



## Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting #5 DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Ann Arbor City Hall (301 E. Huron Street), second floor Council Chambers  
8:30am – 10:30 am  
July 19, 2017

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**Attendees:** Public Present: 11; refer to Appendix A for sign-in sheet.

CAC members present: Peter Allen, Eric Boyd, Robin Burke, Vince Caruso, Bob Galardi, Sue Gott, Robin Grosshuesch, Jim Kosteva, Sarah Mills, Rita Mitchell, Melinda Morris, Seth Peterson, Alice Ralph, Ellen Ramsburgh, Sonia Schmerl

CAC members absent: Maria Arquero de Alarcon, Terry Bravender, Nancy Goldstein, Chris Graham, Darren McKinnon, Sandi Smith

Council members present: None

City staff present: Kayla Coleman, Brandon Hunt, Craig Hupy, Connie Pulcipher

Consultants present: Keenan Gibbons (SmithGroupJJR), Oliver Kiley (SmithGroupJJR), Stephanie Onwenu (SmithGroupJJR)

**Meeting Purpose:** Discuss Final DRAFT preferred plan and potential implementation strategy. Review next steps.

The meeting agenda outline below includes discussion from CAC members and clarifying points from the Project Management Team (PMT).

1. Final DRAFT Preferred Plan
2. Master Plan Document Outline
3. Potential Implementation Strategy and Branding Roll-out
4. Small Group Discussion and Report Out—Expanding the Vision + Implementation
5. Next Steps
6. Public Commentary

### 1. Final DRAFT Preferred Plan

The Project Management Team (PMT) and consultants summarized the changes from the previous version of the DRAFT Preferred Plan.

The CAC members shared the following feedback and perspectives regarding the Final DRAFT Preferred Plan.

- Does the TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) grant cover the full project cost for the Allen Creek Berm Opening?
- Will there be a connection between the Allen Creek Greenway and 415 W. Washington? (*post meeting note: the Allen Creek Greenway will route through 415 W. Washington*)
- UM: Disappointment with the 30 foot easement shown on UM Elbel Field Softball and Baseball fields and the University golf course. The proposed trail alignment elevates one type of recreation over another, creating a hierarchy of recreation types, and causing other recreational uses to be sacrificed to accommodate other forms of recreation, i.e. the trail. The plan shown would result in intramural softball



fields at below standard levels and would impact mature trees along the golf course. UM did not see it as the charge of the CAC to create a hierarchy of recreational uses. Trail options in this area should remain entirely on railroad property or utilize on-street options to avoid destroying recreational resources including a qualified softball field and the Alistar MacKenzie golf course.

- *PMT: Those details do need to be worked out, but we anticipate that other recreational needs could still be enjoyed. The preferred route identifies the best possible alignment, but other alternatives are also identified. Trail alternatives in this section are 'on street options', which do not reflect community desires for an urban trail. Also, there are tradeoffs with each alternative. On-street options may result in a loss of on-street parking. (post meeting note: On May 30, 2017, the PMT sent a drawing to UM demonstrating that the existing recreational facilities on Elbel Field can be accommodated with the proposed urban trail).*
- UM: The referenced recreational resource displacements have been validated through modeling of the Elbel Field area. UM has drilled down to look at the details of the proposed trail route and impacts to UM property.
- The City is giving up some things for this trail. UM could give up some things too, and also gain tremendously. UM would benefit greatly in terms of pedestrian safety and access. The trail could provide a safe route for UM patrons to get to games and events. Keeping mature trees is important and want to avoid destruction as much as possible.
- Interest in maintaining continuity of the trail as much as possible. Allocation of space on the trail should be carefully considered. Consider changing the separation of northbound and southbound traffic on the trail when possible, and then come back together.
- Are there opportunities to work with Watco Companies to realign the railroad to provide more right-of-way (ROW) space?
  - *PMT: Watco Companies has not expressed a willingness to realign the railroad.*
- Is there anything new from Watco?
  - *PMT: We are putting together a package of requests to submit to Watco Companies. We have an upcoming meeting with Watco Companies to discuss requests.*
- Parklike features along the trail, or nodes, are important along the trail. How will the city's three properties (721 N. Main, 415 W. Washington and First and William) be developed or not developed as part of the trail? What happens with those nodes is important. Those green spaces make the experience.
  - *PMT: The charge for this project is to develop a feasible route for the trail. Although we are looking at these properties as to how each could accommodate a trail, we are not looking at details of what would happen with the balance of those three properties. Many options have been discussed for these properties previously; this trail doesn't preclude those possibilities from happening.*
- Are you considering downtown stops for WALLY and/or a future train station?
  - *PMT: Our goal is to maintain ultimate flexibility so that we don't preclude any future developments.*
- There are concerns with the mountain biking community with preserving the Bluffs mountain bike trails.
  - *PMT: We've suggested that the path be slightly offset from the mountain biking paths to appease the mountain biking community. We have met on-site with representatives from the Potowanami Mountain Biking Association and the City Natural Area Preservation who have agreed that the route shown is acceptable.*
- I hope that this greenway is a greenway and not just a \$50 million sidewalk through downtown. There is a great opportunity here, and we shouldn't overlook that potential.



