

Meeting Notes
September 13, 2018
SARA Board Room, 100 E Guenther Street

ATTENDING

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES:

Scott Baird, Marilyn Bradley, Cathey Meyer, Jerry Geyer, Warren Wilkinson, Mark Penner, Patti Radle, Andi Rodriguez, Deb Bolner-Prost, Lourdes Galvan, Stella Tenorio-De La Garza

STAFF & CONSULTANTS: Carrie Brown, Lindsey Campbell, Anamaria Suescun-Fast, Denise Blaz, Tony Canez, Steven Dean, Steve Graham, Kristen Hansen, Jeff Mitchell, Suzanne Scott, Abigail Bush

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Rosemary Geyer, Richard Garcia, Rosalinda Guia, Charles H., Mark E. Liberatore, C. McKnight, Robert Amerman, Jacob Minjarez

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jerry Geyer, 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. Phase 1.2 Executive Committee Design Review, September 14 at the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) Board Room
- b. Phase 1.2 Briefing with Judge Wolff & Commissioner Elizondo, September 18 at Bexar County
- c. Camaron Street Public Meeting, September 20 at Plaza de Armas
- d. Drum Café Workshop, September 25 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the San Pedro Creek Culture Park
- e. San Pedro Creek Subcommittee Meeting, October 11 at 8:30 a.m. at the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) Board Room

APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES FROM June 14, 2018, July 12, 2018 and August 9, 2018

Motion was made by Scott Baird and seconded by Cathey Meyer to approve meeting notes from June 14, July 12 and August 9 as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.¹

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY UPDATE

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

Design Update:

Phase 1.1 Update

- Additional railing to be added near the Travis Gatehouse for pedestrian safety
- Lighting fixtures behind the “Rain from the Heavens” public art installment have been compromised by water – construction team is working to find a permanent solution and replace the compromised fixtures ... Temporary lighting will be installed behind the screen while the work is completed
- Design team working on a trash screen solution at inlet pump station
- Design plans for the pedestrian crossing at Santa Rosa street have been submitted to the City of San Antonio
- Pedestrian crossing design will include a constant flashing sign, a rectangular rapid flashing beacon and a controlled crosswalk, rumble strips and mirrors for pedestrians in advance of the pedestrian crossing

Phase 1.2 Construction Update

- Utility relocation work as outlined in early work package 11 is ongoing and has been impacted by weather

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

- Additional archeological investigations are required in Calder Alley – a third trench is being added in between the two existing trenches to provide one continuous dig – work is being done in cooperation with the Texas Historical Commission and Kay Hindes
- Archeologists are waiting for the soil to be dry enough for them to sift through it in order to continue their investigative work
- Early work package 12 is ongoing with drilled pier construction continuing at the former Dollar General site, Penner’s parking area and Dolorosa to Commerce
- SARA is looking to add early work package 13 until the full work package for Phase 1.2 is approved – early work package 13 will include Commerce St. bridge decking and the resurfacing of Penner’s parking lot

Phase 1.2 Design Update

- The 100 percent design plan submittal for Phase 1.2 was completed July 31
- Design was reviewed by the subcommittee (Aug. 28) and is slated for review by the executive committee (Sept. 14) and Bexar County (Sept. 18)
- Sundt Davilia is reviewing design plans and will submit a guaranteed maximum price for construction on Sept. 21
- Presentation of the final Phase 1.2 design to Bexar County Commissioner’s Court is scheduled for October
- Mr. Averyt shared preliminary renderings from Phase 1.2 design including daytime and night time renderings – noting that many of the patterns depicted in the renderings will change
- SARA is working with the design team and Texas Public Radio (TPR) to ensure the design for Phase 1.2 will accommodate the planned TPR entrance

Commerce Street Closure

- Underground utility conflicts – including the relocation of AT&T manholes and a void under the Continental Building – and weather delays will delay the planned re-opening of one lane
- Construction crews are waiting for the soil to dry out following recent rain events to continue construction
- Additional pedestrian wayfinding signs have been installed that guide pedestrians over to Dolorosa St. and continue on to Market Square
- SARA is coordinating with the City of San Antonio on measures that can make the signs more visible
- Current plan is for one lane to reopen at the end of October at the earliest – barring additional weather delays

