



301 W. Main St.
Town Hall
Carrboro, NC 27510

**Town of Carrboro
Meeting Minutes
Town Council**

October 17, 2023

7:00 PM

Council Chambers - Room 110

Present: Mayor Damon Seils, Council Member Susan Romaine, Council Member Barbara Foushee, Council Member Randee Haven-O'Donnell, Council Member Danny Nowell, Council Member Eliazar Posada, Council Member Sammy Slade

Also Present: Marie Parker, Assistant Town Manager; Wesley Barker, Town Clerk; Wendy Welsh, Deputy Town Clerk; Nick Herman, Town Attorney

POETRY READING

Poet Laurette Liza Wolff-Francis read one of her own poems entitled "Listening in the Garden."

**PROCLAMATION- MINORITY ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT WEEK-
OCTOBER 22-28, 2023**

Mayor Seils read the proclamation honoring Minority Enterprise Development Week in Carrboro. Siddisee Hirpa with Kumon of Carrboro accepted the proclamation and offered a few remarks.

PUBLIC COMMENT

David Mason, Carrboro resident, spoke to the Council with a recommendation to consider renaming a street in Carrboro honoring Braxton Foushee for his years of public service and his advocacy for civil rights.

Pat Mason, Carrboro resident, read a letter written by Denita Mason which was a request to the Town of Carrboro to honor Braxton Foushee by creating a day of service in his name.

Herman Foushee, Carrboro resident, requested the Town Council consider renaming a street in honor of Braxton Foushee.

Mayor Seils asked the Town Manager to explore options of street renaming.

Council Member Eliazar Posada stated he is working on a resolution to honor Braxton Foushee which will be brought forth to the Council soon.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM TOWN COUNCIL RETREATS HELD ON
AUGUST 27, 2022 AND DECEMBER 10, 2022**

A motion was made by Council Member Slade, seconded by Council Member Romaine to approve the meeting minutes with amendments noted.

The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting minutes from the Town Council retreat held on January 21, 2023 and Town Council meetings held on February 14, 21 & 28, 2023 were tabled.

CONSIDERATION TO AMEND THE TOWN MEETING CALENDAR TO ADD A TOWN COUNCIL MEETING ON NOVEMBER 1, 2023

A short Council discussion occurred on this possible additional meeting date.

A motion was made by Council Member Slade, seconded by Council Member Foushee, to not add a Town Council meeting on November 1, 2023, but to allow the mayor to poll Town Council members for an alternate meeting date.

The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – TOWN OF CARRBORO’S USE OF CDBG-CV FUNDS FOR EMERGENCY HOUSING ASSISTANCE

The purpose of this item was to hold a public hearing to receive comment on the Town’s use of Community Development Block Grant – Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) for Emergency Housing Assistance. A requirement of the grant closeout is for the Town to hold one public hearing to obtain public comments. It was stated members of the public may also submit any additional comments to the Town’s Housing and Community Services department by November 6, 2023.

Mayor Seils opened the public hearing to receive public comment.

With no public comment received on this item, Mayor Seils then closed the public hearing.

UPDATE TO BOLIN CREEK GREENWAY CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN

Mayor Seils gave an overview of the plan, stating that Town Council directed staff to conduct public engagement on alternative alignments in the 2009 Bolin Creek Greenway Conceptual Master Plan at their March 28, 2023, with a report to be given to Council no later than October 31, 2023.

Catherine Lazorko, Communications & Engagement Director, gave a presentation to Council on the engagement process that occurred between March 28, 2023 and October 17, 2023 that included a community survey online, canvassing, news releases, printed informational materials, email blasts, social media posts, posters, and engagement tables at community events. Catherine spoke on the equitable engagement efforts during this process which included outreach to marginalized citizens and multilingual surveys. Catherine stated the survey results included a total of 1,769 responses. Catherine explained the key takeaways from the greenway survey included: 1) A majority of community members preferring the Creekside alignment for the Bolin Creek Greenway; 2) Community members wanting more trails and greenways; 3) Community members would use trails more often if they could easily bike to, walk to, or park at a trailhead; and 4) While a majority of community members support the Bolin Creek Greenway Conceptual Plan, a significant number expressed environmental concerns and opposition to a paved greenway.

