

Via E-Mail Only

June 6, 2016

Meeting Summary

San Tomas Aquino Creek Trail

RE: Community Meeting #1

Date of Meeting: Monday June 6, 2016, 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Location of Meeting: Forest Hill Elementary School

Attendees:

City of Campbell:

Fred Ho (FH), fredh@cityofcampbell.com

Todd Capurso (TC), toddc@cityofcampbell.com

City of San Jose:

Kathy LeVeque (KL), Kathy.leveque@sanjoseca.gov

Forest Hill Elementary School:

Denise Khalid (DK), dkhalid@campbellusd.org

Westmont High School:

Abra Evanoff, aevanoff@cuhsd.org

Callander Associates:

Brian Fletcher (BF), bletcher@callanderassociates.com

Dave Rubin (DR), drubin@callanderassociates.com

Marie Mai (MM), mmai@callanderassociates.com

Community:

See Sign In Sheets (attached)

The meeting started with a brief presentation about the project. The participants were then broken into four smaller groups for detailed discussion about the trail. A verbal summary was provided by each of the groups at the end of the meeting describing what was discussed. The following summarizes input received at the meeting, including comment cards.

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Table #1 - Facilitator, Brian Fletcher

- Channelized portion of the creek east of Harriet Ave. is dangerous

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if someone falls in. There have been drownings in the past. This would need to be addressed if a trail were built.

- Some neighbors backing up to the creek have chain link fence, which provides no privacy in the event a trail gets built.
- A better way to spend the money allocated for this trail, might be to install sidewalks on the south side of Hazel Ave.
- Concerns expressed about potential loss of peace and quiet, safety, graffiti, noise and dust during and after construction, trail lighting, and potential for illegal activities.
- Concern was raised about cars speeding on San Tomas Aquino Rd. and whether a protective fence should be provided along the trail's edge.
- Concern was raised about how the trail would be policed and how medical emergency personnel would be able to respond to someone injured on the trail. Where and how do they get on to the trail?
- The intersections of Harriet, Keith, San Tomas Aquino and McCoy as a whole are dangerous. There is no sidewalk on the east side of the bridge. It's also a dark intersection at night and a street light should be installed to improve visibility. Crossing at McCoy needs improvement because of the traffic levels on Harriet.
- A trail would help get to downtown.
- Resident likes privacy and would prefer the City provide safer pedestrian upgrades on City streets.
- Dogs will bark and drive neighbors crazy every time someone walks by on the trail.
- Implementing the trail will decrease property values.
- Increased foot traffic will mean increased "undesirables" behind their homes.
- Residents noted concern about pedophiles and bullies using trail.
- Residents concerned about increased noise.
- No bright lights on trail.
- More people in the creek corridor will reduce "undesirables".
- The trail will provide a safe route for kids and commuters.
- Neighbors worried about safety and exit points from trail.
- Will trail access be limited or is it open to the public?
- Argument that trail will improve safety is false.
- Backyards would be less safe with the introduction of a trail.
- Kids have no way of getting to a safe place if trapped by bullies in the creek corridor.
- Concern about people climbing fences and going into private property. What are the proposed hours of operation?
- Right now, dogs bark when someone is there that shouldn't be. With a trail, the dogs will bark all the time.

- Concern was raised about trash and rodents.

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- What are the public hearings?
- How is this project going to be funded?
- Is money being set aside for police, trash and restrooms?
- Will motorcycles be able to get on the trail?

Table #2 – Facilitator, Dave Rubin

- Any trail design should include a minimum 5' buffer from a residential fence.
- Resident noted that cigarette butts have ended up in their yard.
- Community members noted that home burglaries are common in the neighborhood.
- East of Harriet Ave, the channelized creek is dangerous and may pose a drowning risk if opened to the public.
- Lots of traffic conflicts at Harriet/McCoy and San Tomas Aquino. Concerned about adding more traffic volume to this area with the addition of an on-street trail.
- Graffiti is very common within the creek corridor.
- There is gang activity on occasion within the corridor.
- Want to maintain privacy because their homes back up to the corridor.
- One resident doesn't see how a trail could be implemented because it's so narrow in places.
- Community members questioned where access points to the trail would occur. They noted that the trail seemed very inaccessible for most because access points are so far apart.
- One resident noted that there are safety issues in the creek because it's closed to the public. Opening the corridor for public trail use would improve the situation.
- There are homeless encampments along the creek and having a trail might encourage more.
- Concern was raised about the added noise a trail might bring. People walking behind homes could get dogs barking.
- Concern was raised about more parked cars in the neighborhood related to trail users.
Question was asked who will police the trail. Also, the trail crosses City boundaries, so how will the jurisdictions cooperate in policing the trail? One resident suggested having the trail be access controlled requiring paying trail users to have a key fob or gate access code.
- One resident noted that there is low quality housing in nearby parts of Campbell that would use this trail.
- Community noted there are examples of trails behind homes nearby (Aspesi Dr in Saratoga).

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- Dogs will bark when people walk by.
- Neighbor does not want lighting in backyard.
- Immediate neighbors are most concerned.