## 2. Master Plan Document Outline

The PMT briefly described the outline.

## 3. Potential Implementation Strategy and Branding Roll-out

The PMT presented the Potential Implementation Strategy and Branding Roll-out, followed by a report-out by J. O’Neal, President Treeline Conservancy (note new name) concerning a business plan they are developing.

The CAC members shared the following feedback and perspectives regarding the Potential Implementation Strategy and Branding Rollout:

- Is there any possibility that this would have impact on property values? Could the project utilize the dollars gained from the change in property value?
- Funding is available through FEMA for reducing floodplain hazards; this project should pursue flood prevention opportunities to utilize FEMA funding.

## 4. Small Group Discussion and Report Out—Expanding the Vision + Implementation

In small groups, CAC members discussed expanding the vision and implementation:

- Question 1: What community partners do you feel could be engaged directly in the implementation? What roles or responsibilities could they have?
- Question 2: Do you have specific ideas for building financial support for implementation and/or on-going operations?
- Question 3: In what ways would YOU be interested and willing to continue to be involved in the project and advancing implementation?

Ideas and perspectives raised by CAC members via the brainstorming/small group discussion are provided below:

Group 1:

- Rails to Trails: Organizational support, publicity
- National Challenge Design Competition (e.g. Santa Fe)
- UM Outdoor Adventures
  - Bike rental/bike share
- UM student activism – participation from outdoors-oriented students
- Water Hill SnowBuddy as a model where residents adopt to provide maintenance
- Old West Side Association: Organizational support, publicity
- Ann Arbor Community Foundation (AACF)
- Sierra Club
- Gelman Sciences – potential donation?
- Border to Border and other trail initiatives: frame this as part of a regional trail
- Ann Arbor Bicycle and Touring Society
- MetroParks and County Parks
- Philanthropic Community
- Tech industry
  - Google
  - Toyota
- Public Campaigning



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- Mayors Green Fair
- Huron River Day
- Runners/joggers/marathoners – running events
- UM Sustainability Festival
- Common Cycle (Bike Repair)
- REI (other corporate groups)
- BANFF Film Festival
- Mountain Film Festival
- News/Michigan Daily
- UM Faculty/recruitment
  - Employee connections/transportation
- Water Hill to UM campus
- New Housing Development/Condo Associations
- BRAGG – Building and remodeling group
- TIF from development

### Group 2:

- Community partners:
  - Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring society (contributed to the Huron River Drive, potential opportunity for financial support?)
  - Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition (WBWC) (advocacy and design)
  - Sierra Club (advocacy and design)
  - Office of Campus Sustainability (design resources, support)
  - University – Could help generate ideas for the trail via course projects
    - Urban planning students (advocacy, design)
    - Transportation planning students club
    - Ross School of Business (funding generation ideas)
  - Involve/engage skateboarding community
  - People for Bikes (grants)
  - YMCA (advocacy, impacts, coordination)
- Financial support ideas
  - Greenbelt conservancy
  - Parks acquisition millage
  - Donations from general public
    - Collect donations along the trail – like epark stations, swipe credit card to donate for use of the trail
  - Ralph Wilson Foundation – contributed to bike trail in Detroit
  - Peter and Rita Hayden Foundation
  - Ford Foundation
  - Crowdfunding
  - Community Service Organizations - Rotaries/Kiwanis
  - Community businesses
    - Zingermans
    - Partnerships, e.g. funding in exchange to have food truck at node/park along trail
  - DDA and TIF
- CAC member future involvement opportunities
  - Ambassador/stewardship – interest in providing support to a specific section of the trail
  - Could offer suggestions for grant writing support
  - Each CAC member can make individual contributions toward the trail
  - Ellen Ramsburgh can provide cultural and historic interpretation



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- Seth Peterson interested in participating on Advisory Council