Partner Coordination

- SARA and the construction team continues to work in conjunction with the ongoing archeological work in Calder Alley
- Ongoing coordination with Camaron Street construction – which was included in a recent city bond package
- Camaron Street work is currently at 50 percent design and will be added to the Sundt Davila contract – specifically pertaining to Camaron between Houston St. and Martin St. in order to meet the timeline of the Frost Tower opening
- SARA is coordinating with Camaron Street project, looking specifically at adding parking along the street as part of the planned improvements
- SARA is also coordinating with the City of San Antonio on the planned Commerce Street construction project – the first phase from Flores to Laredo is set to begin in Spring 2019 – to ensure minimal impact on the flow of traffic
- San Pedro Creek Executive Committee will hold a special meeting to review Phase 1.2 design on Sept. 14 and will meet again for its regularly-scheduled meeting on Sept. 21

Questions and Comments

- Ms. Bolner-Prost asked about the possibility of putting in a pedestrian refuge at the Santa Rosa St. pedestrian crossing – Jeff Mitchell, Senior Structural Engineering at HDR Engineering responded that there is not enough space to support such a refuge

- Mr. Geyer asked about the timing for the Santa Rosa street design elements – Mr. Averyt estimated the timing to be approximately two weeks
- Mr. Geyer asked who would complete the pedestrian crossing enhancement work – Mr. Averyt responded that the Sundt Davilia team will be responsible for completing the work
- Ms. Meyer asked whether the design elements would come out of the San Pedro Creek budget – Mr. Averyt responded that the design elements would come out of the budget and that they were planned into the original budget but were not approved for implementation by the City of San Antonio
- Ms. De La Garza asked about whether the buildings along Commerce St. – like the Continental Building – are historic properties – Mr. Averyt responded that SARA is working with the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) ensure the team is meeting all necessary requirements for the work to be completed ... Mr. Averyt noted that the Continental Building is currently sitting on a retaining wall, which will be stabilized by the construction team
- Mr. Geyer asked how much water was in the channel as a result of the rain – Steven Dean, a representative from Pape Engineers estimated there to be between 6 to 18 inches in the channel
- Ms. Radle asked about the responsibility for the wall behind the Governor’s Palace, suggesting better connectivity between neighboring properties – Mr. Averyt noted the wall isn’t included in the project right now but the team is working with the appropriate entities to get it included
- Ms. Bradley asked about parking between Houston St. and Martin St. along Camaron St. mentioning a used car dealership along Martin St. that seems to be empty and suggesting it may be used for public parking – Mr. Averyt responded that he doesn’t know of any existing plans involving the dealership as it is a private development not connected with the project
- Mr. Wilkinson noted that the City of San Antonio is currently working on an Urban Lighting Master Plan and suggested holding a public meeting surrounding the planned construction of Camaron St. with key stakeholders, including local businesses – Mr. Averyt noted that coordination with other entities and projects throughout the city happens as best it can when opportunities arise ... Mr. Averyt mentioned there is a public meeting scheduled around Camaron St. which will allow the design team to sit down with stakeholders and look at the project comprehensively, at which SARA will be represented
- Ms. Galvan asked about the location of the Camaron Street Public Meeting – Mr. Averyt responded the meeting will be held at Plaza de Armas
- Mr. Geyer requested Mr. Averyt coordinate a meeting between Centro, the City of San Antonio and the school district to devise a coordinated position on Camaron St. ... Mr. Geyer noted he met with SAISD representatives about planned improvements regarding traffic flow and an ultimate plan for adding a parking garage and he would like those discussions to include other stakeholders – Mr. Averyt responded that SARA can send out a request to local stakeholders
- Mr. Geyer noted he would like for the subcommittee to send a letter to the City of San Antonio expressing its desire for Camaron St. to be used as a neighborhood street – quiet, tree-lined and with a low speed limit – desire is for Camaron to be a one way street going north with parking on the east side as far as possible and a bike lane on the west side ultimately providing connectivity to San Pedro Creek Park, with access off of Martin St. and access to Kingsbury St. – Mr. Geyer asked Monica Trevino-Ortega to draft the letter and received concurrence from the subcommittee to sign the letter on behalf of the committee
- Ms. Radle mentioned she discussed the idea with the SAISD representatives and they are in support of coordinating a meeting with key stakeholders
- Mr. Geyer asked whether the City of San Antonio’s planned Commerce Street design is accessible to the subcommittee – Mr. Wilkinson noted that it should be available to review via city resources
- Ms. Galvan noted parking as a major concern and the subcommittee needs to address the need for public parking – Ms. Galvan asked whether the City has an existing traffic plan in place that addresses accessibility to downtown – Mr. Averyt responded he has not seen a recent traffic plan
- Ms. Trevino Ortega noted that SARA is working with the Columbus Italian Society on an agreement for public parking – the agreement has yet to be finalized but is currently in process

