

APPROVED

Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

October 11, 2012 Regular Meeting

The October 11, 2012 Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board was convened at 7:00pm in the Social Room of the Recreation Center with Laurel Patrick, Board Vice Chair presiding.

Roll Call

Members present included: Frank Chmielewicz, Sherith Colverson, Bob Cushman, Bridgette Ellis, Allen Eubanks, Laurel Patrick and Cathy Toth. Absent were Gerry Palau and Dan Robbins

Approval of the September 13, 2012 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the September 13, 2012 minutes was made by Bridgette Ellis and seconded by Frank Chmielewicz . The minutes were approved by a 6-0 vote.

Appearance and Citizen Comments

Several citizens attended the meeting including City Council members Ellen Smith and Chuck Hope. Doug Colclasure commented that the surface of the North Boundary Greenway continues to be a problem. The rolling by the DOE contractor was of little value and the smaller stones are overtopping the larger stones. Josh Collins reviewed the Parks Board discussion at the September meeting and the decision to revisit the surface issue in early spring after the rock has settled and the surface has weathered. Mr. Colclasure also commented on the condition of the kiosks at several greenway entrances.

Committee Reports

Bike/Ped Committee- Sherith Colverson

Sherith Colverson discussed the Bike/Ped Committee's draft plan that outlines the "Heart of Oak Ridge" corridor/spot location recommendations and the "Top 10" list of Potential Funding Sources (see attached). Bob Cushman had given a brief overview of the key elements in the plan at the September Board meeting. The list includes corridors, sidewalks and spot location in and around the center City area. Sherith reviewed eight priority projects and potential funding options available for these projects. She discussed unit costs for bike lanes, sidewalks and greenway projects. The Committee's first priority is the Rails to Trails project from Elza Park to Scarboro Road.

Sherith discussed a connector between the Emory Valley Greenway and the Briarcliff Shopping Center as the Committee's number two priority. It was acknowledged that the sidewalk along Donner Place is part of the Greenway and serves as the connector between Emory Valley Road and the shopping center. With that in mind, the Board suggested directional signage to encourage use of Donner Place. Sherith stressed continued maintenance of existing sidewalks and bike lanes as bike use increases. The plan also included immediate and long term considerations (attachment 1). Sherith asked about the "next step" in the approval process to bring

the plan before City Council. Josh Collins outlined a process that included a formal recommendation from the Committee to the Park Board, a recommendation from the Park Board to City Council and a City Council referral to City Staff for review and recommendation. The staff recommendation could include a referral to the Planning Commission for review.

Chuck Hope commented on the condition of sidewalks in some residential areas and supported the Committee's push for continued maintenance and upgrades. Chuck also mentioned a revenue stream back from selling rails, ties and ballast rock when and if the CSX road bed is turned over to the City.

The Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) has included the Rails To Trails project for possible funding in the future. CSX Railway is still reviewing the City's request for the property. No timeline has been established for a decision.

Dog Park Committee- Bridgette Ellis

Bridgette Ellis presented two concept designs for a Dog Park at Big Turtle Park. Option one is located adjacent to Oak Ridge Turnpike and option two is located between the softball outfield fence and East Fork Popular Creek, at the rear of the site. Bridgette outlined the pros/cons for each plan including amount of shade, linear feet of fencing, distance from water source, distance from parking, adjacent activities and potential size. She also discussed potential features for each site. The Dog Park Committee has been working with City staff to evaluate the two concepts and develop cost estimates for each plan. The Parks Coordinator for Knox County met with Bridgette and City staff members to offer input into the proposed designs and discuss operational issues encountered by Knox County. At the November meeting, the Dog Park Committee plans to present cost estimates for construction and maintenance of an Oak Ridge Dog Park at Big Turtle Park.

T.J. Garland expressed concern over the construction of a dog park in Oak Ridge while sharing his daughter's experience at a dog park in Nashville. He was concerned about the construction and maintenance cost to Oak Ridge taxpayers, the liability exposure for the City and management of the park. Others in the audience expressed support for a dog park and related success stories from other Cities. Grass roots support from the community could bring potential sponsorship and donor opportunities.

