



**COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES  
NOVEMBER 20, 2014  
SAN ANTONIO RIVER AUTHORITY  
100 E. GUENTHER, BOARD ROOM  
8:30 A.M.**

**Attendance:** Marilyn Bradley, Giorgio Colussi, Bob Corbo, Michael Cortez, Ed Cross, Stella de la Garza, Scott Gustafson, Caleb Etheredge, Jerry Geyer, Mark Liberatore, Susan Powers, and Jack Suneson; Staff: Dan Curry, David Garza, Suzanne Scott, Steve Graham, Kerim Jacaman, Sonia Jimenez, Marianne Kumley, Jeff Mitchell, Rudy Farias, Bridget Hinze, Brice Moczygamba, Shiva Sandrana, Steven Tillotson, Jeff Tyler, and Victor Carrillo; and Fourteen members of the public.

**1. Welcome and Introductions- Michael Cortez and Jerry Geyer, Co-chairs**

Michael Cortez, Co-Chair opened the meeting.

**2. Calendar Items**

- a. San Pedro Creek Subcommittee meeting- January 15, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Board Room
- b. San Pedro Creek Public Workshop #2- December 6, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at St. Henry's Catholic Church Hall, 1619 S. Flores Street
- c. Westside Creeks Restoration Oversight Committee (WCROC) meeting- December 9, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at 100 E. Guenther, Board Room

**3. Approval of Meeting Notes from October 9, 2014**

Mr. Cortez asked if the committee members read the October meeting notes. Ed Cross made a motion to approve the notes as drafted. The motion was seconded and it passed.

**4. Project Activity Update- Jeff Mitchell, Design Team Consultants**

Jeff Mitchell, Project Manager representing HDR, presented the project update. The surveying, geotech, and subsurface utility information is being processed and refined. Specifically, survey information is being used to demonstrate how the project will impact and alter the channel walls and the team is further developing the project's cross section. Geotech reports and recommendations are being finalized. Subsurface utility information is being used to inform stakeholders and determine how to mitigate impacts and incorporate changes into the project design.

Phase 2 upper reach Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) fieldwork is in progress and nearing completion. Phase 2 lower reach ESA has been authorized and fieldwork is starting.

The draft report for the lower reach effort is expected to be complete in early February 2015. The other technical elements remain the same until the 40% design is complete. The hydraulics and hydrology (H&H) study and design for the entire project is complete and the River Authority will begin review later this week. For more specifics, please refer to the presentation dated November 20, 2014.

Following this portion of the presentation, there were several questions about the resulting floodplain. Mr. Mitchell indicated that Bexar County Public Works and the River Authority will review, confirm, and/or modify the consultant work. The most challenging aspects are the areas with very tight right-of-way. FEMA approval will begin at the end of the design phase and confirmation is anticipated when construction is complete. The City of San Antonio is the floodplain administrator. The Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) is submitted after design is complete to predict the floodplain changes. The Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) is issued approximately 12-18 months after construction completion and floodplain changes are confirmed. David Garza, City of San Antonio Center City Development, will get information regarding what property owners/developers will need, CLOMR or LOMR, to get a building permit. It was suggested that a frequently asked questions (FAQ's) fact sheet be developed, posted, and shared with the committee members to assist with floodplain inquiries.

Mr. Mitchell resumed the presentation with information about anticipated water demand. Currently, the water flows from the inlet tunnel when the pumps are on. The vision for the project is to see more water in the channel with plantings and green spaces along it. The plantings and green spaces will require an increase in irrigation. The three gate facilities will create impoundments and larger volumes of water and increase evaporation demand. All changes will meet TCEQ requirements. A work session with the design team and agency partners is set for December 11, 2014. Examples of floodgates will be presented during the January meeting.

Finally, stakeholder coordination continues. The City is leading the effort with City owned properties and the River Authority is taking the lead with private property owners. Jeff Tyler, SARA Project Manager, emphasized the project is first and foremost an engineering flood control project and as design continues, specific stakeholder issues will be addressed. Russell Persyn, SARA Watershed Engineering Manager, stated at the current time, the consultants have been instructed to seek donations only for needed right-of-way. If donations are not secured, the project will stay within the current limits. Dr. Persyn also notified the group that right-of-way needs will primarily be based on containing (reducing) the floodplain and that utility easements will also have to be revisited as changes are made. The 40% design milestone will offer a better understanding of what is truly needed.

A question was raised about the Army Corps of Engineers (COE) involvement with the project. Mr. Tyler and Dr. Persyn stated that there are multiple interactions with the COE. Particularly, regarding permits for impacting U.S. waters (404 permit) and protecting existing COE elements along the creek (408 permit). The COE is aware of the review schedule and understands their role is a critical path item for getting the project built. The River Authority will do as much as possible to keep the permitting process moving forward.

