



Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting #1 MEETING SUMMARY

Ann Arbor City Hall (301 E. Huron Street), second floor Council Chambers
8:30 – 10:30am
May 4, 2016

Attendees: Public Present: 7; refer to Appendix A for sign-in sheet.

CAC members present: 21; Maria Arquero De Alarcon, Peter Allen, Eric Boyd, Terry Bravender, Robin Burke, Vince Caruso, Bob Galardi, Nancy Goldstein, Sue Gott, Robin Grosshuesch, Jim Kosteva, Darren McKinnon, Sarah Mills, Rita Mitchell, Melinda Morris, Seth Peterson, Alice Ralph, Ellen Ramsburgh, Sonia Schmerl, Sandi Smith, Jeff Van Schaick

CAC members absent: 1; Chris Graham

Council members present: Councilmember Briere (Ward 1)

City staff present: 3; Kayla Coleman; Connie Pulcipher; Cresson Sloten

Consultants present: 3; Neal Billetdeaux (SmithGroupJJR), Keenan Gibbons (SmithGroupJJR), Oliver Kiley (SmithGroupJJR)

Meeting Purpose: Kick-off the Allen Creek Greenway (ACG) Master Plan project with the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). Review project scope and [schedule](#), discuss guiding documents and resources, and review inventory and analysis findings.

The meeting agenda outline below includes discussion from CAC members and clarifying points from the Project Management Team (PMT). See [meeting presentation](#) for additional information shared.

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Review project scope and schedule
3. Review project structure and organization
4. Discuss project impetus and key guiding documents
5. Review preliminary inventory and analysis findings
6. Next steps
7. Public Commentary (3 minutes/speaker)

Welcome and introductions

The CAC meeting started with the CAC members introducing themselves and sharing the perspective they are bringing to the ACG planning process:

- Sue Gott – Knowledge of University of Michigan property and planning, lifelong resident
- Jim Kosteva – Community relations at University of Michigan, community partner
- Bob Galardi – Lifelong resident, Parks Advisory Commission (PAC), Allen Creek Greenway Conservancy (ACGC) member.
- Rita Mitchell – Sierra Club, longtime resident
- Sarah Mills – Planning commission member, lives close to ACG corridor, bicycle commuter
- Eric Boyd – Friends of the Border-to-Border (B2B) trail, Old West Side resident, desire to bike safely to river and work



- Sonia Schmerl – Old West Side, lives close to corridor, desire to see safe route to river, enjoy B2B trail.
- Vince Caruso – Allen Creek Watershed, avid cyclist, interest in potential for greenway to reduce flood hazard, interest in alternate transportation modes and their economic benefit
- Ellen Ramsburgh – Historic District Commission, consider ACG relationship to historic districts
- Alice Ralph – East Stadium Boulevard neighborhood, greenway advocate, interest in urban design and historic preservation
- Seth Peterson – Old West Side resident, architect, avid cyclist
- Robin Burke – Legacy Land Conservancy, interest in greenspace and relationship of people to ecological function
- Terry Bravender – Water Hill resident, is a pediatrician and interested in health impacts/benefits
- Sandi Smith – DDA board member, participant in the 2007 Greenway Task Force, back yard faces Allen Creek
- Maria Arquero De Alarcon – Architecture & Urban Planning professor at University of Michigan, Kerrytown resident that does not own a car
- Jeff Van Schaick – Watco railroad representative, interest in how greenway will impact railroad operations, desire for safety for all users.
- Robin Grosshuesch – Water Hill resident, interest in the greenway aesthetics and looking ahead at the 500 year plan
- Nancy Goldstein – lives close to the railroad, interested in the whole project and brings the perspective of people who live close to anchor sites and the railroad
- Melinda Morris – came to Ann Arbor in 1956 to go to school, raised a family, ACG will make Ann Arbor complete, ACGC member.
- Peter Allen – Teaches transit oriented design, desire to involve green spaces in the ACG, bought 5 buildings on N. Main to be by the river and Allen Creek, interest in how to get across N. Main and connect to neighborhoods.
- Darren McKinnon – ACGC member, Water Hill resident, 1 block from 721 N. Main, participated on the N. Main Street Vision Task Force, runs on B2B trail.

