



ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS BOARD

MINUTES

October 3rd, 2018
Committee Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall
101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC

Voting Members – Matthew Kopac (chair), Jessalee Landfried (vice chair), Donald Addu (secretary), Roberto Valle Kinloch, Tyjuanna LaBennett, Rachel McIntosh-Kastrinsky, Matthew Herman, Matthew Pait, Laura Marie Davis, Casey Collins, Wafa Khalil

Excused Absences – None

Ex Officio Members/Staff – Laura Woods, Tobin Freid, Vicki Westbrook, Michelle Woolfolk, Javiera Caballero, Heidi Carter

- I. **Call to Order at 6:06 pm**
- II. **Amendment to September 5, 2018 Minutes** – Section V. Announcements, subsection h. is updated to read Triangle Regional Resilience Assessments event will be held on 11/9/2018 at the Frontier in RTP.
- III. **Approval of Minutes, 10-0**
- IV. **New Business and Continuing Business**
 - a. **Durham Planning Department** – Mike Stock, presented the following on the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO):
 - UDO is land use law
 - Ordinances are the laws implementing the policy set by the city and county
 - The current UDO is joint city and county and became effective in 2006 replacing the merged zoning ordinance and subdivision ordinance
 - The UDO covers enforcement and does not cover housing codes, building codes or storm water codes
 - The UDO and zoning map are not static documents as the governing body, either the city council and/or county commissioners can change the zoning
 - Text amendments can also change zoning or the UDO
 - Request for Proposal has been issued for the new comprehensive plan with a start date of January 2019 and an anticipated three-year completion time
 - b. **Coulter Jewell Thames, PA** – Dan Jewell, the owner of the private developing consulting firm, Coulter Jewell Thames, gave a view of the UDO from a developer's perspective:
 - Environmental enhancements were made to the UDO ten years ago
 - The UDO is a living document

- Durham has one of the most robust environmental water shed protections and flood plan ordinance
 - Developers want easy and concise ordinances along with ordinances that are fair and balanced
 - Expect the law to be applied evenly to everyone
 - Tyjuanna asked how developers engage communities to get their input for proposed projects – Dan responded that responsibility falls on the folks in the community
- c. **Durham Belt Line for Everybody** – Aidil Ortiz provided the follow statements and request to the EAB:
- Aidil is the secretary of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission
 - Durham is following the same path as the New York City High Line and the Atlanta Beltline
 - The design and lack of protections for folks living near the Atlanta Beltline has caused sever gentrification and loss of traditional neighborhoods
 - If we can make things unequal with design, we can make things equal with design
 - The elected bodies will be voting on the Durham Belt Line in November
 - The community in the Durham that will be impacted by the Durham Belt Line has not been engaged in the discussion and if we continue without that engagement we will repeat the negative impacts seen in New York and Atlanta
 - Aidil requested the EAB support the Resolution for Equitable Development of Trails and Open Space Amenities in the City and County of Durham
- d. **Water Quality Index** – Christine Cailleret and J.V. Loperfido presented the following on Durham’s Water Quality Index (WQI):
- The WQI grades our water quality as it is in the public’s interest in knowing the quality of our waterways
 - When surveyed, 73% of Durhamites do not know about the WQI
 - Folks were concerned with public health, is the water safe? What does it look like?
 - Over 50% of folks wanted to know the water chemistry
 - Water chemistry and bacterial load were the main concerns from residence
 - A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was done on the WQI
 - The WQI is vulnerable to weather and seasonal changes and does not consider trash
 - It also does not currently consider habitat quality
 - There are several stakeholders involved with the WQI including the Water Quality Unit, the City-County Sustainability Office, City Manager Office/City Council, NC Division of Water Resources, City residence, local watersheds and environmental groups
 - Christine and J.V. are requesting input from EAB members on updates to the WQI. J.V. can be reached at John.Loperfido@durhamnc.gov

V. Announcements

- a. Next EAB Meeting 11/7/2018 at 6:00 PM, 2nd floor Committee Room, City Hall
- b. Imagine a Day Without Water is on Oct 10th. Videos from 13-18 year olds need to be submitted by Oct 8th
- c. The County Commissioners will meet on November 5th at 9:00 am at 200 E. Main St. Durham.

VI. Resolutions – Approval of the Resolution for Equitable Development of Trails and Open Space Amenities in the City and County of Durham, 11-0 (Attachment A)

VII. Adjournment at 8:47 pm

Notice under the Americans with Disabilities Act - A person with a disability may receive an auxiliary aid or service to effectively participate in city government activities by contacting the ADA Coordinator, voice 919.560.4197 or ADA@DurhamNC.gov, as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the event or deadline date.