Work Plan Deliverables

Delayed until the November meeting.

Unfinished Business

Board Governance

Delayed until the November meeting.

New Business

Attendance

The Park Board received letters for three Board members requesting their recent absences be excused. Allen Eubanks missed the May and June meetings, Cathy Toth missed the April, June and August meetings and Sherith Colverson missed the August and September meetings. Bob Cushman made a motion to excuse the absences and Bridgette Ellis provided the second. The motion was approved by a 7-0 vote.

Director's Report

Pavilion Update

The small picnic shelter at Melton Lake Park was removed during the first week of October. The contractor began laying out the site/setting elevations during the second week of the month. Later that week dirt moving operations began. Pouring foundations should begin the third week of October.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49pm.

Oak Ridge Recreation & Parks Advisory Board (RPAB) - Bike & Pedestrian Working Committee (BPWC)

October 2012

The City of Oak Ridge Council approved their Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in April of 2011 and it included a specific vision and mission for the City to work towards. Its vision was to have the City become an easy and safe place to travel by foot and bicycle while its mission was focused on the following three priorities:

- *Identification and prioritization of needed pedestrian and bicycle facilities;*
- *Ensure that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are included in all new projects;*
- *Develop programs to promote walking and bicycling through education and enforcement.*

Since 2011 many efforts on behalf of the City have been made to work toward implementation of this plan's mission, including the formation of an ad hoc, Bicycle and Pedestrian Working Committee (BPWC) that directly reports to the newly formed City of Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks Advisory Board. The BPWC has provided the RPAB the ability to implement the first mission of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan through its identification of eight (8) priority projects in September of 2012, including a potential Rails-to-Trails project for the soon to be abandoned CSX railroad line running from east Oak Ridge at Elza Gate Park to Scarboro Road by the Y-12 New Hope Center. This paper seeks to provide further clarification, education and promotion for the Plan's second mission.

Currently there are no City regulations that help to promote and encourage safe, connected, alternative transportation specifically for biking or walking. Below are three suggested ordinance additions for Oak Ridge's Zoning and Development Ordinance as well as two suggested long-term approaches for City policy that promotes biking and walking.

Immediate Considerations

Consistent with the recommendations of the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan all future development shall:

- *“Provide appropriate bicycle amenities to encourage cyclists and also include connections to existing pedestrian sidewalks, walkways and greenways. Signage indicating the presence and location of such amenities shall be scaled for easy reading by bicyclists and pedestrians as well as motorists.”*
- *“Provide secure bicycle parking as part of all high density residential, commercial, retail, office, industrial, and mixed use development where appropriate. The bicycle parking shall be integrated at a rate of one bicycle rack space for every fifty (50) vehicle parking spaces with all parking and storage located in safe, visible areas that do not impede pedestrian or vehicle traffic flow, and shall be well lit for nighttime use.”*
- *“Submit site plans for development that clearly show how the site’s internal pedestrian and bicycle facilities connect with external existing or planned facilities or systems.”*

Long-term Consideration

Complete Streets Policy

According to Smart Growth America, the concept of “complete streets” is to design and operate transportation in a City to “enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.”ⁱⁱⁱ Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Working Committee recommend that the City Council consider its own unique Complete Streets Policy and begin working on its implementation for 2014. A suggested model for Oak Ridge can be found with the City of Hendersonville, Tennessee, adopted as a part of their 2009 Land Use and Transportation Plan.^{iv}

Maintenance Policy

When shoulders, bike lanes, and paths are filled with sanding materials, broken glass, and other debris, bicyclists will avoid them and use travel lanes. To reduce conflict with motorized vehicles throughout Oak Ridge, to provide safer travel for all users, and to protect the investment of public funds in bikeways and walkways, an overall maintenance policy should be set by the City to provide accommodation for bicycle travel to include scheduled inspection and maintenance of state facilities.

The maintenance plan that will execute the policy need to be realistic and agreed upon by both Council and City staff with priority given to high-use areas and to facilities where potential conflicts with other users are greatest, and where a time and efficient response to maintenance can be accomplished. The City must continue to support activities and programs that preserve, maintain, and prevent deterioration of the existing transportation system and a maintenance policy would ensure this.

