



DURHAM OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS COMMISSION

AGENDA

February 19, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
Committee Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall
101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC

I. Call to Order

Members present: Keith, Lakisha, Annette, Dave, Justin, Reynolds, Laura, Kristen, Javiera (ex officio member)

Called to order (without quorum) 7:05pm

II. Approval of Minutes

Wrong date, will adjust.

III. Excused Absences

Luis, Ladawanna, Randy, Derrick, Kamala

IV. Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

V. Presentations

- a. Sara Childs (Director of Duke Forest) and Brooke Massa (NC Wildlife Commission) – Eno-New Hope Wildlife Corridor - <https://ncbg.unc.edu/eno-new-hope-plan/>

Project - develop plan to protect wildlife habitats b/w chatham, durham, and orange counties. animals need places to hang out and find food (habitat patches) and ways to move between these areas (habitat corridors). project was funded by partners for green growth, also some money from orange county. project area studied is eno river and new hope creek watershed. animals need to be able to move around to eat, mate, to maintain genetic diversity, with climate change they may move for that too. as we carve up our landscape through development, we reduce biodiversity (called 'the great extinction' globally). this is not good for our health. wildlife crossing points across roads can often be just as important as habitat corridors (bridges, culverts, etc). culverts can impede movement of animals (for example, a pipe under a road that is always flooded, animals would not go through that).

-Objectives: create a plan for ensuring wildlife habitat connectivity across the landscape.

-Results of spatial analysis: map showed more important habitats, lots of habitat around new hope creek corridor connecting up to eno river corridor. would benefit if we protected all the areas in this analysis. link from agenda (see above) has synthesis of of all of this, summarizing. see that link for their recommendations.

Brooke - talking about green growth toolbox. land use planning audience is their primary target, helps them understand where priorities should be in land use planning. this handbook is available online. they also provide conservation data for communities. they also do presentations about how to use conservation data to influence development and also preserve natural areas. Can go to [ncwildlife.org\greengrowth](http://ncwildlife.org/greengrowth) to find this handbook.

-various people asked if they would be doing this presentation to various committees and commissions within the city, also the new hope advisory committee

b. Aidil Ortiz – BPAC Community Outreach and Projects

BPAC - have made a recommitment to community outreach, had a retreat that was an open meeting, focused a lot on what was going on with fayetteville street as a corridor w/r/t how we get bikes and peds to move across that corridor. held retreat at nccu. trying to pass out bike or peds info to events that cater to african-american or latinx groups. we have invited your commission members to our events, held untokening conference. bpac reviewed transportation and parks and rec plans in the durham comprehensive plan, want to focus on what we need to say more of in this master plan vs the last master plan. no mention of people in that plan, all focused on amenities and devices. only mentions buses or bikes etc no mention of what we hoped to accomplish with these devices w/r/t people. we hope to have a more people centered comprehensive plan this time around. committed to 'outward facing' meetings that occur outside of the halls of durham city hall. interested in data around crashes with scooters.

-Annette - lack of mention of people leaves out pedestrians, 'a devastating mistake'.

-Aidil - agrees, 'were feeling the outcomes of censoring people for things' . talked about the overlap of our committees, trails and streets often overlap.

VI. Old Business

None.

VII. New Business

a. ECWA Open Space Budget Proposal

Ricky White - new ellerbe creek watershed association executive director - about protecting the intact natural areas and restoring water and and quality to areas that are degraded, also about engaging the community about the creek. one of 3 land trusts in city. ellerbe creek is dirtiest creek that flows into falls lake. raleigh funds a lot of our work b/c they want to keep their water source clean for raleigh. right now city doesn't have a fund for match to support ecwa. were looking for staff person that's thinking about open space issues.

-Reynolds - happy about the efforts, talked about 170,000 gallons of sewage went into ellerbe creek, have you heard more?

-Ricky - waiting to hear from city staff, would like more support to keep eyes on the creek to minimize damage of infrastructure failures like this when they inevitably occur

-Annette - what kind of money are you requesting?