Trish McGuire, Planning Director, then gave a presentation to Council on the technical and regulatory review with this plan. Trish stated staff has consulted with the Town Engineer and other consultants while also considering Town, State and Federal regulations pertaining to

natural environmental conditions, endangered species, special flood hazard areas, streams and wetlands, and fish and wildlife. The review did not identify regulatory roadblocks to any of the conceptual alternative trail alignments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON BOLIN CREEK CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN **ITEM**

The mayor then opened the floor to public comments from citizens wishing to speak on this agenda item.

Lisa Dunn, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creek alignment. She thanked staff for their engagement efforts.

Ryan Byars, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and thanked the town staff for the engagement efforts.

Arlie Byars, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Diane Robertson, Carrboro resident, spoke on the engagement efforts for Bolin Creek Greenway citing recent letters submitted to the Town Council by various organizations. She also spoke on environmental concerns with this Creekside alignment.

Catherine Fray, Carrboro resident who served as a co-chair for the Comprehensive Plan, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and thanked the town staff for the engagement efforts

Patrick McDonough, Carrboro resident, showed a slide show and spoke the affordability of Bolin Creek Phases 3 &4. He spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Brian Crawford, Carrboro resident, showed an image comparing children's illustrations of those who drive to school and walk to school. He spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Samuel Smith, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. He emphasized that greenways are a way to separates cars from other road users.

Nancy Lovas, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and advocated for completion for safety and accessibility.

Cristóbal Palmer, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and urged the town to move forward towards next steps.

Nick Lytle, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and the petition what was signed by over 1,000 residents. He also thanked the town staff for the engagement efforts.

Zoë Little, Carrboro resident, spoke on behalf of the NC Triangle Democratic Socialists of America (NCTDSA) in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. She also read comments from a survey administered by the NCTDSA about the Bolin Creek Greenway.

Maria Palmer spoke in support of completing the Bolin Creek Greenway and advantages of the public service. She made a promise to read out the names of the public servants who made it possible to her grandchildren every year on a walk along the greenway.

Will Jukes, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of moving forward with the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Mel Kramer, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of moving forward with the Bolin Creekside alignment and how she would like to see her kids be able to bike and walk

to school on the greenway. She also thanked the town staff for the engagement efforts.

Altha Cravey, Carrboro resident and retired professor, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Frith Gowan, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment after being skeptical of the idea. After years of using the Chapel Hill greenway, she stated she sees the benefits of the paved portion in Carrboro.

Michael Adamson, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and stated he sees the benefits after using the Chapel Hill greenway.

Tim Turner, Carrboro resident and former chair of EAB, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. He stated the quality of the creek is a result of what is happening in the watershed and not just what is happening by the proposed path. He said this trail could stabilize the bank and have native plantings along the area.

Bruce Sinclair, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and using the OWASA easement for the path and that it would help fix issues along the creek. He also thanked the town staff for the engagement efforts.

Rob Pinder, Carrboro resident, thanked Town staff for their work on this process, he spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and said it would be a way for him and his children to get around Town easier and enjoy the forest.

Valerie Calvo, Chapel Hill resident, enjoys living by the greenway portion in Chapel Hill and spoke on the accessibility this expanded greenway would provide. She supported the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Lili Manning, Carrboro resident, uses the greenway to get around town, spoke in favor of the Bolin Creekside alignment and stated it would allow for more accessibility.

Nick Reasor, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and thanked the town staff for the engagement efforts.

Alyson West, Carrboro resident and member of Carrboro Greenways Commission, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. She stated it would be a special place to share and would be embraced as one of Carrboro's finest public spaces.

Wamiq Chowdhury, Carrboro resident and CSTF member, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and stated that it would provide connectivity and accessibility to residents.

Maggie Dickson, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and stressed the importance of a paved path and how it provides safety in terms of an emergency response rate.

Michael Harrison, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and thanked the town staff for the engagement efforts.

Alex Melnick, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Patrick Quirk, Chapel Hill resident spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. He said he and his kids' bike down Estes Dr. every day to school and there needs to be a safer route for children to get to school.

Heidi Perey, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. She spoke on the mental health of millions of American and how connecting to nature will help with this issue.

Angus Ewington spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. He stated that he drives to Carrboro or walks the railway but that is not good option. He would spend more time in Carrboro if there was a greenway here.

Shannon Arata, attorney for Friends of Bolin Creek, spoke on the riparian buffer based on state law and what the riparian buffer provides to creeks. She spoke on the 2009 study of engineering needs before moving forward. If this moves forward, the state buffer authorization certificate must demonstrate there is no alternate option. She requested council put off the vote and get the study done prior to moving forward.

