

## Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

10-15-2020

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board held a meeting on October 15, 2020 at 6:04 p.m. via zoom webinar.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Present:

Stan Engle  
Robert Harrison  
Eric Montgomery  
Megan Schuller  
Maryln Zahler via Phone

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members Absent:

Cassie McClure  
Eli Guzman

Others Present:

Phil Catanach, Recreation Administrator, Parks & Recreation  
Sonya Delgado, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Paul Dugie, Souder, Miller & Associates  
Frances Escola, Public  
Arturo Gonzalez, Program Manager, ECM International  
Franco Granillo, Parks Administrator, Parks & Recreation  
Mike Heard, Highland Enterprises  
Joy Ann Lucero, Management Analyst, Parks & Recreation  
Catherine Mathews, Landscape Architect, Parks & Recreation  
Sreedevi Mohanraj, Architect, Public Works  
Jennifer Morrow,  
Hazel Nevarez, Senior Office Manager, Parks & Recreation  
Robert Nunez, Youth Services Administrator, Parks & Recreation  
George Pearson, Public  
David Sedillo, Interim Director, Public Works  
Philip Simpson, Southern New Mexico Trails Alliance, and Local Resident  
Tony Trevino, Interim Deputy Director, Public Works  
Ceci Vasconcellos, Community Engagement

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting of October 15, 2020 via Zoom webinar was brought to order at 6:04 p.m. by Vice-Chair Engle and recognized as having a legal quorum.

### **1. Introductions**

#### 1.1 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Members

Board members introduced themselves and stated the district they represent.

## 1.2 Parks and Recreation Staff

Staff introduced themselves and stated their position.

### 2. Conflict of Interest

No Conflict of Interest.

### 3. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Schuller moved to approve agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Montgomery. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

### 4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Montgomery moved to approve minutes of August 4, 2020 as presented, seconded by Mr. Harrison. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

### 5. Public Participation

Vice-Chair Engle read emails that were received to [Parksandrecadmin@las-cruces.org](mailto:Parksandrecadmin@las-cruces.org) regarding GO Bond Trail Routing from Philip B. Simpson, Ashleigh Curry, and Andrew Bencomo.

Ms. Frances Escola said it sounds like phase 1 is being talked about and the portion of the Armijo Lateral that gives her great concern for her safety is that there is not enough discussion about safety for the people who live along the ditch from the bicyclists. She said she is not ready to address it at this point but doesn't want to miss out on an important opportunity. She said maybe it is better for her to say what she has to say until it gets closer to that phase of the project. She asked if Ms. Mathews or Ms. Vasconcellos had anything to say. Ms. Mathews said she did speak with Ms. Escola who has expressed concern regarding the idea of a trail along Armijo lateral adjacent to her property. Ms. Mathews said that part of the Armijo lateral is south of Brown Road and North of Avenida de Mesilla – that portion of the lateral has been discussed by others as a potential location for trail facilities but at this point of time, it is not part of what is proposed for the Armijo lateral trail. Ms. Mathews said she feels Ms. Escola's concerns could be heard and could be valuable in providing all perspectives with regard to the trail. Ms. Mathews informed Ms. Escola if she was interested in speaking, it would be valuable but left final decision to Vice-Chair Engle. Vice-Chair Engle said this meeting is going to be pretty long and this could be discussed off-line.

### 6. Action Items

#### 6.1 Go Bond – Trails (Tony Trevino, Interim Deputy Director, Public Works)

Mr. Tony Trevino presented a Power Point presentation to the Board on the 2018 GO BOND, Walking, Jogging, Biking, Recreational Trails (Question #4). Mr. Trevino informed the Board this

is the same presentation given to the BPAC Committee. Presentation covered some background and projection information.

Background:

