



Meeting Notes

April 13, 2017

SARA Board Room, 100 E Guenther Street

ATTENDING

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES:

Marilyn Bradley, Ben Brewer, Giorgio Colussi, Bob Corbo, Michael Cortez, Ed Cross, Caleb Etheredge, Jerry Geyer, Theresa Gold, Kathy Krnavek, Mark Penner, Andi Rodriguez, Humberto Saldana, and Trey Whiddon

STAFF & CONSULTANTS:

Kerry Averyt, Allison, Elder, Kristen Hansen, Marianne Kumley, Megan Lagrone, Bridget Hinze, Jeff Mitchell, Brice Mocygamba, Melessa Rodriguez, Suzanne Scott, Anamaria Suescun-Fast, Chad Yount, Carrie Brown, Marianna Lynn, and John Chisholm

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Lourdes Galvan, Mark E. Liberatore, J. Stafford, Allen Hatly, Robert Amermath, Jenna Stoeltje, Cathey Meyer, Tony Cantu, Robert Ramirez, Navia Sedeno, Luisa Casso, Mukul Malhotra, Tony Piazzi, Shane Malkowski, Rosemary Geyer, Benjamin Rosts, Michael Hardwick, LP Stevens, Nita Shaver, Don Mathis, Drew Smith, Charles Massiatte, Frank Monaco, Eva Osborne, and Pablo Martinez

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Michael Cortez, Co-chair, called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m. He asked attendees to introduce themselves and then reviewed calendar items.

CALENDAR ITEMS

- a. San Pedro Creek Subcommittee meeting, May 11, 2017, 8:30 a.m. at the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) Board Room
- b. Westside Creeks Oversight Committee meeting, June 20, 2017, 6:00 p.m. at the San Antonio River Authority Board Room

APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES FROM March 9, 2017

Trey Whiddon moved and Ed Cross seconded motion to approve the meeting notes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.¹

ZONA CULTURAL UPDATE

Mukul Malhorta, MIG, provided an update on the Zona Cultural design process:

- MIG, Inc., Grupo de Diseño Urbano (GDU), and WSP came together to create the street design concepts.
- Their goal was to ensure the Zona Cultural plans connect with the street concepts and designs of the downtown transportation plan proposed in 2012.
- The framework focused on connecting the existing destinations and amenities, creating a street hierarchy, streetscape designs at San Pedro Creek and areas of major intersections, and integrating current plans and ongoing improvements into the vision.

¹ Text in bold italics indicates a decision made by the subcommittee.

Overall Vision

- The area encompasses a number of historic sites.
- This area is a crossroads of culture, commerce and community, so the goal is to capture the unique story of place.
- The overall plan is to interconnect neighborhoods and use San Pedro Creek as the “green spine.”

Overarching Framework

- All improvements along San Pedro Creek are to connect with the future Zona Cultural.
- Commerce, Dolorosa, and Houston Streets will be main connectors with San Pedro Creek.
- Mr. Malhorta reviewed the conceptual Zona Cultural Plans as they most closely relate to San Pedro Creek. For the entire presentation, please visit the San Pedro Creek Improvements Project website.

ALAMEDA THEATER UPDATE

Lori Houston, City of San Antonio, provided an update on the Alameda Theater:

Alameda Theater Project Overview

- The theater was built in 1949 and was the first major Spanish language theater in San Antonio.
- The first attempt to restore the theater was made about 20-30 years ago with the goal of reactivating the space, but in the last year and half, plans have really begun to form.
- In 1994, the City of San Antonio acquired the space.
- There have been many discussions of what the theater should be, and the city is now bringing together partners who understand the cultural significance, can acquire necessary funding, and who all have a clear vision and sense of respect to honor the space and its history.

Alameda Theater Today

- Theater and backstage theater are now vacant.
- In 2011, the backstage was improved by efforts led by Mr. Ernest Bromley.
- The fluorescent murals still exists, and the restoration of the theater will include a plan to restore them.
- The plan will be to restore the theater to hold a capacity of about 1,000-1,500 people.
- As the nonprofit was in the midst of raising the funds to restore the theater, the Tobin Center was also under construction, so resources were scarce, and the project lacked a unified vision between the city, county and private sector.
- The backstage area can be seen from San Pedro Creek, and once construction is completed in that area, it will also be accessible from the creek.

Moving Forward

- Texas Public Radio (TPR) is considering a relocation from their Datapoint location to the Alameda Theater to allow for more visibility, street presence, and an improved location in the city’s urban core.
- Michael Kaiser, former Kennedy Center CEO, with the DeVos Institute of Arts Management was brought on to perform an assessment of the concept and to make a recommendation.