- Ms. Meyer asked whether the new Bexar County parking garage would be available for public parking - Mr. Canez from Bexar County responded that the new garage is still in design and will be for county employees, however the new garage will open up spaces in the existing Flores St. garage for public parking
- Ms. Bolner-Prost noted that SARA should partner with Frost Bank for public parking, she also mentioned that several people have asked her about an ADA drop off point
- Mr. Wilkinson noted that there are a number of spaces controlled by TxDot under 281 and 35 interchange, but there would be a challenge of getting people from that parking area to places throughout downtown ... Mr. Wilkinson's suggested looking into tuk tuks or self-driving vehicles to provide transportation from parking lot to destinations throughout downtown
- Mr. Geyer asked whether anyone was aware of a current official downtown transportation plan – Mr. Wilkinson noted the latest one he has seen was created in 2014; Ms. Bolner-Prost responded that she did not think a transportation plan currently exists, but that any transportation plan would be impacted by the Alamo Interpretive Plan that is currently in the works
- Ms. Galvan emphasized the importance of a transportation plan and urged that the committee make a recommendation that a downtown traffic study be completed
- Mr. Geyer asked Mr. Dean whether he knew of a recent traffic study – Representative responded he did not believe it has been updated since 2014
- Mr. Wilkinson asked Mr. Dean whether they're looking into unmanned and autonomous vehicles – The representative said they are not because the technology is still unproven

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE UPDATE

Kristen Hansen, San Antonio River Authority, provided the following updates:

Plaza de Fundación Update

- Recent rain events have caused the bacteria levels in the creek to spike – plaza water is being managed and is currently turned off for water quality sampling
- During this time, samples are taken daily to determine when bacteria levels return to normal
- Normally samples are taken on Wednesday and reported on the San Pedro Creek Culture Park and SARA websites by Friday
- Ms. Hansen shared the graph of bacteria levels showing that current findings are not within acceptable range for recreational water contact
- Ms. Hansen shared a photo of the new rain gauge that was installed at the beginning of the San Pedro Creek Culture Park

Storm Response

- Ms. Hansen shared photos of the water level as a result of recent rain events
- Ms. Hansen shared photos of flooding on the lower paseo and illustrated how the operations team blocks off the area to pedestrian traffic as a result
- Ms. Hansen shared photos depicting how the water is being absorbed by the bioswales

Motorized Vehicles

- SARA has been part of public and stake holder meetings surrounding the regulation of dockless scooters
- At this time motorized vehicles continue to not be allowed on San Pedro Creek Culture Park paseos
- SARA exploring geofencing technology to prevent motorized scooters from working in areas where they are not allowed
- SARA has experienced increased operations and maintenance cost as a result of staff having to pressure wash scooter marks off the trails
- SARA is coordinating with City and the County on overall operations & maintenance and will continue to do so as is the standard on the Mission Reach and the Museum Reach

Questions and Comments

- Mr. Wilkinson noted that the scooter marks are becoming a problem across the city and are difficult to remove
- Ms. De La Garza asked about the lighting in the rains from the heavens being out – Mr. Averyt noted there were issues with water getting into the fixtures and shorting them out – the fixtures are being reassessed and temporary lighting is being brought in while the issue is evaluated and fixed
- Mr. Geyer asked whether the Mission and Museum Reach were opened in phases – Ms. Scott noted that the Mission Reach was opened in phases while the Museum Reach was opened all at once

ART UPDATE

Carrie Brown, San Antonio River Authority, provided the following updates:

Programming

- Monday night yoga is continuing throughout October – yoga sessions have been well attended to date
- Planning a holiday event to celebrate multicultural holiday traditions that will include festive lighting, temporary artwork, music and food vendors throughout the San Pedro Creek Culture Park on December 8
- Working on coordinating with community partners to host events along the creek – anticipate a partner event will take place in October
- Ms. Brown noted she is plugged in and providing feedback on parking as it pertains to the various events held at the Culture Park

Tricentennial Artwork

- SARA received 166 applications in response to its call for Tricentennial artwork – the call closed on August 30
- Good diversity in applications from around and outside the U.S. – including 48 from San Antonio and 17 from abroad
- Ms. Brown shared information about the members of the selection panel
- Selection panel will meet in late September and early October to review the applications and select three finalists who will be contacted for proposals
- The three finalists will submit proposals; The subcommittee will have the opportunity to review finalist proposals
- Selection criteria includes experience completing a public project of similar scope; sensitivity, creativity and engagement with diverse communities; Interest in the way the San Pedro Creek Culture Park influenced the development and culture of San Antonio
- Ms. Brown shared the proposed artwork selection schedule moving forward – including proposals due from finalists on Nov. 9 with Bexar County approving a selected artist in December 2018