- GO Bond approved by Voters August 21, 2018 for walking, jogging, and biking trails, \$2.7 million.
- Past meetings:
  - Public- February 20, 2020
  - EBID-June 10, 2020 (meeting was to try and apply for the first leg of the Mesilla drain trail and get permits from EBID). There were lots of concerns by the farmers and residents. Did have to end the Mesilla Drain trail at Burn Lake for the time being due to farmers near NM28 who are on the Board of EBID who do not want the trail behind the property on the drain behind their orchard and the plant. Did get the first permit, and Ms. Mathews is now working on getting the second permit, which is the Armijo trail. Mr. Trevino said EBID tells us which side of the drain to be on with the lateral. Referring to the email from Mr. Simpson about using the east side of the lateral rather than the east, Mr. Trevino said the reason we cannot be on the east side is because EBID has restricted us to the west side.
  - BPAC-June 16, 2020 – presented same presentation going in depth over interim detour routes and reasoning why those were chosen with future plans to follow the main plan trails along the drains and laterals when funding time and collaboration with entities (whether it be with the railroad, NMDOT, EBID).
- Mesilla Drain Trail:
  - Mr. Trevino displayed and reviewed the mapping of the Mesilla Drain Trail (just permitted by EBID). The Mesilla Drain Trail ties into the Outfall Channel (which is Northwest of Mayfield High School), works its way south crossing Bruins Lane to the Field of Dreams (at this point, will have to do modifications to drain because there is not enough access to build safe trail and get safe access across). Trail continues to crossing Tashiro, and continuing South.
  - Mr. Trevino went on to display the Mesilla Drain Trail mapping where it crosses Picacho. He said this is another area of concern. Mr. Trevino said Ms. Curry had spoken to Mr. Harold Love of NMDOT and he also had some conversations with Mr. Love. Mr. Trevino said Public Works had put in for two map grants for two hawk systems. The first hawk system was on the drain just east of 17<sup>th</sup> Street – there was a serious concern from NMDOT on this - from an engineering standpoint, a hawk system crosswalk this close to a major intersection of 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Picacho Ave. would be in conflict with timing of traffic signals. Mr. Trevino said Public Works did not get the grant so will be utilizing the existing intersection of 17<sup>th</sup> & Picacho as the crossing. Trail continues to Amador Ave which will also have to utilize the signalized crossing at 17<sup>th</sup> and Amador, continuing to Burns Lake and ending at I-10. Working on final design to hopefully get this project started ASAP.
  - Mr. Trevino displayed a possible last segment of the trail that is across I-10.

- Las Cruces Lateral Segment A Trail:
  - Mr. Trevino displayed mapping of the Las Cruces Lateral which starts at the Armijo Lateral, Southwest of the Three Crosses Ave., heading east across Alameda Blvd. to Madrid, utilizing some bike lanes at Madrid crossing Main (another area where a Hawk system will need to be installed). Trail will continue to behind police station and end at Spruce. Mr. Trevino said Public Works is currently designing Campo Street, going thru different design concepts on how to fit pedestrians, bicyclists, trying to come up with a design schematic to fit through the narrow road, and how to accommodate extension of Las Cruces Lateral trail down to Campo, picking up in the downtown area and extend that in the next phase.
- Armijo Trail:
  - Mr. Trevino displayed mapping of the Armijo Lateral Trail which starts at the Outfall Channel (west of Dona Ana Road), follow eastern bank of the lateral to McClure Rd. Concern here is as extend further down the Armijo Lateral, where it ties into Parker Rd., the right of way ends a couple hundred feet north of Parker Rd. so there is not direct access from EBID property to Parker Rd. (you would have to cross BNSF. This is a lengthy process. This causes having to jump to McClure Rd. Improvements will be done on McClure as it crosses to second 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (2<sup>nd</sup> Street is called out on to be a shared bike route on the Active Transportation Plan) to get to Parker. From here, Mesilla Street was too close to railroad traffic signal, and reason for route going to 4<sup>th</sup> Street. From 4<sup>th</sup> Street, will continue across Picacho to Hadley Ave. up to Armijo Lateral and continue to Amador Ave., crossing Valley Drive, to the Mesilla Drain Trail.
- Trail Cross Sections
  - Mr. Trevino displayed a picture explaining trail is going to be asphalt. Some areas will have to have some concrete based on width of the bank that is there, to make sure is structurally sound. EBID will work on naming the different locations.
  - Mr. Trevino displayed a picture of a trail crossing example saying there will be signage with Ziggy the Turtle, stop signs for bicyclists before they enter the roadway, bollards, crosswalk signs, advance warning signs, and wayfinding signs.
- Next Steps
  - EBID permits –Mesilla Drain Trail has been obtained. Armijo Lateral permit has been submitted. Next one will be the Las Cruces Lateral.
  - Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Approval
  - Amendment to design-build contract.
  - City Council approval.
  - Begin construction.

Mr. Trevino opened the floor to questions.

Mr. Harrison thanked Mr. Trevino for his presentation and asked in the aspect of some of the stuff Ms. Curry brought up, and with the NMDOT grant funding that wasn't approved, if there are other possibilities for funding through the Safe Routes to School for different parts of this project since some of these crossings go through multiple different schools. Mr. Trevino said he has not

had this conversation per se with Ms. Curry and is open for any kind of grants. He said he is going to apply for the map grant again this coming cycle. He added the interim child connections are on existing streets, part of the Active Transportation Plan, so signage and stripping will be done – this effort will not go to waste. Mr. Trevino added Public Works will reach out to Ms. Curry, and through the quarterly LCPS and CLC correlation meeting with the schools.