Attachment A

Resolution for Equitable Development of Trails and Open Space Amenities in the City of Durham

WHEREAS, The City of Durham is creating a green rail trail park that encircles downtown called [The Durham Belt Line](#);

WHEREAS, [Federal funding for the](#) Durham Belt Line Trail Master Plan was obtained through a TIGER grant with the express purpose of creating 'Ladders of Opportunity' for residents with little access to transport who have suffered from a legacy of structural disinvestment;

WHEREAS, Durham Environmental Affairs Board acknowledges that structural and institutionalized racism, including redlining, restrictive racial covenants, urban renewal of the Hayti neighborhood, and other discriminatory practices led to current racial disparities in quality education, living wage employment, healthy environment, affordable housing, and transportation;

WHEREAS, the City of Durham's ninety day outreach plan to address the concerns around authentic community engagement and racial equity for the Durham Belt Line should be considered a pilot project that informs public engagement strategies for future public investment in biking, pedestrian, trail, park and open space infrastructure;

WHEREAS, a racial equity plan and data that will be tracked for the Durham Belt Line and projects like it should prioritize the interests and concerns of the most socioeconomically disenfranchised residents and businesses along the corridor of the Durham Belt Line as well as planned trails and amenities in other neighborhoods;

WHEREAS, EAB recognizes that less than 3% of dollars from tax funded projects in the City of Durham are spent with minority owned businesses, the city should commit to concrete goals around the recruitment and employment of local workers and minority-owned businesses;

WHEREAS, transparency of funding is seen as a value of high importance to maintaining trust with the community, the City of Durham should commit to declaring any non-public funds pledged or secured for the Durham Belt Line and future bike, pedestrian, trail, park and open space infrastructure and associated amenities;

WHEREAS, community engagement of socioeconomically disenfranchised residents along the Durham Belt Line corridor and racial equity plan for the Durham Belt Line project is a priority above City's expected construction timelines;

WHEREAS, the city can learn from similar green infrastructure projects that have hurt long time and low income residents, it is recommended that Durham should draw upon the expertise of groups like Partnership for Southern Equity to avoid the mistakes of projects like The High Line in New York and the Atlanta BeltLine in Georgia;

WHEREAS, lessons learned from similar precedent projects like the Atlanta BeltLine and The High Line, as well from green infrastructure research such as Lewis and Gould's study *Green Gentrification and the*

Barcelona Lab for Urban Environmental Justice and Sustainability, suggest that, at this moment in time, green amenity projects such as the Durham Belt Line will most likely foment extreme displacement of longtime residents from their homes, economic, and cultural communities unless other community designed equity-oriented policies are adopted and implemented before:

- 1) fundraising for any dollars beyond the federal grant
- 2) design for the trail which is already funded through a combination of federal and local funds
- 3) any construction of the Durham Belt Line begins;

WHEREAS, the adopted Durham Belt Line Master Plan section on Housing and Equity on page 110 and 111 (of the approved August 6, 2018 Durham Belt Line Master Plan) calls for specific implementation strategies:

1. Reduce barriers to residential infill housing and “Missing Middle” housing
2. Preserve existing affordable rental housing near the corridor
3. Support neighborhood scale affordable housing
4. Develop a partnership with other agencies and purchase property for affordable housing in the vicinity of the corridor
5. Perform further study and outreach in the Avondale Drive area
6. Determine equitable development guidelines and metrics using the Belt Line Trail as a pilot
7. Conduct a broader land disposition and equitable development study that should be adopted in advance of construction of this project;

WHEREAS, the founder of the Atlanta BeltLine, Ryan Gravel, and Nathaniel Smith resigned from his position on the Board of the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership, stating: “we believe that who the Atlanta BeltLine is built for is just as important as whether it is built at all”;

WHEREAS, the founder of The High Line Robert Hammond stated in an interview with Citylab, “We were from the community. We wanted to do it for the neighborhood... Ultimately, we failed.... Instead of asking what the design should look like, I wish we’d asked, ‘What can we do for you?’ People have bigger problems than design”;

WHEREAS, social equity is one of the three fundamental pillars of the City of Durham’s goal of creating an excellent and sustainable quality of life;

WHEREAS, The cities of Seattle, Washington, Austin, Texas, Madison, Wisconsin have adopted racial equity city council resolutions;

WHEREAS, Anacostia 11th Street Bridge Park has adopted an economic and cultural equity plan to create a roadmap for equitable outcomes;

WHEREAS, Durham stands to benefit from the lessons learned from these precedent projects and academic studies;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Durham Environmental Affairs Board endorses the creation and subsequent adoption of a Racial and Cultural Equity Plan and requests that the City of Durham adopt such a plan for the Durham Belt Line as a model to be used in all future bike, pedestrian, trail, park and open space amenities.

Some additional links:

City of Seattle's Race and Social Equity Resolution:

<https://seattle.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=3859422&GUID=256D2F78-E2B3-4E1D-96A8-3214FBC4FD4B>

City of Austin Racial Health Equity Resolution:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=230788>

City of Austin's Racial Equity Assessment:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/13jkNPRsEmeJqg0OFndGN5G2bzY6D2E90/view?usp=sharing>

Austin's Chief Equity Officer:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/about-equity-office>

D.C.'s pending racial Equity resolution:

<https://legiscan.com/DC/text/PR22-0524/id/1651466>

City of Madison's Racial Equity Initiative:

<http://www.nlc.org/resource/madison-city-profile-on-racial-equity>