



City-Wide Public Meeting #1

MEETING SUMMARY

Ann Arbor City Hall (301 E. Huron Street), second floor Council Chambers
6:30 – 8:30pm
June 16, 2016

Attendees: Public present: 33; refer to Appendix A for sign-in sheet
Elected officials present: 3; Councilmember Briere (Ward 1), Councilmember Lumm (Ward 2), Councilmember Smith (Ward 5)
City staff present: 3; Kayla Coleman, Sonja Karnovsky, Connie Pulcifer
Consultant (SmithGroupJJR) staff present: 3, Neal Billetdeaux, Keenan Gibbons, Oliver Kiley

Meeting Purpose: Kick-off the Allen Creek Greenway (ACG) Master Plan project in a Community Meeting format. Review project scope and schedule, discuss guiding documents and resources, review inventory and analysis findings and gather community input.

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|----|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Welcome and Introductions | 15 minutes |
| 2. | Project Overview & Analysis | 30 minutes |
| 3. | Group Discussion | 30 minutes |
| 4. | Open House Feedback | 45 minutes |

Summary: Comments from the group discussion are synthesized below into the following topic categories: Connectivity Opportunities/Challenges, Land Use Patterns and Property Access, Community Assets and Destinations, Site-Level Environmental Considerations, Utilities and Infrastructure, and Cost/Engineering/Timeframe. Though some comments apply to more than one category, we have attempted to group them in their most logical fit. Staff and consultant responses are denoted in *italics*; clarification of comments are denoted in (parenthesis)

Refer to Appendix B for written feedback comments, Appendix C for Map Station feedback and Appendix D for written responses to specific questions.

Visit <http://www.a2gov.org/departments/systems-planning/programs/Pages/Allen-Creek-Greenway-Master-Plan-Project.aspx> to view information shared at the meeting.

I. CONNECTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- o Connections should be made further south to Eisenhower.
- o People in Pittsfield Township would like a bike path to get in to Ann Arbor.
- o West side ravines (natural areas) could be utilized for public connections.
- o The Allen Creek Greenway does not have to follow the rail line.
- o What can the rail right-of-way accommodate?
- o Where is the Allen Creek Drain? How does it relate to the rail right-of-way? Can both the Allen Creek Drain and the greenway exist in the right-of-way?
- o *The Allen Creek Drain runs through easements managed Washtenaw County’s Water Resources Commissioner.*



- *Daylighting the Allen Creek Drain would require widening the creek beyond the current easement limits to provide capacity. The Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner has provided a statement regarding the [potential for daylighting the Allen Creek Drain](#).*
- Allen Creek Greenway would serve as a direct walking/biking path through the city; currently no North-South path exists.
- We should look for ways to make reference to daylighting (the drain) and water features; make a connection to the water.
- Playgrounds and other features aimed at children, as well as benches, would be nice along the trail.
- Permaculture, terraced gardens, and activities along the trail would be nice. Terraced gardens will help us to use the space we have.
- Small merry-go-rounds along the trail would be nice; similar to those in Paris.
- What are some alternatives to rail-with-trail?
 - *The project will examine the cost and feasibility of rail-with-trail.*
 - *The project will consider several rail-with-trail options, partial rail-with-trail, or no rail-with-trail.*
 - *The project will also look at alignments within existing city right-of-way and/or utilizing public and private property.*
- There are limited opportunities for building structures in the floodway.
 - Can you look at other trails to gather user data? Trails in Madison, WI would have demographics similar to Ann Arbor.
 - *We want to look at who will use the trail, not just volumes.*
 - *We want to make sure that the amenities match the needs.*
- There is potential to coordinate with the Ann Arbor bike share program to have bikes available along the path.
- The pathway should follow a logical route and widen at publicly owned areas. It seems to serve both recreational and commuting needs.
- This looks so practical; it doesn't look like it should be so difficult.
- Upkeep and maintenance has been a problem at other bike trails (in the city).
- Who will operate this trail? *Maintenance is a critical element in the success of a greenway. The Dequindre Cut in Detroit is very well maintained by the Riverfront Conservancy. This model works through public-private-nonprofit partnerships.*
- Bike/pedestrian interactions and bike/car interactions are safety concerns.
- The existing southern trail east of the rail by the University of Michigan (UM) stadium feels like an uncomfortable tunnel. If that is an example of a 15-30 foot path we need to look at some other options.
- The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is interested in development of the Border-to-Border Trail because it is part of the state-wide Iron Belle Trail.
- MDOT may be willing to contribute funding toward trails that help make connections to the Iron Belle Trail. They are apparently interested in the potential pedestrian tunnel north of Depot St.
- A representative from The Highline in New York came to Ann Arbor and noted that the Highline offers great economic benefits to the area and draws more visitors than the 7th wonder of the world- Great Sphinx. The Allen Creek Greenway could be similarly successful.