Mr. Harrison asked in aspect of staying in the laterals that Mr. Simpson talked about and coordinating with going ahead with what's planned, can we keep in the works of working with BNSF, EBID to try to maneuver something to stay more on the trails – and if it's more BNSF or EBID. Mr. Trevino said it is a little bit of both – BNSF had a longer lead time and a lot more restrictions. He said Public Works has been in contact with them in other areas of some trails trying to find some remedies in how to address some of these areas and to have an answer for the future for the rest of the trails.

Vice-Chair Engle said Mr. Simpson mentioned using 1<sup>st</sup> Street, North of Hadley, and Mr. Trevino mentioned it was too narrow to add a bike lane. Vice-Chair Engle asked if there was any possibility of putting share-o's or signage to say it's a bicycle corridor as well and then use 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and in looking at the aerials on google maps, there are a lot of alleyways and asked if alleyways were considered as part of this and why not. Mr. Trevino said alleys were never brought up. Mr. Trevino said there are a lot of plans with the City that need to be incorporated into all of the projects; the Active Transportation Plan had called out 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> to be part of that. He said in an effort to make the budget go further to do additional work on the trails, if do some stripping on 4<sup>th</sup> street and follow it, it will go a lot further than having to try to build something along the alleyway. He said alleyways get a lot of traffic with heavy equipment from the utility companies. Mr. Trevino said he cannot get a crossing near the BNSF currently, it would have to come all the way from 4<sup>th</sup> street, cross, and use the east bound bike lane if it's there, and then get it. Mr. Trevino displayed an aerial showing Picacho and the Armijo lateral and showed there was no more than two feet from the property line to the EBID drain, so there is no width for anything to drive thru or put a path, modifications would have to be made. He said obstacles like this is what has put a hindrance on the project.

Mr. Sedillo added to the question that Board member Harrison brought up, if there had been any discussion with Ms. Curry on coordinating efforts on funding as part of safe routes to school and yes, this is something that can be discussed. He said that Ms. Curry mentioned she had spoken to Mr. Harold Love of NMDOT and Public Works also had conversations with him, but if they could meet together to have this discussion, this would help move toward that more permanent location to where they could have a hawk signal on Picacho and possibly over by 17<sup>th</sup>. He said Mr. Love said in Ms. Curry's e-mail he was open to reviewing those again. Mr. Sedillo said we would definitely use those partnerships to move forward with our permanent locations. He said we want to utilize everything that we can to make sure that we make these trails as whole as possible, although it does take some time and what we are trying to do currently is to align with the best path possible with the time frame and funding we have at this time. He said as Mr. Trevino said, we are actively working to get to those permanent paths that were shown.

Mr. Phil Simpson directed to Mr. Trevino – he said it was mentioned that 2<sup>nd</sup> Street is part of the Active Transportation Plan and his greatest concern with the surface streets would be McClure. He said he doesn't see McClure as a very good solution for bicycles and pedestrians as he doesn't see there is enough room to widen it or really make it safe for non-motorized users. Mr. Trevino agreed this is probably not one of the better roads on this project but at this point, this is the only way to get across the railroad tracks at an already identified crossing, across the lateral and on to the west side. Mr. Trevino said they are working with their design team as to what improvements can be done to McClure and once have answers can share with Parks and Recreation and on website.

Ms. Escola expressed concern with what she understands to be eight feet of paving. She said where the Armijo Lateral goes between Brown Road and Avenida de Mesilla, it is so narrow and the homes come right up to the ditch bank, that if there was eight feet of paving plus with concrete, this could damage plant material from peoples yards and roots of the plants going underneath. She said people will have to use more water to offset the heat and wonders if the well being of plants and humans that live along the way are being taken into consideration. She said from what she heard about the concerns of the farmers was that there are still plans to move forward and wonders how much respect is given to the concerns of the people who will have to live with these decisions and she would like to hear this. Mr. Trevino responded the eight feet won't be all the way through and vegetation will be taken into consideration. Mr. Trevino added in regards to the farmer, he did have to do his due diligence and put forth best effort for the public who voted these trail alignments to move forward to get these alignments completed and done and as programmed for the entire city. Ms. Escola expressed she has numerous concerns about this lateral and has spoken to Mr. Trevino before and he assured her it was not part of any trail plan and it is. Mr. Trevino said it wasn't part of this plan, that the GO Bond project does not go that far south. Ms. Escola said she understands it is on future phases. Mr. Trevino said yes, it may be. Ms. Escola said she would like consideration given for the well being of the people who live that close to the ditch. She said she is serious, she will not continue to live here if this trail goes through, she should be able to be in her back yard safely, with peace and quiet, and feeling of privacy, it's not safe. Vice-Chair Engle added Ms. Escola can talk to him on this at any time and he can bring her issues to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and staff.