Discuss project impetus and key guiding documents

- CAC members identified the following documents and plans that should be added to existing list of guiding documents:
 - Allen Creek Watershed Management Plan, city, county, MDEQ adoption (www.acwg.org)
 - GLISA Grant studies on Climate Change conducted by Michigan State University
 - Stormwater Management Plan for 500 year floodplain + increased precipitation (Huron River Watershed Council report)
 - First and William site study – FTCH study of parking deck



Review preliminary inventory and analysis findings

The PMT presented a series of slides depicting inventory and analysis maps for the study area.

Project Boundaries & Connections

Through discussion of the project boundaries the following perspectives were shared:

- It would be nice to extend the southern boundary to Ellsworth due to the large number of employees in that part of the city.
 - The PMT acknowledged the connection opportunity, and stated that the 2013 Non-Motorized Plan does identify connection opportunities that would extend from the southern boundary of the ACG to Ellsworth.
- At the northern boundary, it is important to consider access across railroad tracks (from Huron River Drive into Bandemer).
 - The City and Washtenaw County have secured a grant to study the connection to Bandemer and part of the planning work around the B2B Trail.
- The South State Street Transportation Plan project was reviewed. This places the transportation corridor within context of the land use plan. This planning project is current underway.
- Consider potential connections into the Allen Creek ravines.
 - Consider pedestrian and bike access along the ravines. These ravines are already being used informally by pedestrians.

Discussion of Project Users

Potential ACG users were discussed. The CAC members shared the following perspectives:

- Concern was expressed that the project may be too focused on a bicycle path.
 - The PMT recognizes that bicycle riders are just one potential user for the ACG, and that the final form or functions that the ACG will serve have not been determined. This planning process seeks to clarify the users and their needs as a basis for the planning and design of the ACG.
- Concerns about bike and pedestrian conflicts were raised.
 - Any proposed/constructed trail needs to be wide enough to safely accommodate bike and pedestrian traffic flows.
 - Many CAC members felt that the trail has to be designed as a shared use path.
 - The ACG should not be a bike versus pedestrian issue.
 - People will self-select for risk tolerance. Commuters or recreational bicycle riders desiring to go fast would likely stay on the street network.
 - Columbus, Ohio trails have a posted 15 mph bicycle speed limit.
 - Interest in seeing best management practices and guidelines for shared use paths.
- There is an interest in accommodating different types of users, from commuters to nature observers.
- Interactions and use of the road network is more of a safety concern (e.g. bicycle and vehicle crashes).
- The notion of "where would you allow an unaccompanied 10 year old to ride?" could be considered a potential guiding principle for the planning and design process.
- Designing the facility for ages "8 to 80" is a good idea as a potential guiding principle.
- Desire among some CAC members to maximize green space where possible along the corridor.
- Consider elevating portions of the greenway (e.g. Huron to Hoover) to provide a seamless flow and/or safely cross major street intersections.



- Many CAC members see the ACG as a recreational facility providing access to the Huron River and downtown from Ann Arbor neighborhoods.
- The elderly population is growing and their needs should be considered in the planning process, such as:
 - Improved, accessible access to recreational facilities.
 - Additional green spaces and pocket parks along corridor that might provide places to rest
 - Consider the needs of users with compromised vision
 - Consider the needs of users that are less visible (e.g. kids, people riding tricycles or recumbents), especially when among vehicle traffic.
 - Reach out to the Commission on Disability Issues to seek their input
- Consider the design potential of the ACG as a transportation corridor *and* a destination itself.
- Consider the ACG as a wildlife corridor that provides natural space and habitat.
- There is a common desire to head to the river. There are a lot of drab paved areas along the corridor currently.

