

Henderson County
RAIL-TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, June 8, 2022

The RTAC held a regularly scheduled meeting on June 8, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. in the King Street Meeting Room.

Voting Member	Present	Not in Attendance
Chuck McGrady, Chair		√
Chris Burns, Vice Chair	√	
Douglas Moon, at-large	√	
Selena Einwechter, at-large	√	
David Adams, at-large	√	
Dr. Ken Shelton, at-large	√	
Brent Detwiler, City of Hendersonville	√	
Nancy McKinnley, Town of Laurel Park	√	
Mike Egan, Conserving Carolina	√	

Also present: Chris Todd, Business & Community Development Director; Autumn Radcliff, Planning Director; Marcus Jones, County Engineer; and Janna Bianculli, Senior Planner.

Call to Order

Vice Chair Chris Burns called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Meeting Summary

Mr. Mike Egan commented that there were a few syntax errors he wanted to correct. No motion was made.

Updates

Conserving Carolina

Representatives announced that the lease agreement with the City of Brevard was finalized on June 6th. Signage will also be added to that portion of the trail to let the public know that the trail is closed.

Friends of Ecusta Trail (FOET)

Representatives updated that the FOET attended the White Squirrel Festival to fundraise and raise awareness of the trail.

HC Staff

County staff announced that they secured a federal grant of \$10.4 million for the construction of Phase D of the trail, which spans from the US 64/Battle Creek Rd intersection west to the County line. This money will become available in October of 2026. County staff is working to expedite the grant, if possible.

Discussion

Law Enforcement Overview

Guest speakers from the Sheriff's Department, City and Town Police, and various fire departments presented their thoughts on enforcing trail rules. The only method that gives the entities enforcement authority is to codify the "rules" within each jurisdiction. As for now, unauthorized vehicles are driven by trespassers and could be enforced as such since the trail is not officially open to the public. County staff updated the RTAC that an MOU

between the County, the Town, and the City is fully drafted and being reviewed by the legal department. Execution of the final document will likely occur before the end of the year.

Continued Discussion of Public Safety

County staff presented research conducted regarding emergency light systems. Many public entities are removing these devices due to the costly maintenance and lack of use. Staff presented the cellular voice coverage along the trail and noted that all carriers cover about 99% of the trail. RTAC members responded that they agree with the research and do not see a need in spending money on antiquated technology.

Public Outreach

County staff presented the idea of helping to facilitate an Ecusta business group that would be comprised of adjacent business owners. This group would assist the RTAC and the County in advising on issues and opportunities. The FOET expressed interest in assisting county staff on coordination of this group. The aim is for this group to become an independent entity.

User Groups Identification

Chris Todd, BCD Director, described the various considerations the RTAC will need to undertake as a trail “etiquette” is developed. The etiquette will be drafted by the Recreation Advisory Board and the RTAC will provide their input before the rules are adopted. Some of the issues that need to be addressed concern e-bikes, proper “passing” protocol, other types of “modes”, and speed limits. The RTAC will further discuss these topics at their next meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m.