



PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

Trails and Blueways Council

Work Session Notes

April 22, 2024, at 10:00am

George Hellwig Administration Building

14420 Bristow Road, Manassas

Approved by the T&BC on May 28, 2024

1. Call to Order – Joe Marshall, Bill Selfridge, Jason Williams, Liz Cronauer, Bill McCarty, Eileen Sheridan, David Brickley, and Neil Nelson were present. Staff present – Janet Bartnik, David Kroeger, Yolanda Hipski, Ed DeLeon, Patti Pakkala, and INFORM Studios consultants.

2. Powell's Creek Crossing Charette

Consultants provided context based on their exploration of the site. Reviewed ecological conditions, existing conditions, land use, utilities, landmarks/vistas, pedestrian/cycling pathways, creek access, existing street networks and parking,

Neil Nelson shared that there is an overlook (Dent Family Overlook) that is just west of the study area. He added that there is an island near Powell's landing that is a high point with views.

Consultant point – the location of the crossing chosen should support the focus of the trail – whether focused on local access or on regional access. The destination goal versus the traversing goal is a decision point.

Discussion point – storytelling – what story will be told by the crossing? Lots of natural areas, but perhaps there could be a focus on historic, cultural, or other story.

7 Ecological perspectives identified for the site –

- Dark blue is the perennial stream
- Light blue is the tidal area
- Brown and yellow are the wetland areas
- Green is lowland forested

There are about a dozen archaeological protected sites, most in Leesylvania State Park.

Indigenous species in the area requiring considerations: bald eagles, migratory birds, long eared bat, butterflies; Sturgeon; the creek is an estuary used for spawning for many types of fish;

Discussion point – Neabsco Boardwalk just north of this site – what was done well?

- Was designed to go through several different types of habitats – how do we want to interact with these areas?
 - o David Brickley shared that parking will be the biggest issue for the Powell's Creek site. The VRE station may be helpful.
 - o Jason Williams shared that the density of population adjacent to the site will require work to ensure the crossing feels open to all the public.

- o Joe Marshall shared that Leesylvania SP books up in the summer and is not likely to be a resource that season. The power line corridor is also a possibility for parking access.
- o Eileen Sheridan noted that the parking areas in LSP are paid lots. May be best to talk to the state admin folks rather than the park management due to turnover in those positions.

Creek access was discussed. The team is looking at the many ways that pedestrians can connect with the crossing – by bike, foot, kayak, etc.

- Bill McCarty asked if there would be consideration distinguishing bike lanes from pedestrian lanes. Discussion ensued.
- Yolanda Hipski shared that the elementary school might offer parking capacity
- There is a potential to add a parking lot to the end of the street in the neighborhood to the south and west.
- Mass transit and its future were discussed;
- Types of watercraft access to be included was discussed;

Bill McCarty asked if fishing would be included in the design.

Type of path – definitions:

- Footpath – 4 feet wide, unpaved
- Path/Trail – 5-9 feet wide
- Accessible Path – 10 feet wide, paved

How we will get down to the water will be a challenge given the existing topography. There is a regulatory question related to what PHNST access is to be constructed accessibly. The south side seemed more feasible to those present to establish a way to the water. Three generally located access strategies have been identified from the north shore (points A-C) and two from the south shore (points D-E).

- Point A – just west of the train bridge. Access is relatively flat and comes from the existing parking lot in Leesylvania state park.
- Point B – further west of point A. Access would be from a potential parking lot in Leesylvania State Park. Drop in elevation is 50 feet. Two route options are available.
- Point C – further west of point B. Access would be via elevated boardwalk from point B.
- Point D – eastern Potomac Shores location separated from train track.
- Point E – western Potomac Shores location accessible by elevated boardwalk.

Trying to accommodate ADA accessibility on the north side will require LSP cooperation. On the south side, will require cooperation with landowners there.

Determination of accessible routes to the departure points was important to explore before settling on which location would be best for the crossing.

Patti Pakkala shared the perspective from the Don Briggs days that the PHNST was intended to be close to the water.

3. Adjourn