ⁱ Oak Ridge Bike and Pedestrian Plan, 2011. http://www.knoxtrans.org/plans/OR_BikePed_2011.pdf.

ⁱⁱ Oak Ridge Zoning Ordinance, 1959/2010.

http://www.oakridgetenn.org/images/uploads/Documents/City%20Codes/Zoning%20Ordinance/Zoning%20Ordinance_Secured.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Smart Growth America’s Complete Streets, 2012. <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/tag/complete-streets/>

^{iv} City of Hendersonville, TN, Complete Streets, 2009. [http://www.hvilletn.org/getdoc/2b093dae-4045-4af2-bddf-940497e90371/Chapter6-](http://www.hvilletn.org/getdoc/2b093dae-4045-4af2-bddf-940497e90371/Chapter6-CompleteStreets)

[CompleteStreets](#)

Oak Ridge Recreation & Parks Advisory Board (RPAB) - Bike & Pedestrian Working Committee (BPWC)

October 2012

The Oak Ridge Bicycle and Pedestrian Working Committee has met on the third Thursday of every month for the past eight months to discuss ways to promote their mission: *To improve the quality of life for the people in Oak Ridge through attaining recognition as a bike and pedestrian friendly community.* The committee has shared in the past the importance of focusing on projects in or near the "Heart of Oak Ridge," and the top project priorities reflect that sentiment. The committee sees that through these prioritized projects, our Oak Ridge Community can indeed become recognized as a bike and pedestrian friendly place to live, work and play.

Depending upon the action that the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board would like to take in making a recommendation to the City of Oak Ridge City Council for bike and pedestrian priority project(s), it will directly impact the recommendation for potential sources of funding for the projects.

Top Project/Funding Priorities

Project Prioritization:

The committee worked to prioritize projects using a similar process to the one employed in the Oak Ridge Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (ORBPP), however, the committee did not use the ranking criteria identified in the ORBPP, as the relative location to schools, parks, employers, etc. did not seem the optimal metric for ranking prioritized projects for the current demand for Oak Ridge bicycle and pedestrian experiences.

Instead, the committee ranked each project priority based on where resources are most urgently needed near the "heart of Oak Ridge" (highly visible and easily accessed locations) and where improvements would have the greatest impact on improving the bicycle and pedestrian experience. The committee strongly felt that the Melton Lake to Y-12 rail line, currently held by CSX, is the top priority for project funding and execution in the near term. The priority projects listed below are based on the premise that a "phased" implementation of an Oak Ridge Rails to Trails line (from north of Elza Gate Park to the intersection of Scarboro Road and Bear Creek Road) is the main priority for recommendation and current funding efforts (aside from any imminent safety concerns).

Project Priorities for Bike Lanes/Sidewalks

1. Connecting Emory Valley to S. Illinois Ave.
 - Potential CSX line or along road (TBD)
 - If along Lafayette - between ORTP & near Hendrix Dr. – bike lane(s) needed – (4th Corridor project priority in approved ORBP Plan)
2. Emory Valley Road
 - Connecting Greenway to Food Lion shopping Center – then onto potential Emory Valley/Illinois Ave. connection – for ease of travel*
3. Administration Road(s) at ORTP to Laboratory Road – add connecting sidewalks
4. Connect the current gaps of sidewalk along Oak Ridge Turnpike between Illinois Ave. and Florida Ave. (1st Corridor project priority in approved ORBP Plan)
5. Bike Lane connection along Scarboro Rd. to Bethel Valley Rd (just past Bear Creek Road)

6. Safe crossing for bikers on the Illinois & Lafayette intersection (potential over pass as part of long-term Rails to Trails Phasing)
7. Expand bike lanes on Bethel Valley Rd - west to existing bike lanes near ORNL gate
8. Continued maintenance/support for greenways, sidewalks and bike lanes as prioritized in the approved Oak Ridge Bike and Pedestrian Plan

Associated Costs & Funding Source Prioritization:

The committee worked to identify those funding streams that seemed reasonable and attainable, while focusing on the prudence of expending resources towards unsuccessful efforts. The list below focuses on those potential sources of funding that the committee believes are attainable, available and reasonable to anticipate receipt of through working with other stakeholders. The committee strongly believes that the best and most reliable source of funding is through the US DOT Surface Transportation Program.