II. LAND USE PATTERNS AND PROPERTY ACCESS

- *The rail corridor is private property owned by Watco and they are operating an economically viable business.*
- *Watco has concerns about the safety of a rail-with-trail option.*
- *Watco is not interested in selling the corridor at this time.*

III. COMMUNITY ASSETS AND DESTINATIONS

- *Ann Arbor has already done daylighting of a drain south of Seventh Street in West Park. This created an open pond that really helps to divert runoff.*
- *What is being done regarding development in the corridor while this planning is going on?*
 - *City staff are working with the Planning and Development department to look at development proposals to find opportunities for Allen Creek Greenway connections.*
 - *City staff have started conversations with Beal regarding Kingsley Condominiums; a 30 foot easement has been requested.*
- *Whole parcels could be available for Allen Creek Greenway connections; we don't have to limit it to easements. Pocket parks would be nice. It would be nice to have larger nodes along the trail.*
 - *Private property owners have to be willing to sell for this type of connection.*
- *Is the 1st and William parking lot in the floodway?*
 - *A majority of this property is in the floodway.*
 - *A study was done by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) on the 1st and William property which studied storm modeling. This project will not require that level of study for individual parcels.*
- *The 1st and William site is included in this study as public land adjacent to a potential Allen Creek Greenway.*
- *What will be done with other city properties including 721 N. Main and 415 W. Washington?*
 - *We are looking at these properties only as they relate to routing of the greenway. We are not going to look at development plans for these properties as there have already been many concepts explored.*

IV. SITE-LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- *Daylighting will have long-term benefits; water features along the trail would be nice.*
 - *The Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner regulates the Allen Creek Drain.*
 - *The volume of water in the Allen Creek Drain would make daylighting difficult in some places.*
- *What does it mean that the County Water Resources Commissioner owns the drain?*
- *The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ranks daylighting as "very effective" in cleaning up watersheds. It (daylighting) connects people to their watershed.*
- *San Francisco has day-lighted several creeks in order to help clean up the bay.*
- *How will animal migration be handled on the trail (deer migration)?*
- *The UM and State of Michigan studies about the floodplain suggest we should shift from a 100-year to a 500-year boundary in response to anticipated climate change.*

**V. UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

- You need to look at non-motorized connections to get people to the greenway.
 - *As we do more research we may make recommendations for connections that need to be strengthened; opportunities for wayfinding to direct people to the trail and linkages to other routes and destinations.*
- What do we need at intersections to make them safe? What is the experience with other trails, greenways, and crossings? Should there be more stop lights instead of stop signs? Push buttons?
 - *Recommendations for safe road crossings will be a part of this project.*
- How can we separate motorized and non-motorized transit? Crossing Main Street is particularly difficult.
- Crossing at elevation (grade separated) rather than at grade would be good.