Phase 1.2

- Artwork opportunities in Phase 1.2 will include the water wall, a 5-part mural similar to phase 1.1 and a sculpture lawn
- Art components will be included in the budget presented for Phase 1.2

Questions and Comments

- Mr. Baird asked how members of the selection panel was selected – Ms. Brown responded that she chose the panel based off her own knowledge of the participants, recommendations from Bexar County as well as availability of the panelists to review the 166 applications and attend all required meetings
- Mr. Baird asked if Ms. Brown is following the guidelines originally set forth by the committee on utilizing local artists – Ms. Brown noted that the call to artists was heavily emphasized locally resulting in 48 applications from San Antonio
- Mr. Canez asked if applicants would be weighted more heavily by being local – Ms. Brown responded they would not
- Ms. De La Garza asked where the water wall would be located – Ms. Brown responded that it is between Houston and Commerce behind the TPR space while the 5-part mural will be behind the Governor's Palace

- Mr. Geyer noted that the artwork will be down on creek level, which will be below street level

Questions

- Mr. Geyer requested that the subcommittee be able to see the birds eye view of Phase 1.2
- Mr. Geyer noted that, as of now the design team is following a course of action to use the same tiles that were utilized in Phase 1.1 for continuity – Ms. Brown responded that artists Michael Menchaca and John Philip Santos were engaged for the entirety of Phase 1
- Mr. Geyer noted that using the same materials and same designs are not fully appropriate due to the current tile artwork getting worn down by the elements – Ms. Brown responded that the fading is not a representation of the artist and that SARA is looking into utilizing colorfast porcelain tile instead of the concrete tiles or limiting the color palette moving forward
- Mr. Geyer registered a concern about the limited opportunities for new artists in Phase 1.2 other than the 5-panel mural – Ms. Brown responded that SARA is exploring opportunities for temporary art, including bridge underpasses and the bridges at street level
- Mr. Geyer noted that there are no plans to have permanent art ornamentation on the bridges in Phase 1.2 and he would like this decision to be reconsidered moving forward
- Mr. Geyer – there are no plans to have art ornamentation on the bridges – issues to discuss in the next meeting
- Mr. Geyer strongly recommends that the bridges be constructed to accommodate art later and in the future art should be put on both sides of the bridges – even in Phase 1.1 – Ms. Brown noted that artwork is on both sides of the bridge in 1.1
- Mr. Geyer clarified that art should be visible from both creek and street side and bridges should be constructed accordingly to accommodate the artwork

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Monica Trevino-Ortega, San Antonio River Authority, provided the following update:

Design Workshop Recap

- There were 38 attendees at the subcommittee design workshop on Aug. 28
- Key takeaways included lighting and signage – need for more safety lighting and wayfinding for signage; Concerns about making things kid friendly – create more engaging opportunities for kids and the general public interact with water; Artist selection was another note – comments were made about whether or not to repeat artists from one phase of the project to the next
- Top public art elements in Phase 1.2 include the continuation of murals and the sculpture lawn
- Phase 1.2 design will be reviewed by the executive committee (Sept. 14), followed by Judge Wolff and Commissioner Elizondo (Sept. 18) and is slated to be presented at Bexar County Commissioners Court on Oct. 2
- Interpretive Plan contract is out to Toxey/McMillian & Associates and an email will be distributed to the committee today
- SARA is launching a new San Pedro Creek Culture Park website that will go live on Monday, Sept. 17 – the new site features a better user experience, cleaner look and feel, updated navigation and new photos
- Ms. Trevino-Ortega shared an audio clip of the Spanish translations of the website and mobile app audio tour
- Visitors will have the option to hear the audio tour in Spanish beginning in early October
- Stickers will be added to the interpretive signs along the creek to make visitors aware that the tour is available in Spanish
- Only five subcommittee surveys have been completed – the survey will be open through Sept. 28 for subcommittee members to complete

Questions

- Mr. Geyer noted that some early feedback from the survey suggested members may prefer meetings to start at 9 a.m. and that he is working to hold meetings to a two-hour timeframe to accommodate subcommittee member schedules

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC AND SUBCOMMITTEE

ITEMS TO PRESENT TO Westside Creeks Oversight Committee:

- Westside Creeks Oversight Committee meets quarterly and will not meet prior to October 11

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Scott Baird and seconded by Cathey Meyer to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m. The motion carried unanimously.¹

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