Table #3 – Facilitator, Marie Mai

- Resident would like to see pedestrian bridge at Silacci Dr improved/replaced to be ADA accessible and better looking.
- Resident asked what the hours of operation will be for the trail.
- Would trail surface be paved? Would be good to have two lanes on trail (one for walkers/joggers and one for bicyclists) from a safety perspective.
- Students already use path and pedestrian bridge. There are also drug dealers in the corridor.
- Resident is interested to see what barrier will be for the school edges. Access to schools needs to be controlled.
- One community member commented that an hour is not long enough for the breakout groups.
- Resident commented that parking not likely a concern because this is not a regional trail.
- Question was asked whether there'd be timed opening and closing of the trail.
- Where trail meets Westmont Ave is a good location for a trailhead.
- Resident commented that backyards are currently too accessible for having a trail. The flood wall and steel fence above are climbable. Raise fence to make it non-climbable. There are break-ins currently happening in the area. Also concerned about homeless encampments in the creek corridor.
- Behind Westmont High School, there's a PG&E easement that the trail needs to avoid.
- Existing pedestrian bridge is not ADA accessible. Kids climb on the outside of the bridge and cross the creek, which is very dangerous.
- Cars speed around the curve on Silacci Dr. There are lots of parked cars and not enough spaces.
- Kids climb over gate on Forest Hill side of the creek. Would be better to open the gate.
- Silacci Dr acts as a school drop off zone. Trail will encourage more cars to park on street.
- Question was asked whether the trail would have restrooms anywhere.
- Kids jump residential fences and do drugs. Some burglaries as well.
- Question was asked about how adequately these concerns have been

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- addressed on existing Santa Clara Valley trails. Can experience in other areas be used for data?
- Concern was raised about vandalism, trespassing, homeless using creek as a bathroom. What assurances can be provided to keep a trail clean and safe?
- Resident concerned about grade differences between trails and homes as it relates to privacy and scoping out homes for burglary.
- Existing trees at San Tomas Aquino and Harriet obscure pedestrians from view. Dangerous spot.
- One resident claimed that there have been 14 homes burglarized in the past 16 weeks.
- There's a high point in San Tomas Aquino Rd and cars going too fast get airborne and miss the slight curve, ending up in or near the creek.
- The trail along San Tomas Aquino Rd would have to be very narrow in places because there's very little room between the edge of the road and the creek.
- Cars speed along San Tomas Aquino Rd and there have been accidents at the curve east of Margaret Lane. Cars have gone through the barrier and into the creek. Safety issue for trail users.
- Resident noted that their view into the creek corridor would be impacted by a new fence they'd have to install at the trail edge.
- Light levels on City streets are low, resident safety a concern.
- Resident noted concerns as security, privacy, noise, and a trail that's too narrow to walk on.

Table #4 – Facilitator, Fred Ho

- A community member questioned: what problem does the trail solve?
- A question was asked about how many trail users are expected to use this trail.
- A resident requested crime statistics relative to trail development behind homes. What are the impacts neighbors can expect?
- Graffiti is a problem in the creek corridor.
- Residents noted concern for lighting intrusion from the trail if lit.
- Residents asked questions about operating hours and how it would be enforced. There was also concern about which jurisdiction would be responsible for policing the trail. Could there be a hotline to call if there are trail issues and emergencies?
- A resident asked which side of the creek bank the trail would be built.
- Neighbors expressed concern over privacy if there's a trail running behind their homes.

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- It was noted that there's significant vandalism already occurring (including cutting the fence).
- Is it possible to use funding from this project for other alternatives like video surveillance in the creek as a crime deterrent?
- Resident would like to hear police department's opinion on the trail and how it would be managed.
- Question was asked about how often the trail would be maintained.
- Would there be volunteer opportunities if the trail gets built?
- Has the City considered including a dog park as part of the trail project?
- Resident suggested doing systematic polling to gauge community interest in the project.
- Resident is concerned that the construction of a trail will decrease property value.
- Resident noted there are homeless encampments in the creek already.
- Any trail design should consider protection of creek wildlife (coyotes, frogs, opossums, bobcats, etc)
- Consider fencing on creek side of trail.
- Traffic congestion at Harriet and McCoy is already very challenging.
- If trees will be planted as part of the trail project, who will maintain them in the long run?
- Benches along the trail might be intrusive or used for climbing.
- Would restrooms be included as part of the project?
- Having a public presence on the trail would put more eyes on the trail and would discourage loitering.
- It was requested that crime data be provided showing the impacts of a trail behind homes.
- Using the word "passive" for the trail is good.
- Will the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) let the water flow in the creek?
- Is there an opportunity for a solar field?
- Maintain or improve habitat for wildlife in creek
- Get more cars off the street
- Would City offer privacy fencing for property backing up to the trail?
- What happens to existing fencing between properties and trail?

General Discussion Outside of Break-Out Groups:

- Some community members not happy with identification of stakeholders being the Water District, School Districts and City staff. Neighbors would like to be considered as a stakeholder in the process. BF clarified that neighbors are stakeholders, which is why we're having the

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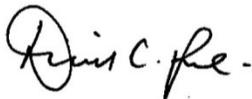
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- meeting to listen to their concerns.
- Question was asked whether the project will go before San Jose's City Council.
- Resident inquired whether neighbors adjacent to the creek get more weighting with regard to input. TC clarified that all input is weighted equally.
- Question was asked whether the City would consider eminent domain to accommodate any trail segments where adequate width was unavailable. TC responded that the City would not pursue eminent domain.
- Question was asked whether there have been previous studies done for this trail, and if so, can they be made available to the public?
- Community member noted that the Smith Creek Trail project was opposed by neighbors and would like to see the results of that process.
- Question was asked, why spend on this project when there are other needs in the City?

-END-

The information above is Callander Associates' understanding of items discussed and decisions reached at the meeting. Callander Associates is proceeding with the project based on this understanding. If you have any questions, additions, or corrections to this memo, please contact this office in writing within three days.

Submitted by:



Dave Rubin, Project Manager, Callander Associates

cc: All attendees

Attachments:

1. Sign-in sheets, dated June 6, 2016, four pages
2. Comment card received at meeting (6/6/16)
3. Additional comments/letters received at meeting (6/6/16)
4. Log of phone calls (current as of 6/7/16)
Photographs of Existing Conditions sheets with public input comments