VI. COST, ENGINEERING AND TIMEFRAME

- Are you currently looking into funding sources?
 - *Once more details are known about the alignment and specifications of the future Allen Creek Greenway we will examine funding options.*
- A greenway allows for access to different funding sources: health benefits (CDC), storm water management, habitat restoration, etc.
- Is there greenbelt money available for Allen Creek Greenway development?
 - *A Councilmember responded that Greenbelt money may be available for projects such as this.*
- Have you been in touch with the Trust for Public Land? They have worked on many trails and know different (federal) funding sources.
 - *SmithGroupJJR has worked with the Trust for Public Land on the Inner Circle Greenway project in Detroit and will research opportunities for this project. .*
- The Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) supports community partners; putting in the greenway would reduce flood insurance around the city.
 - *Allen Creek Greenway would offer multi-faceted benefits.*



APPENDIX A: SIGN-IN SHEETS

SIGN-IN SHEET Allen Creek Greenway City-wide Meeting
Meeting #1

Name (Please Print)	Representative of/ Affiliation:
1. LORRI SIPES	Downtown resident
2. Jason Frenzel	Huron River Watershed Council
3. Michael Bahr	Ann Arbor Resident
4. ROBIN GROSSKURCH	CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
5. HERB LONER	WATERHILL RESIDENT
6. ALICE RALPH	Friends of A ² Greenway
7. Janet Lumm	A2 city council
8. MARÍA REQUERDO DE ALARCÓN	
9.	



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Name (Please Print)	Representative of:
10. MIKE FORGACS	longtime interest in greenway.
11.	



SIGN-IN SHEET **Allen Creek Greenway City-wide Meeting**
Meeting #1

Name (Please Print)	Representative of/ Affiliation:
1. John Hetrick	citizen
2. Ellen Ramsburgh	HDC
3. Nancy Goldstein	CAC
4. Kevin Leiser	Waterworks Panel

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Name (Please Print)	Representative of:
19. SETH PETERSON	CAL
20. JENNIFER HANNA	citizen
21. Diane Giannola	resident
22. RYAN TORIAR	CITIZEN
23. Francesca Cassara	ALGC
24. Odile Hugard Haber	my own ^{portable} republic
25. ALAN HABER	COMMONS
26. Rita Mitchell	Sierra Club
27. JOANIE STOVALL	RESIDENT





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Name (Please Print)	Representative of/ Affiliation:
1. MICHAEL BRUNER	
2. ELEANOR POLLACK	citizen
3. Katherine Griswold	citizen
4. Vince Caruso	CAC
5. LINDA DIANE FELDT	-
6. Chip Smith	City Council
7. Ethel Potts	Allen's Crk Wats. Grp
8. Jonathan Burkley	Allen Creek Greenway ^{com}
9. JOE O'NEAL	ACGC



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Name (Please Print)	Representative of:
10. Jen Schlicht	Resident + Clean Water Action Ann Arbor
11. Kristi Gilbert	Resident

APPENDIX B: WRITTEN FEEDBACK Feedback forms were available at the meeting. One feedback form response was received:

When you think “Allen Creek Greenway,” what do you imagine?

A continuous pedestrian pathway, large enough to accommodate biking and walking in 2 directions with passing, with several cutouts for gardens, green infrastructure, playgrounds, picnicking, etc. Well maintained. Safe.

Who do you imagine the users of the greenway to be? How would you use it?

Recreational/commuter, with more recreational users. I would love to use it as a commuter, if it is built in a way that makes it possible as an alternative. Travel from home/office to the B2B to fish and swim would be lovely.

Are there issues or opportunities that you are aware of that are important for the project team to know?

