



MINUTES

MORGANTOWN River Town Action Team Meeting Minutes

October 15, 2014

MEETING HELD AT Lebanese Bistro., 156 Clay Street

Attendees: Ella Belling, Bill Kawecki, Steve Selin, Jenny Selin, Anna Withrow, Cathy McCollom, Melissa Burch, Rummy Hilloowala, John Lichter, Jeff Mikorski, Bob Genter, Sera Zegre

- I. Distributed and reviewed the minutes from the September 17th meeting. There were no changes or additions.

- II. **Two Minute Public Updates:**
 - Cathy McCollom briefed the group on Main Street Morgantown's branding strategy to rebrand The Wharf as the "Downtown Wharf" as part of a larger communications strategy. It is likely that the next step will be the development of a Master Plan for the Downtown Wharf District and Hazel Ruby McQuain Park area.
 - Ella Belling--fishing pier access sign installed by WVDOH in front of The Seneca Center on Beechurst Avenue.
 - Ella Belling Provided an update on outcomes from FERC public hearings held about the hydro-electric plant proposal at the Morgantown Lock & Dam. FERC is asking the power company applicant to complete a more rigorous recreation resource impact plan before being allowed to proceed with their application. Local stakeholders are being asked to provide secondary recreation use data in support of developing a recreation resource impact plan.
 - Jenny Selin briefed the group about two upcoming trail safety walks being held to increase trail safety in response to recent trail incidents.

- III. **Morgantown Riverfront Cleanup (Saturday, October 25th)**

Times: 12 noon till 3:00 pm; home for WVU football game!

Scheduled as part of the United Way's Make a Difference Day. WVU students are being recruited through the Office of Service & Learning and through the support of the Student Government Association. Plans to paint trail fence near the Morgantown Lock & Dam. Big thanks to BOPARC for providing materials and tools!

IV. **Makin Engineering Discussion on Riverfront Development (Bob Genter)**

Below please find Bob Genter's summary notes from his riverfront development presentation. He is primarily discussing future development in the Wharf and Hazel Ruby McQuain Riverfront Districts:

Potential next steps and options to move forward:

1. *Create Design Standards for Development*
 - a. *Guide development of the riverfront's surrounding space, its corridors to connect street to river, and development along the riverfront: consider views into and out from, multimodal priority, mixed use developments, architectural standards, accessibility, lighting, landscaping, etc.*
 - b. *The document needs to be adopted by City as an 'overlay' or 'official map' for this to be used as a legal tool; Jeff may have good ideas for to create a legal tool*
2. *Master Plan for the Riverfront/Wharf Area Corridor*
 - a. *In-depth analysis and creation of a set of development plans to guide the entire development (may be completed later when funding can be put together)*

Creating mixed land use in the space and programming the corridor is a direct link to increasing the 24hr activity goal. Increase 'eyes on the corridor' and opening up spaces into the corridor... this does plenty for way-finding, security, and aesthetics; and creates a welcoming atmosphere. And it increases storefront space for additional businesses, user services, and an increased tax base.

Keep in mind the larger Goals for- Safety, Security and Changing People's Perceptions about the Trail and the Riverfront Corridor.

Further discussion continued on the need for integrated planning for the Hazel Ruby McQuain and Downtown Wharf districts.

V. Melissa Burch Presentation on Enhancing Visitor Safety along the Riverfront Trail.

Melissa Burch, BOPARC Director, briefed the group about recent meetings concerning several assaults that have occurred along the trail. Melissa advocated for additional measures needed to ensure the safety of riverfront and trail users going forward. These measures may include additional policing, publicizing a personal safety app that recently has been developed, more park rangers assigned to the riverfront district, better lighting, creating clearer sight lines from and to the trail, dealing with the homeless population along the trail, planning more positive events along the trail, moving the bus depot. These are urban issues affecting many communities. Melissa briefed the group on plans to expand events at the Hazel Ruby McQuain Park in 2015. Discussion continued on the need for a broad coalition approach to make progress on these issues. A collaborative approach to marketing events along the riverfront is needed. Is there a need for citizen trail monitors to play a role here in notifying authorities about undesirable activities along the trail? A citizen protocol or app? A Friends of Hazel Ruby McQuain group? Linking participation in cleanups and river sojourns to membership in a friends group? The time may be right to activate this type of group again. A “Take Back the Park” or “Embrace the Park” campaign? Creating an inventory of physical spaces along the trail.

Could this group make design and code recommendations to the city planner and to city council? Could we approach the Benedum Foundation about a Master Development Plan for the Wharf District?

VI. Anna Withrow’s Riverfront Corridor Master Plan (Landscape Architecture Master’s Student)

Anna briefed the group on her progress on her Master’s Degree project to develop a Riverfront Corridor Master Plan. The project has incorporated public input into identifying potential projects and landscape design elements along the riverfront of Star City and Morgantown. She will present her final project at the December meeting of the River Town Program.

VII. Next Meeting

November 12 Morgantown 4:30 pm Table Nine Restaurant