Mr. George Pearson, Chair of BPAC and citizen, said one of the concerns of the BPAC is safety, and the safety of road crossings is of primary concern. He said a multiuse trail system is being designed and he would like some assurances from the City that at some point, when trail transitions to where it is no longer multiuse, that there are markings indicating you are no longer on a trail. Mr. Trevino agreed with Mr. Pearson, and said as engineers, it is their job to make sure to have crossings safely done, safely marked, and proper signage.

Mr. Harrison asked if neighborhood concerns were listened to regarding the McClure transition, Council, and neighbor input. Mr. Trevino said for the first public meeting, invites were sent out and this was through the entire trails. Mr. Harrison said another visualization or interpretation of these trails, thinking of the safety and multiuse, these trails are just linear parks. Mr. Trevino agreed and said there is a lot more to it than just a trail, there is a lot more collaboration on these trail alignments, going thru EBID with crossings.

Ms. Schuller moved to accept Mr. Trevino's presentation to move on to City Council, seconded by Ms. Zahler. Ms. Schuller expressed an advisory point to Mr. Trevino coming off Ms. Escola's comments, cautioning how EBID is depicted in presentation to Council, a word of caution – the farmers and ranchers will block a lot more if presented the way it was presented here. Mr. Montgomery said it would be a benefit to the Council presentation to include comments on the paving and vegetation affected as discussed by Ms. Escola. Mr. Montgomery said he appreciated staff's consideration of the routing, especially as concerned with the linkages of the EBID flow channels relative to BNSF right of way. He said he also appreciated the explanations in the presentation. Vice-Chair Engle said as an avid cyclist and walker, he is forced to begrudgingly agree with Mr. Trevino's analysis of the engineering issues involved with getting our crossings plus the fact that in some instances the money for the crossings didn't materialize when submitting for grants. He said he would love to have seen crossings that favor walkers and cyclists because he believes that we have neglected walking and bicycling as a viable transportation system in favor of single occupancy vehicles for far too long. He said the project needs to be done, otherwise we may not get anything else out of it and thinks Mr. Trevino did a good job in showcasing the difficulties in trying to build a transportation system that could benefit those users.

Motion to have Mr. Trevino's presentation move forward to City Council was approved unanimously.

## **7. Discussion Items**

Vice-Chair Engle asked the Board if they are willing to entertain discussion items 7.1, 2, & 3 or table these items for a later date. Ms. Zahler said date and time these items will be discussed has to be decided on if tabled per Robert's Rule of Order.

Ms. Zahler moved to table discussion items 7.1, 2 & 3 until the November 19, 2020 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting, seconded by Mr. Harrison. Ms. Schuller asked if 7.3 Budget Information was time precedent to discuss at this meeting or if could wait. Ms. Delgado said it was just for information and not time sensitive. Mr. Montgomery asked what agenda looks like for next month in interest of moving three items for discussion. Ms. Delgado said there may be an item that comes forward related to Go Bond, but no other items.

Mr. Harrison, Mr. Montgomery, Ms. Schuller, and Ms. Zahler voted for tabling. Vice-Chair Engle voted neigh. Motion to table discussion items 7.1, 2, & 3 until the November 19, 2020 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting carried.

### **7.1 Go Bond Project Updates (Tony Trevino, Interim Deputy Director of Public Works)**

### **7.2 Parks and Recreation Programs/COVID Procedures (Sonya Delgado, Parks and Recreation Director)**

### **7.3 Budget Information (Joy Ann Lucero, Management Analyst, Parks & Recreation)**

## **8. Staff Member Comments**

Ms. Delgado said there were no staff comments at this time.

## **9. Board Comments**

Mr. Harrison thanked Mr. Trevino for taking to heart recommendations of the BPAC, trail, and biking communities' and appreciated his District 2 meeting this week.

Ms. Zahler thanked the board for being patient with her. She wants all Board members to know the dog issue for the veteran plaque is not a dead issue and hopes this is still a goal for the Board.

Vice-Chair Engle said it was good to have Ms. Zahler back and glad she is moving forward with issues important to her, the City, and Parks and Recreation.

Vice-Chair Engle thanked Parks and Recreation staff and the Board for dealing with these interesting times.

## **10. Adjournment**

Mr. Montgomery moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Harrison. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

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Hazel Nevarez, Recording Secretary

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Stan Engle, Vice-Chair