



MEETING NOTES
MARCH 12, 2015
SAN ANTONIO RIVER AUTHORITY
100 E. GUENTHER, BOARD ROOM
8:30 A.M.

ATTENDING: MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES- Ben Brewer, Marilyn Bradley, Ernest Bromley, Giorgio Colussi, Michael Cortez, Stella de la Garza, Pat DiGiovanni, Caleb Etheredge, Jerry Geyer, Mark Penner, Susan Powers, Patti Radle, Humberto Saldaña. **STAFF AND CONSULTANTS-** Tony Canez, David Garza, Kristen Hansen, Claude Harding, Bridget Hinze, Jeff Mitchell, John Mize, Brice Moczygemba, Bob Perez, Russell Persyn, Shiva Sandrana, Steven Tillotson, Laura Vasquez, Ronnie Biediger, Linda Ximenes. **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC-** Donovan Unsey, Tony Cantu, Cathey Meyer, John Dean, Claus D. Heide, Larry Stevens, Robert Ramirez, Olga Lizcano, Heath Coven, Brandi Ware, Orlando Rangel, Peg Rangel, Shelby Gutierrez, Ken Gindy.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Michael Cortez called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.

Acknowledgment of Jack Suneson, Marti's

Mr. Cortez acknowledged Mr. Suneson's recent death and Jerry Geyer noted his contribution to the development of the San Pedro Creek improvements.

Welcome Mark Penner, Penner's

Mr. Cortez welcomed Mark Penner to the subcommittee. He noted that the Penners have been attending all the San Pedro Creek (SPC) Subcommittee meetings and have a strong interest in the improvements to the creek.

Mr. Geyer also acknowledged the presence of the two Westside Creek Restoration Oversight Committee (WCROC) co-chairs, Olga Lizcano and Robert Rodriguez.

Orlando and Peggy Rangel, residents of Camp Street, introduced themselves as interested parties.

CALENDAR ITEMS

- a. San Pedro Creek Subcommittee meeting- April 9, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Board Room

- b. Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee (WCROC) meeting- April 14, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Board Room

APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES FROM FEBRUARY 12, 2015

Stella de la Garza moved and Mark Penner seconded the motion to accept the meeting notes. ***They were approved by unanimous vote of the subcommittee.***¹

PROJECT ACTIVITY UPDATE

Jeff Mitchell, design team consultant, presented the information and a conversation ensued:

- After introducing the design team members present, he reviewed the activities for the month of February and into March. (Please see the slide presentation for more information.)
- The team will be ready to submit the 40 percent plans on March 27, including the cost estimates and will present the plans to the Commissioners Court of April 7. SARA will be seeking approval of the 40 percent plans and authorization to move toward the 70 percent design.
- In response to a question about the significance of the 40 percent plan; Mr. Mitchell explained what it includes. Mr. Geyer and Mr. Cortez expressed concern that the subcommittee members did not have enough information about the design at this point. Russell Persyn noted that any changes to the scope of the project would need to be made in the next two to three weeks. He added that the cost estimates would drive some decisions about the project.
- A subcommittee member questioned the purpose of the subcommittee if the Commissioners Court would be considering the plans before the subcommittee had seen them. Mr. Geyer asked for a special meeting to brief the subcommittee on the plans and be able to give their feedback before they went to the Commissioners Court.
- Subcommittee concerns that were expressed included: uncertainty about the kind of feedback the subcommittee members would be able to provide; progress of the plan development is so far along that it cannot really be changed any more; negative impacts to businesses; lack of information about impacts to property owners; stakeholders not being given the opportunity to review and give feedback on the plans before they go to the Commissioners Court; whether the purpose of these improvements are for aesthetics or for flood control; and flooding issues in the Five Points area that are still to be resolved.
- Mr. Persyn reviewed the public involvement process and pointed out that SARA staff has met with all the affected property owners and they had a list of concerns from them. It would not be possible to address all of the concerns due to budget constraints and no authorization to purchase property – any property that is needed for the improvements will be sought through donations.
- Mr. Mitchell pointed out that the design was essentially the same as what was presented to stakeholders in December; there were more details now in the 40 percent plans.
- One factor influencing the schedule is the desire by the funding partners to have something in place by the 300th anniversary of the founding of the city of San Antonio in 2018. Another important factor influencing the decisions is the funding and that cannot be addressed until they have the cost estimates. An additional factor has to do with

¹ Text in bold and italics type indicates a decision made by the subcommittee.

permitting since getting the permits can impact the schedule.