Margaret Wiener, spoke in opposition to the Bolin Creekside alignment and was disappointed with the survey and public engagement.

Jay Paskins, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. He stated that expanding the greenway along the creek would open access to other parts of the community.

Olivia Hodgson spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. She stated that she was impressed with the survey the town conducted.

Nick Econopolay, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Bryan Moynihan, Carrboro resident, spoke in opposition to the Bolin Creekside alignment and the ecological impacts of building this out. He stated it was not the best use of town resources and cited the ecological impact. He was disappointed with the survey and cited it was bias.

Cecilla Carter, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. She stated she often uses the trails, and it would be nice to be on a greenway. She also stated it was empowering for children to have the option to bike to school or see friends.

Elyse Keefe, Carrboro resident and member of the TAB, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment. She stated it would be more accessible to all residents and benefit the whole community.

Mary Sonis read a letter on behalf of Crystal Cavalier-Keck in opposition of the Bolin Creekside alignment. She stated how important it was to preserve the natural area around Bolin Creek and concerns of building in the riparian buffer.

Martha Hoelzer, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of a greenway but not the Creekside alignment. She was disappointed in the community survey and asked council to delay the vote.

Laurie Khamala, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment and the accessibility it would provide to residents.

Dan Lital, Carrboro resident, spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Gerry O'Donnell, Carrboro resident, spoke in opposition to the Bolin Creekside alignment. He stated he was not in favor of paving the path next to the stream and requested that upkeep costs need to be spelled out to the residents.

Lily Baldwin spoke in support of the Bolin Creekside alignment.

Mayor Seils thanked the Town staff for this large engagement process project noting the diversity of outreach. Catherine Lazorko stated this was a town-wide effort and she recognized Eve Greene, Communications and Engagement Specialist, for her work during this process.

Council Member Nowell asked a regulatory question regarding the Jordan Lake watershed rules which are a large part of awareness and analysis with this project. Trish McGuire responded stating the project under design is subject to these watershed rules and it complies to the rules. Further, Council Member Nowell stated this preferred alignment is the Town's ability to comply with these rules, it also combines levels of safety for pedestrians, and meets all goals. He also spoke on the 2009 Bolin Creek resolution which had some next steps attached, that would close the loop on the conversation.

Council Member Nowell stated he was in favor of making a motion on this proposed resolution. He then asked to add text to the resolution to have a report from staff entailing next steps and a timeline for design and engineering in the spring.

Council Member Romaine read a statement which thanked staff on the engagement process noting targeting communities and staff going to where the people are for outreach such as BIPOC neighborhoods or community events. She also spoke on the financial benefit of having this engagement process completed in house rather than with a consultant. Further, Council Member Romaine stated the Creekside alignment has potential to deliver the most powerful benefits to the community and it is consistent with findings from the community survey. She noted the Creekside alignment would not add any additional impervious surface, the Creekside alignment would result in few trees needing to be cut down compared to the Upland Forest, the narrow path of a greenway could shrink the impervious surface area and improve environmental aspects along the creek, it would open all kinds of opportunities for safe routes to schools, and the Creekside alignment most aligns with the Carrboro Connects plan and connects the town. She stated the Council should move forward with the Creekside alignment.

Council Member Haven-O'Donnell stated she would not support this resolution because of sections 3 and 4 still subject to be reviewed, feels the review should be complete before moving forward. She stated other routes have not been demonstrated as practical referencing the Sewell School roadside path, and the Norfolk Southern decommissioned rail line. Council Member Haven-O'Donnell further spoke on the twin pillars of the Town, race and equity, and climate action, feels that the truth about climate change has not been fully relayed to the community and that the word "climate" was absent from the 2009 master plan. She urges council to utilize climate science in decision making and bridging the community.

Council Member Slade was glad to have opportunity to see the day that Council followed through with the promise to have a broader community input process for Bolin Creek after the 2009 plan was adopted. He acknowledged the community recognizing other living beings and the appreciation for it, stating the alignment will improve the situation by the creek, and stated the need to balance foundational human needs with environmental constraints.

Council Member Foushee thanked everyone for the inclusive community engagement in the process. She stated not discussing Bolin Creek for fourteen years has not been beneficial to the process as it could have resulted in a different position over this time. She asked the community to stay at the table in the ongoing process as their engagement is still needed.

