Work Group for Elmendorf Lake Park and the Linear Creekway Trails, Rudy Farias, SARA

Mr. Farias provided the update. He reminded the committee that input was solicited from the WCROC to form a workgroup. The workgroup will evaluate the various projects and make recommendations on the types of signs. Mr. Farias presented a series of examples of monument trailhead signs, map signs that will capture street and creek information, way finding signs, and interpretive signs (history and informative). The signs at Elmendorf Lake Park will also have information about the water quality features.

To date, the work group members are Co-Chair Olga Lizcano, Sky Curd, and Gabriel Velasquez, Larry and Yolanda Kirkpatrick, and Kamala Platt. The group will likely meet on Fridays and have a working lunch. Terra Design Group, the trails design consultant, will research the information and the workgroup will consider it and offer recommendations on the sign content.

Signage for Alazan and Martinez Creeks will be the first set to consider, followed by Elmendorf Lake Park, and then San Pedro and Apache Creeks. For Alazan Creek, there will be one

monument, five map, two interpretive, and two wayfinding signs. For Martinez Creek, there will be two monument, four map, three interpretive, and two wayfinding signs.

The committee suggested including transit stops on the maps as well as directions for cyclists when the trail is not bike friendly. It was also suggested that Roberto Rodriguez (former SARA Board member), the San Antonio Housing Authority, and Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS), be contacted for historical aspects of the creeks. They would like to see all aspects of history noted from the Native Americans to modern history. Finally, the suggestion was made to add QR codes and other smart phone information to the signs to access more in-depth information and in several languages available.

VIII. Citizens to be Heard

None.

IX. Miscellaneous Items

Rudy Farias, San Antonio River Authority, presented the first item under this agenda item. Mr. Farias explained to the committee a letter was emailed to him from Carlos Gonzales with West End Hope in Action (WEHA). Copies of the email were available at the meeting. Another member, Tomas Guadiano, from WEHA was present. Mr. Guadiano explained the email is concerning an area close to Elmendorf Lake Park that is a very blighted area with lots of debris and overgrown vegetation. The area is near Commerce and 26th Street, essentially from Christ the King Senior Living Apartments to Commerce on the creek side. Mr. Farias indicated the email was also sent to David Garza, COSA Center City Development Office. Mr. Garza forwarded it to Art Reinhart with COSA Transportation and Capital Improvements Office.

There was some discussion about the on-going litter and trash problem in the area. Basura Bash and other community-based clean ups with WEHA and OLLU were also considered. Initially, a motion was made for the WCROC to send a letter to the City, in support of the WEHA request, and ask the City for the maintenance schedule along with a request to expedite a clean up with special attention given to protect the wildlife habitat. The motion was shelved due to a lack of a quorum. Therefore, the committee agreed by consensus that Co-Chair Ramirez would send the letter to the City.

Bridget Hinze, San Antonio River Authority, presented the second item. Ms. Hinze informed the committee that the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Urban Waters Program held a meeting on January 22. She explained further that the federal government is already a partner in developing the Westside Creeks projects. The Urban Waters Program will raise the profile of these projects and possibly facilitate grant funding. Mr. Ramirez let the committee know he attended the meeting and requested the EPA look into funding the dredging of Elmendorf Lake as a public health issue.

X. Adjourn

The meeting was formally adjourned at 8:15 p.m.