Assessment Scope

- The questions examined by Mr. Kaiser allowed him to examine if our city could accommodate and support the Alameda without compromising the sustainability of the other theaters already in existence.
- Mr. Kaiser found that the city can support a theater like the Alameda, but most importantly it should be restored to honor its cultural significance and history.

Concept

- The theater will be restored, and a conservancy will be charged with managing the theater.
- Restoration of the theater will include the addition of a thrust stage to create intimacy. Capacity will be downsized from 2,500 to 1,500. A tiered slope will be constructed to allow for flexibility, and the balconies will be restored. Diverse Latino-focused programming will take place in the restored theater.
- TPR will be housed in the backstage, and will have access to theater space where diverse community programming can occur.
- As a subtenant, TPR will lease about 35,000 sq. ft. of the facility from the conservancy.
- A nonprofit will be established with a small fiduciary board to oversee the design phase. Once the design is complete, the board will expand to 15-20 individuals.
- The board will be provided with quality staff and an executive director.

Latino-Focused Programming

- The programming must be diverse and appeal to many age groups. Programming may include symposiums, film festivals, arts education, etc.
- Collaborative programming will be at the heart of the Alameda Theater.

Why Now?

- There is a focused mission and unified vision among the city, county, and the private sector.
- The city and county will provide funding up front for the capital budget, and funding for programming and operating costs will be fundraised by the nonprofit.
- In addition, the partnership with TPR will bring forward a different dynamic and diversify the potential donor pool.

Theater Plans, Projected Budget, and Next Steps

- The theater entrance will be off Houston Street, and the TPR entrance will be off San Pedro Creek and part of the newly constructed backstage area, to ensure it does not compete with the historic theater entrance.
- A projected \$26.4M budget is anticipated to be needed for complete restoration which will include a complete Alameda Theater restoration, Casa De Mexico improvements, and backstage improvements.
- There are multiple funding sources including the Houston St. TIRZ, TPR, state and federal historic tax credits, and philanthropy.
- Community input will be sought throughout the next stages of the project.
- The nonprofit will be created by partners (city, Cortez Family, TPR, and county) and will be separate from the city.
- City and conservancy will be creating a master lease agreement expected in June.
- Once funding and lease agreement are finalized, the design will start immediately with the nonprofit leading the process. The goal is to complete design by summer 2018 and for construction to be completed by spring 2020.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY UPDATE

Kerry Averyt, San Antonio River Authority, reported the following:

Design Development

- Most of the design was submitted on February 28, with the exception of the art elements.
- Remaining design elements from the tunnel inlet to Houston Street will be presented to Commissioners Court on April 18.
- The team is working through the Plethora art installation to finalize foundation design and coordinate utility work.
- Continuing work on components to Houston Street are near completion, but south of Houston Street, elements are still being developed. Once this is complete, then the 90% design goal will be reached.

- As the landscape architect has taken another opportunity, a replacement has been named. This will not impact completion of design from the tunnel inlet to Houston Street before the Tricentennial Celebration.

Construction Activities

- The construction team continues to work through utility relocations.
- There have been some historical stones discovered in the process, which will be preserved.
- Construction continues around the tunnel inlet structure.
- Salinas Street Bridge was demolished and the materials are now being removed.

Current Street Closures and Fiesta Street Closures

- Mr. Averyt reviewed upcoming street closures. All street closures can be found on the San Pedro Creek website and individuals interested in receiving regular updates can register for construction emails on the website.
- Commerce and Dolorosa Streets will be fully open during Fiesta.

Projected Street Closures

- Commerce Street closure will tentatively begin in November.
- The schedule is now being reconfigured with the City of San Antonio for 2018 closures for Phases 1 and 2.
- Team met with City of San Antonio and TCI department for the first time the week of April 9.

Construction Tours

- A construction tour was held for media and elected officials on March 30, and a public tour was held on March 31. The next public tour is set for June 2.

Upcoming Construction Activities

- The foundation is being poured for cypress trees and wetland area, and excavation between Santa Rosa and Martin Street is now occurring for new retaining walls.

Other Activities

- A promotional opportunity for businesses along San Pedro Creek is being finalized.
- A presentation will be made to Commissioners Court on April 18 of the remaining interpretative art elements.

OTHER ITEMS

- Suzanne Scott made a presentation to City Council B Session the week of April 2, and comments were positive.
- Robert Amerman San Antonio River Foundation Executive Director, invited the subcommittee and meeting attendees to the next public art meeting to gather stories from the community. The next public meeting will be at Trinity on April 29 from 1-3pm.

ITEMS TO PRESENT TO Westside Creeks Oversight Committee:

A subcommittee meeting recap will be provided to the Westside Creeks Oversight Committee.

ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Bob Corbo at 10:32 a.m. and Kathy Krnavek seconded. The motion carried unanimously.