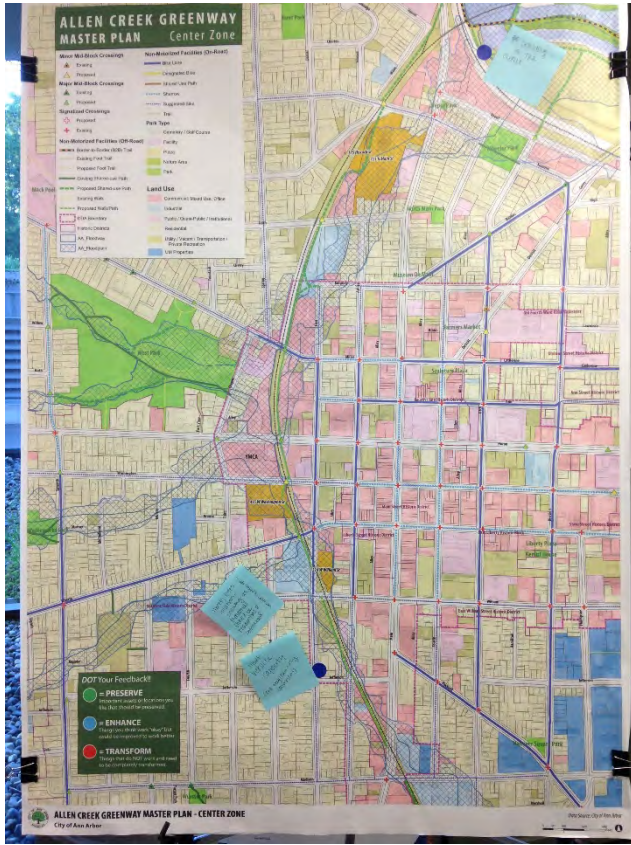
- Maintenance and upkeep. This has been a constant headache on other paths. I work at Miller and 1st, facing the railroad. While a pathway would great- teens especially already walk on the tracks- the wooded area is a home to some (who must be considered) and a gathering place for partaking in probably illegal substances. The area must be well lit and safe, hopefully without sacrificing much tree cover. The flooding in the lot is also ridiculous- green infrastructure in the area would be a great asset.
- As a current downtown resident, I would love to see community gardens along at least some sections.
- Additional bike rentals, to me, as a resident and worker downtown, are not as necessary. An Argo-to-Gallup 1 way style rental might be nice, though.
- If it ever extended beyond 94, that would be amazing. I commute to State/ Airport as well and it is nerve-wracking...

APPENDIX C: MAP STATION FEEDBACK



NORTH ZONE STICKY NOTES (TRANSCRIBED):

- Think beyond the mechanical. Think more about the landscape. Plantings should include milkweed for monarch butterflies. Need to support wildlife that exists in our city.
 - Great if part of DTE site could be incorporated into the greenway as open space.
 - Seems like a legal crossing would be a better solution than a fence.
- Can't get to desired destination legally – currently.



CENTER ZONE STICKY NOTES (TRANSCRIBED):

- Crossing of the outlet.
- Limit vehicle capacity (one-way / two-way conversion)
- Liberty lofts location – showing as industrial should be residential & commercial. U-M renting office space.
- Don't build in flood plain.
- Very concerned about safety at mid-block crosswalks.
- Would provide relief for the currently over-loaded system.
- Good location for daylighting. Waterworks Park.



SOUTH ZONE STICKY NOTES (TRANSCRIBED):

- Creeks that run through boulder are amazing.
- Would like to see water.
- 1st + William needs to be remediated now.
- Could implement ROI not to build in flood way / plain at all; look @ zoning
- 415 Washington = temp parking for 8 yrs
- Bandemer crossing illegal
- Are there projects we can take on before Master Plan?
- Allen Creek Drain Easement? Where is it. Who owns it. Show on the map!!
- Existing path is too narrow. Feels restrictive
- Don't use State Street for this because connector is supposed to go there.
- Pittsfield commuters that can't get to Ann Arbor. Need to extend past current project limit. Path to bypass commuter traffic



APPENDIX D: QUESTION SHEET FEEDBACK

Are there issues or opportunities that you are aware of that are important for the project team to know?

WHAT DOES IT CONNECT TO?
CASCADES + B2B TRAIL ARE CRITICAL PLACES
TO CONNECT WITH



Who do you imagine the users of the greenway to be? How would you use it?

BIKERS
WALKERS
PEOPLE TRAVELING TO THE CASCADES
PEOPLE BIKING FOR WORK + FUN
LOOKING FOR THE ALLEN CREEK
GOING TO THE RIVER
SCIENCE CLASSES
HISTORY CLASSES
gardeners
going to the BZB for recreation/fishing.
commuting to work w/o navigating motor traffic



When you think “Allen Creek Greenway,” what do you imagine?

WATER FEATURES
GREEN SPACE — NIN URBAN ENVIRONMENT
FEELING OF GETTING AWAY
CONNECTEDNESS N-S