## **5. Briefing on San Pedro Creek Public Workshop #2- Sonia Jimenez, Design Team**

## **Consultants**

Sonia Jimenez, Public Involvement Consultant representing Ximenes & Associates, provided the briefing. The second workshop is set for Saturday, December 6 from 9 a.m. to noon. It will be held at St. Henry's Parish Hall off of Nogalitos and S. Flores, near the southern end of the project area. The format for the workshop will be similar to the first workshop. The team will provide a short briefing on the first workshop along with how the information collected has been integrated into the current design. Following the presentation, participants will work in table groups to discuss the suggested design and provide feedback and comments on the function and appearance. Each table facilitator will provide the larger group with a report summarizing the discussion. Participants will be given comment cards and information related to how public comment translated into design elements. The team will be prepared for 100 participants. Ms. Jimenez then turned it over to Steve Tillotson.

Steve Tillotson, Lead Architect with Muñoz and Company, provided the committee with a sample of the information to be presented at the second workshop. Mr. Tillotson explained how the information from the first workshop was considered and incorporated into the current project design. A key element to the design is how the creek interacts with and fronts adjacent properties. The idea is access will complement and positively influence these properties. It is the hope that the design guidelines will be finalized and codified.

The design itself is not much different from the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) but some shifts have occurred with right-of-way, the H&H and the survey information. The team is currently defining the hydraulic envelope. The information from the first workshop has been taken into consideration and programming the activities and infrastructure to support them is currently underway. Recreational, cultural, and historical elements have influenced the design. Specific design elements include a finger lake design originating at the inlet structure. The structure will be the perceived source of the water and serve as a destination and anchor point for the creek. Moving south, there will be a crest (flood) gate at Travis Street with water higher and wider all the way to Santa Rosa. This area will be the most park-like area north of S. Alamo. A low bank with high bank paseos will transition into the Alameda area with a gathering spot and amphitheater. Past Dolorosa Street the creek opens up again with more park like design and grassy banks. It is desired to have trees planted within this section to provide shady respite. North of Nueva Street is another crest gate to stack water back to Travis with another weave of upper and lower bank paseos. At Cesar Chavez Boulevard, the concrete culvert between the Marriott and La Quinta will be opened up with alternating low bank and high bank paseos. The outlet structure will be another gathering spot. The area adjacent to the Judson Lofts and Dean Steel is constrained and condensed with the esplanade being designed on the west bank and less open space. Just past the outlet, the hydraulics change significantly. At Camp Street, the concrete culvert will be kept intact with depths of 5-6 feet upstream from S. Alamo Street and getting shallower closer to the culvert. There will be a low bank paseo on the east with a high bank paseo on the west. The channel will be sculpted to be a little wider and a little deeper to create a park-like setting. The lower reach area is the least developed as there is not a strong design concept just yet for the area where the other creeks meet San Pedro. Alazan Creek will have a trail that meets the San Pedro Creek project.

The committee asked several questions regarding private property interface and design guidelines. There are four buildings that currently abut the creek with the other having

about ten feet between the creek and a structure. The City is currently evaluating the potential use of an overlay district similar to the River Improvements Overlay (RIO). Mr. Tillotson briefly mentioned the names for the character areas. The names are being re-evaluated and will be determined at a later date. The office of Historic Preservation will be engaged before the names are finalized. Jerry Geyer, Co-Chair, urged the team to come up with names that reflect new and old references for each area so they can endure the test of time.

## **6. Other Items**

Suzanne Scott, San Antonio River Authority General Manager, announced that SARA, Muñoz, and the County have developed a new concept for the inlet structure. Mr. Tillotson explained the Tree of Life concept to redefine the notion of this being the springs for the creek. The pattern will simulate water flowing through tree like branches and flowing into a trunk. It is currently presented as a hard scape plaza with plantings and water is diverted into a series of springs that converge to fill the lake at Villa Aquinilla. It will include large public art structures with some focus element at the termination of the plaza and parking along the edges. Ms. Scott asked the committee for feedback. The intent is to have this type of element define the visual from the highway with height and color to attract people to the area. The committee supported the public art component, expressed concerns about graffiti, and liked the connectivity between Five Points and the Italian community. Mr. Cortez pointed out that the Tree of Life concept is also being used in the *Zona Cultural* Cultural Zone.

Mr. Geyer informed the group that the Founder's Day event went well and he thanked SARA staff for the materials. There was a lot of interest and information disseminated.

Mr. Tillotson informed the group that the project received an award from the San Antonio Chapter of the AIA for Unbuilt Design. The award was presented to Muñoz for the PER design effort.

## **7. Items to present to WCROC**

Workshop #1 outcomes and a preliminary update from workshop #2.

## **8. Comments from the Public**

None.

## **9. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:24 a.m.