Planning Process, Scope & Direction

CAC members shared a number of perspectives relative to the planning process; these perspectives include:

- The EPA considers daylighting as a best management practice.
 - The Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner has provided a [statement](#) indicating that there are significant technical challenges with daylighting the Allen Creek. The PMT is not considering daylighting within the scope of the ACG Master Plan project.
 - Other CAC members indicated that in place of daylighting, explore other means and cues to raise awareness of the Allen Creek should be explored.
- The ACG plan is a complex project with a lot of layers of information. This is the first time the greenway has been looked at in this level of detail.
- The existing conditions inventory is extensive with a lot of overlap between topics. Suggestion that the PMT work to identify the differences and/or conflicts between past studies and the inventory information.
- Identifying constraints or major barriers early in process may be helpful, for example concerns were raised regarding width of a trail and available land area to accommodate it.

Coordination with other Transportation Projects

The following information and perspectives were shared by the CAC members regarding other transportation projects that might affect the ACG planning effort:

- The project needs to acknowledge connectivity of other transportation projects, including:
 - The Connector
 - North-South commuter rail
 - East-West commuter rail
 - Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA) route changes
 - Where do these projects intersect, what are the challenges?
- The University of Michigan (U-M) can potentially provide a lot of users for the ACG (students, game day traffic, athletic events, etc).



- Connections to U-M athletic venues could lessen traffic and parking demands and improve safety.
- The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has an increased interest in the project due to the potential pedestrian tunnel through the DTE Broadway site that could connect the B2B trail with the state-wide Iron Belle Trail system.
- Questions about the timing and sequence for advancing the Connector project were raised.
 - The next phase of work is to conduct a Phase 1 Environmental Impact Assessment for the first phase of The Connector route (which connects Plymouth Road/North Campus area to Central Campus and downtown).
 - This is a partnership project with the City, DDA, AAATA (TheRide), and U-M.
 - U-M anticipated to fund 75% of Phase 1 planning & design (\$3 million/2-year schedule).
- A question was asked about commuter "use" data.
 - The PMT mentioned that digital counters can be used to track bicycle and pedestrian trips once a trail is constructed.
- The City should consider adding a pedestrian component to flood project north of Depot Street.
 - The City would like to make this pedestrian connection, subject to funding availability and other constraints. The base FEMA grant does not cover all the costs associated with this potential.
- Consider phasing ACG improvements in a 2 step process; e.g. use on-street connections initially and then expand to bigger off-street connections in the future.

Next Steps & Logistics

Upcoming Meeting

- June 16, 2016 – City wide meeting, 6:30-8:30pm
- September 14, 2016 – CAC #2, 8:30-10:30am
 - To include review of planning objectives and detailed exploration of design options, associated impacts and cost scenarios.
- January 11, 2017 – CAC #3, 8:30-10:30am
- All meetings will be held in the second floor Council Chambers at City Hall (301 E. Huron Street).

Coordination clarifications and requests:

- Some CAC members requested that complete PowerPoint presentations and other materials be provided in advanced of meetings.
 - The PMT will make a determination before each meeting regarding which content can be provided in advance. Content may benefit from being presented in-person first where clarifications and questions be answered directly.
- The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings are internal staff meetings and are not open to public.
- By a show of hands at the CAC meeting, it seems that the majority of the CAC members have completed the self-guided walking tour. Members that did not take the tour were encouraged to do so using the [maps](#) provided.



Public Commentary

- Overall very interested in project; particular focus on the Library lot, which could be considered as a potential trailhead to the greenway. Looking to get enough signatures to bring the Library Lot park forward as a ballot question in November.
- Longtime resident. Thanked the city and CAC members for coming together to advance the ACG project.

Appendix A: Sign in Sheet

Name (Please Print)	Representative of/ Affiliation:
1. JOE O'NEAL	ACGC
2. Stephanie French	ACGC
3. ALAN HABER	AA Committee for the Community Common
4. Jonathan Bulky	ACGC
5. Lerry Deck	WBWC
6. Roy Muir	ACGC
7. Francesca Cassara	ACGC
8.	
9.	
10.	