Additionally, the committee highly recommends referencing (as the approved ORBP Plan lists) the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization list of funding sources printed in the ORBPP.

The total cost associated with a Rail to Trails Project that would replace the Oak Ridge CSX railroad line depends upon the many choices that end users of the trail will be hopefully be able to make with our local decision makers. To begin thinking about estimated costs, the Rails to Trails Conservancy recommends first considering the following:

- User acceptance and satisfaction
- Accessibility
- Cost to purchase and install materials
- Cost of maintaining the surface
- Life expectancy
- Availability of material

Before you choose a specific trail surface, you should also consider the pros and cons of hard surfaces and soft surfaces.

Hard Surface

- More accommodating for multi-use trails
- More expensive but requires less maintenance and can withstand frequent use

Soft Surface

- Less expensive
- Often does not hold up well under heavy use or varying weather conditions

Below are estimated costs per mile of previously installed a Rails to Trails projects:

- Asphalt: \$200K - \$300K
- Concrete: \$300K - \$500K
- Crushed/granular stone: \$80K - \$120K
- Soil cement: \$60K - \$100K
- Resin-based stabilized material: varies
- Boardwalk: \$1.5 mil – \$2 mil²

The cost of installing a bike lane is approximately \$3,100 to \$31,000 per kilometer (\$5,000 to \$50,000 per mile), depending on the condition of the pavement, the need to

remove and repaint the lane lines, the need to adjust signalization, and other factors.³ Based on our above current recommendations, estimates for priority projects run between \$ 36,000 to \$500,000.

The cost for concrete curbs and sidewalks is approximately \$49/linear meter (\$15/linear foot) for curbing and \$118/square meter (\$11/square foot) for walkways. Asphalt curbs and walkways are less costly, but require more maintenance, and are somewhat more difficult to walk and roll on for pedestrians with mobility impairments.⁴ Based on our above current recommendations, rough estimates for priority projects run between \$250,000 to \$600,000.

Potential Funding Sources

1. **DOT Surface Transportation Program** - \$ 222,621,794 Estimated FY 2013 Funding for Tennessee Under the Conference Report for the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)* (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/table2013.cfm>)
2. **DOT - Transportation Alternatives Funding** - \$18,119,645 Estimated FY 2013 Funding for Tennessee Under the Conference Report for the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) – (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_enhancements/legislation/map21.cfm)
3. **DOT - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program CMAQ Funding** - \$35,570,454 Estimated FY 2013 Funding for Tennessee Under the Conference Report for the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) – (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/)
4. **Transportation Community and System Preservation** - <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tcsp/index.html>
5. **Local Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) Partnerships** – potential partnership between the City of Oak Ridge CVB & private investors to ensure the Rails to Trails Corridor is designed in a fiscally feasible, phased approach until a bike and pedestrian connection (a “Rails to Trails”) is completed between Elza Gate and Scarboro Rd. Discussions have not yet begun with the CVB.
6. **Funds from salvaging materials from railroad line** – need to generate discussions with City of Oak Ridge and potential buyers of the materials and ensure that a percentage of any profits from the purchase of the old rail road materials go toward the remodeling of the line for a Rails to Trails Corridor.
7. **Volunteer help from local Boy & Girl Scouts** (as well as other local organizations interested in bike/pedestrian projects) – ex: building benches, clearing railroad trails, etc.

¹ http://www.knoxtrans.org/plans/OR_BikePed_2011.pdf

² http://www.railstotrails.org/ourwork/trailbuilding/toolbox/informationsummaries/trail_surfaces.html

³ <http://www.walkinginfo.org/engineering/roadway-bicycle.cfm>

⁴ <http://www.walkinginfo.org/engineering/roadway-sidewalks.cfm>

Dog Park: Proposed Layout 1



Dog Park: Proposed Layout 2