### Group 3:

- Community partners
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - Huron River Watershed Council
  - Bike Societies, Runners, Bikers
  - Naming rights, donations, memorials, etc.
    - Time limit (10 yrs, etc.)
  - Creating open green space for stormwater
  - Sierra club, ACWA, UM student groups, Waterhill groups, DDA, Main Street Business Association, Art Alliance, Ann Arbor Art Center, OWSOSI
  - Tech industry
- Financial support ideas
  - Calculate for a TIFF
  - FEMA
  - UM Alumni Groups
  - Naming rights (donations, memorials, etc.)
  - Service clubs (Kiwanis and Rotary)
  - Tech industry
  - Endowment for maintenance (Ann Arbor Area Foundation)
- CAC member future involvement opportunities
  - Operating strong maintenance and funding for the sustainability
  - Peter Allen- Fundraising
  - Bob G- Advisory Council
  - Vince C.- Advisory Council

### Group 4:

- Is there value to connecting with the Iron Bell and Border-to-Border Trail (B2B) from a branding and signage standpoint?
- Frame trail as a loop vs. spur—perhaps through Ypsilanti—to create a loop with the B2B and Iron Bell Trail(s) – old rail line between Saline and Ypsilanti
- The County has not been listed as a partner; County is very interested in B2B
- Explore place-based partnerships along trail nodes, milestones, etc.
- Explore educational opportunities or approach schools. Could be opportunities for Safe Routes to Schools (funding opportunity too)
- Research opportunities related to the trail
- Non-motorized transportation demonstration model
- Healthy Towns initiative
- MDOT TAP grants, Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund (MDNRTF) grants
- Partners:
  - Friends of the B2B Trail
  - HWPI (Dexter-Chelsea loop)
  - Legacy Land Conservancy
  - River Towns/Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC)
  - Wild Ones
  - Sierra Club
  - Michigan Botanical Club
  - Events, races
- Communication tool: quantify the benefits of built space – case study
- Projects for Public Space (PPS)
- Rails to Trails



- YMCA (direct spur of the trail into the building?)
- Traffic congestion mitigation grants
  - E.g. air quality
- Bike Share (Bike Ann Arbor)
- Special Assessment District (SAD) as opposed to a TIF
- Have an open partnership with U of M – is there a way to benefit each other across the city? IS there a way to share city-owned resources? Could be of great benefit to city and University alike.

### 5. Next Steps

PMT discussed the upcoming activities

- CAC Meeting 6
  - September 13, 2017; 8:30-10:30 a.m.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Council Chambers, City Hall (301 E. Huron Street)
- Community-Wide meeting 3
  - October 4, 2017; 6:30-8:30 p.m.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Council Chambers, City Hall (301 E. Huron Street)
- Approval process timeline
  - November 8: Planning Commission Public Hearing (to be confirmed)
  - December 18: City Council Action (to be confirmed)

### 6. Public Commentary

Members of the public shared the following perspectives and questions:

- What is the purpose of the pavilion on the north end of the trail?
  - *PMT: There is a spiral ramp connection that would enable you to get over the railroad tracks and N. Main Street. The drawings are conceptual at this time, detailed designs will not be part of this Master Plan project.*
- There are a lot of meetings coming up for the project, if members of the public are more informed about upcoming meetings it could be a better way to build awareness.
  - *PMT: We will continue to put upcoming meetings on the project website and public meeting calendar, members of the public can sign up for email alerts by visiting [a2gov.org/allencreekgreenway](http://a2gov.org/allencreekgreenway).*
- The greatest potential concern may be the public reacting negatively to the dollar amount of the total project cost. It will be important to frame the project cost in smaller portions of the project, rather than one lump sum.
- There is a real potential to provide concessions along the trail. A huge number of people would be attracted to this trail and would be a good generator of revenue.
- Please note the new terminology: use “urban trail” instead of “greenway” and the project name will be “The Treeline”
- UM: We’ve done an analysis and the 30’ easement would require the diminishment of the left outfield [at Elbel Field]. This reduces the field’s viability as a fully functional softball field. Again, the destruction of the viability of the baseball and softball fields to provide room for the trail is a big disappointment. There shouldn’t be a hierarchy of recreational opportunities valuing this trail over baseball, softball, and golf.
  - *PMT: There are several alternative routes that will remain possible, and we want to keep all options on the table and keep discussions open.*



ALLEN CREEK GREENWAY

Appendix A: Public Sign-in Sheet

Name (Please Print)	Representative of:
21. Noranna G. Herzberg	Allen Creek Cons. Advisory
22. David Swain	
23. Rita Mitchell	Sierra Club - Huron Valley Grp
24. CONSTANCE CRUMP	S. ASHLEY ST.
25. PETER ALLEN	PETER ALLEN, d A
26. Jonathan B. Kelly	Treeline 1
27. Ethel Potts	self
28. Pete Long	EDC/AZ
29. Francesca Cassara	Treeline Conservancy
30. Larry Eiler	Eiler PR



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Name (Please Print)	Representative of/ Affiliation:
1. Janine Easter	ACGC
2. WAYNE COLQUHITT	ACGC
3. Roy Muir	ACGC