-Ricky - maybe 2.5 million dollars? explained that city of raleigh water tax payers pay a portion of the money to ecwa to clean the creek. trying to work with triangle land conservancy and eno river association to do joint projects.

-Javiera and Sara childs - how much do you need?

-Ricky - we asked for half a million dollars

-Javiera - there's property that has been identified as key properties, when there are opportunities available. a lot easier to protect the land than to clean the water later. 15 different jurisdictions working together on this issue.

-Jane - not surprising that when there's no single person advocating that this issue doesn't get addressed

b. TC1900004 UDO Text Amendment

-Carl - this is a privately initiated text amendment, explained the process for doing an amendment like this. december this one went to joint city county planning commission, last week went to the regular planning commission. looks at existing regulations around affordable housing and open space and tree canopy protections. affordable housing provision bonus says that if you develop a certain amount of your units at median income, you get more units in excess of what the ordinance allows. had it for 30 years and has only been used twice. incentive is not there for developers. this text is from a developer who is interested in doing affordable housing. their contention is that the open space, tree canopy requirements make it challenging to build more units. planning commission voted last week to delay recommendation on it for two months b/c its so complex.

-Reynolds - carl sent a link to the planning commission agenda, these are two issues that people on this commission care a lot about. go to the link, scroll threw it to page 70 (of 93 pages). its fairly technical so everyone should review it. it's incumbent on us to say something about this since we are the open space commission. described process as if developer is willing to build more affordable places in their development, they are allowed to build more units.

-Dave - developer is framing it as a choice between affordable housing and more trees, is that valid equivalence?

-Carl - was initially to be 'by right', but this proposal is not that

-Aidil - talked about forming a super sub committee into a development review process, its fun to 'be nosy' about what's coming in terms of development in the city. might make sense to do things together between bpac and dost. if we can link together that would be good.

-Annette - expressed frustration with current discussion, wouldn't say why

-Lakisha - i would like some knowledge about this and discussion around it

-Annette left meeting.

-Javiera - maybe you guys need to table it since you don't have a quorum. other groups have been monitoring this with similar concerns re: both affordable housing and environmental concerns from various people

-Reynolds - on the affordable housing coalition. they approved of the changes to open space but did not support the tree canopy changes. will share this document with carl to circulate.

-Aidil - recommended people split up parts of plan and review them and then share info with rest of group. said she appreciates the coalition of affordable housing committee's expertise but she is uncomfortable with how little contact they have with people who are actually living those experiences.

-Laura - would like to start some meeting to review these things, would be great to have someone prepared next meeting to share informed opinion on this topic by the next meeting. laura will take charge and send doodle poll to organize.

c. New DOST appointments

Outgoing - Tesha notified us that due to work and other life commitments she can no longer be on DOST. They are trying to get more city and county appointees to get numbers up.

-Carl - one application open for several weeks for county and no applications. at large county application. soon an at large city one. county appointee can live in the city.

VIII. Updates

a. Updates from staff

-Jane - Matching grants was approved. closed on easement upstream from little river reservoir.

-Javiera - send recommendations to city council, they will read the packets and think about who fits the best, will think about diversity but we don't know anyone, so send us recommendations if you think helps

-Dave -reminded people to go vote.

b. Updates from liaisons

None.

c. Updates from committees

None.

IX. Adjournment

Adjourned at 8:32pm.

DOST Priorities

1. Advocate for increased funding to build out and maintain priority trails and open space
2. Support the implementation of the Durham Beltline Master Plan with a specific focus on equitable community engagement for the components of the plan that can still be addressed
3. Examine the Matching Grants process to encourage applications that reflect the racial and economic diversity of Durham
4. Support implementation of the Trails and Greenways Master Plan with a specific focus on equity.
5. Encourage implementation of the Urban Open Space Plan
6. Pursue ongoing professional development on trends in equitable development of trails and open spaces.
7. Proactively research and implement open space and trails acquisition best practices for ordinances and policy.

DOST Committees

Committee	Chair	Meeting Date/Location
Development Review	Annette Montgomery	
Matching Grants	Annette Montgomery	
Open Space	Reynolds Smith	
Trails	Randy Akin	
Equity	Derrick Beasley	