Council Member Posada thanked the staff for the inclusive engagement process. He stated he wants to continue using community engagement for other efforts going forward keeping everyone engaged.

Council Member Foushee asked for some clarity on the recent survey and using the 2009 survey, since this was the starting point. Catherine Lazorko stated they wanted to be as neutral as possible and do things similarly as possible to the 2009 survey but added that demographic data was not included in the 2009 survey.

Trish McGuire stated public works takes care of maintaining the greenways in the town.

Mayor Seils thanked the staff for the engagement process and members of the community for their participation. He also thanked Council Members for their comments and following

through with this effort. Further, he spoke to the permitting requirements with the Jordan Lake Watershed and other projects in Carrboro that have went through, and followed, these requirements. Further, Mayor Seils stated the corridor will continue to be used as an OWASA sewer easement and providing a greenway trail that follows the rules is the best route to go and says the Creekside route is most successful in terms of serving most Carrboro neighborhoods, Carrboro residents and Carrboro schools.

Mayor Seils then called to question.

Council Member Slade spoke on Chapel Hill extending their greenway and asked if staff can coordinate with them as it makes sense, would like to add this amendment to the resolution.

A motion was made by Council Member Nowell, seconded by Council Member Posada that the following resolution be adopted, with the addition of Section 5 text, that provides additional staff direction:

A RESOLUTION RECEIVING
BOLIN CREEK GREENWAY CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN UPDATE

WHEREAS, Carrboro residents and the Carrboro Town Council have long supported a network of greenways throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, the Council adopted a Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan in 1994 (and updated in 2006) that first identified the Bolin Creek corridor as a potential alignment for greenway development; and

WHEREAS, the Council adopted the Bolin Creek Greenway Conceptual Master Plan (“the Plan”) in 2009 as a platform for future planning and implementation of the Bolin Creek and Jones Creek greenway trails; and

WHEREAS, Phase 1a (Wilson Park Multi-use Path) and Phase 1b (Homestead Road-Chapel Hill High School Multi-use Path) of the Plan have been completed, and construction of a portion of Phase 2 (Jones Creek Greenway) of the Plan is expected to begin next year; and

WHEREAS, in adopting the Plan, the Council directed Town staff to retain all alternative conceptual alignments for Phases 3 and 4 in the Plan and to establish a process for public input on those phases; and in March 2023, the Council directed staff to conduct public engagement on the alignments in the Plan and to bring a report to the Council no later than October; and

WHEREAS, the Town conducted a community survey and other community engagement activities between June and October of 2023 and, in a parallel effort, evaluated the alternative conceptual alignments in the Plan for any new technical or regulatory challenges; and

WHEREAS, the results of the Town’s community engagement activities indicate a strong preference for the conceptual “Creekside Alignment” for Phases 3 and 4 of the Bolin Creek Greenway; and Town staff identified no new regulatory or technical challenges to continuing to use the Plan as a platform for future planning and implementation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Carrboro Town Council:

Section 1. The Council receives this update and reaffirms its support for the continued pursuit of greenway development throughout the community.

Section 2. The conceptual alignment identified as the “Preferred Alignment” in the adopted Bolin Creek Greenway Conceptual Master Plan (and identified as the “Creekside Alignment” in the community survey) is hereby adopted as the preferred alignment for Phases 3 and 4 of the greenway trail.

Section 3. The Council reaffirms the conclusions from the Plan that the Preferred Alignment is the most successful in terms of serving the largest number of Carrboro neighborhoods and provides the greatest diversity of options for accessing the trail.

Section 4. The Council further affirms that other proposed routes do not offer practical alternatives in terms of connecting the largest number of Carrboro neighborhoods to each other and to schools, parks, jobs, civic and social opportunities, and downtown.

Section 5. The Council requests that Town staff report back to Town Council in Spring 2024 with a description of next steps and a timeline that would be required for the Town to follow up on the selection of this preferred creekside alignment that includes a RFP for design and engineering and including coordination with Town of Chapel Hill where needed.

Section 6. This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

This the 17th day of October 2023.

Ayes (6): Mayor Damon Seils, Council Member Susan Romaine, Council Member Barbara Foushee, Council Member Danny Nowell, Council Member, Eliazar Posada, Council Member Sammy Slade

Noes (1): Council Member Randee Haven-O'Donnell

MATTERS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council Member Slade stated he would soon be bringing forward a resolution regarding Israel.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Council Member Slade, seconded by Council Member Posada to adjourn the meeting.

The motion carried unanimously.