- Suggestions from the subcommittee were to include the list of concerns of property owners when the presentation is made to the Commissioners Court; and be clear which improvements are being done for aesthetics and which for flood control.
- Mr. Persyn stated that he would like to meet on April 2 to show the subcommittee the 40 percent plans. **He would need to consult with the Executive Committee to validate the date.**²
- The subcommittee asked that the information include the **sum total of the impact Mr. Persyn thinks the plan will have and the concerns.** They would like to be able to say they have seen the plans and give comments on what the County Commissioners will see and state the concerns they have.

Steve Tillotson presented on the design/visualization. A summary of the presentation follows. (For the full presentation, please see the attached PowerPoint.)

- There are a fair amount of properties in the 100-year floodplain, even though some of them haven't experienced flooding. The fundamental goal is to remove them all from the floodplain. The walking path on one side may be considered an amenity. Anything more than that is for beautification, which may have an impact.
- **Part of the discussion that still needs to happen is whether the channel has to be open the entire way.** Some property owners want it open and others do not. Some businesses may be impacted as part of that, which needs to be considered. Ultimately, the project is for flood control and there needs to be a balance between that and what is an enhancement to downtown.
- They are aware they will not be able to build all that is designed, but the costs need to be determined first and the drawings done to be sure of what is wanted. They will be making changes between the 40 percent and 70 percent plans.
- He reviewed the drawings for the 40 percent plan pointing out where there would need to be additional property in order to build it as designed and where no additional property would be required. In some of the places where additional property was needed, the property owners were willing to donate the property and in others that was not the case. SARA has not been given the authority to acquire property – the property owner must donate the property.
- The existing right of way is indicated on the drawings as requested by the subcommittee at the last meeting. **The request was made to be able to see the channel more easily on the drawings. Mr. Tillotson agreed to have them for the April 2 meeting.**
- Parking is an issue that must be addressed with some of the property owners. A suggestion was to build a multi-level parking garage using bond funds or some other source of funding.
- The design team will be meeting with the Pace Foundation to coordinate with their construction of a plaza on their property.
- Downstream of Camp Street there is minimal impact to conveyance. The project will need to provide structural support where they will do the widening.
- SARA and the design team will be coordinating with the Commerce Street improvements being done by the City.

² Text in bold type signifies an item that needs follow up.

- Humberto Saldaña requested that the record reflect he had not seen these drawings before this meeting.
- He then reviewed the renderings and pointed out that the Merodeo illustration had been modified and the Canal Principal had changed slightly from before. The visual for the Alameda Plaza area at Houston and Travis has not changed from the one in the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER).

OTHER ITEMS

- Mr. Geyer noted that there was an article in the *Express-News* on the drainage project in the Mark Twain Middle School area. **Because of its importance to the project, he suggested organizing an opportunity to drive together around there to see the runoff and the elevation change from there to San Pedro Park.** To be able to see and understand where the water comes from and goes- into the box culverts under the highway system, among others.
- Mr. Geyer also indicated he would like to see a summary of the West Commerce Street Project for this subcommittee. It will impact Marty's and Penner's. **Mr. Persyn agreed to have a short briefing for the subcommittee, probably for the May meeting.**
- **Several people have asked for a summary of what we are doing- milestones, costs, etc. – in a trifold that could be handed to people who are interested.**
- On February 3 there was a special presentation for the Tour Guides on the project.
- There are ducks in San Pedro Creek now that there is a little bit of water.

ITEMS TO PRESENT TO WCROC

- Today's presentation on the 40 percent plan

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

ADJOURN

Marilyn moved to adjourn and Ernest Bromley seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.