

**San Antonio River Commission Board Meeting
December 18, 2007
City Hall Media Briefing Room**

Members Present: A.J. Rodriguez, *Hispanic Chamber of Commerce*
J. Darryl Byrd, *Silver Ventures*
Julian Trevino, *Chairman*
Lisa Wong, *Rosario's Restaurant*
Lynda B. Burke, *Community Category*
Lionel Sosa, *Executive Director, MATT Foundation*
David Straus, *Straus-Frank Co.*

Staff Present: Penny Post oak Ferguson, *Assistant City Manger*; Steve Whitworth, *City Attorney's Office*; Trey Jacobson, *Mayor's Office*; Colleen Swain, *Downtown Operations Assistant Director*; Lori Houston, *City Manager's Office*; Malcolm Matthews, *Parks and Recreation Department*; Paula Stallcup, *Downtown Operations Department*; Steve Baum, *SA Parks Police*; Debbie Klein, *Legal Department*

Others Present: Steven Schauer, *SARA*; Joan Gaither, *SA Conservation Society*;

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Trevino at 9:12 a.m..

Minutes from the November 27th meeting were approved. (*Linda Billa Burke motioned, Lionel Sosa-second*)

Vision Statement for San Antonio River Commission

Linda Billa Burke made a motion and Lionel Sosa seconded to discuss the Vision. Trey Jacobson began discussion regarding the SA River Commission Vision.

Julian Trevino thanked Trey Jacobson for all of the work with the Mission/Vision statement. Trey indicated that he combined parts of Commission members suggestions, worked with AJ and Darryl to make a final revision.

At the Chairman's request, Darryl Byrd read the entire document. The Commission agreed that it was well done.

The Chairman asked that copies of the Vision/Mission Statement be made available at each meeting and ultimately be placed on cards for the Commission for easy-carrying as well as drafting something to the Mayor and City Council on the newly adopted Vision Statement of the River Commission.

Penny agreed to draft a memo regarding the Vision/Mission Statement for Julian's signature and also indicated that the Vision Statement would be placed on the River Commission Website and e-mail out the web link to the Commission Members.

Following an inquiry by Trey Jacobson, the Chair expressed interest in widely and formally communicating the adopted Vision Statement. Trey asked if it should be communicated to City Council and other boards and commissions.

Chairman Trevino suggested disseminating this to City Council, Mayor and anyone else in city government in form of a memo. Darryl commented that, with the amount of time spent on the

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vision statement, instead of a written memo we should share the vision statement in person starting with City Council Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, and HDRC (since they have so much responsibility for approving and reviewing projects) explaining the process the commission went through to develop the statement and giving them an opportunity to buy into it and accept it as a guide by which they will make their decisions.

Julian Trevino requested a list of all organizations related to the River, so that the Commission members can sign up to speak at these organizations regarding the Vision of the River Commission.

Darryl Byrd suggested presentations to relevant Commissions.

Lionel Sosa suggested a 3 minute video in lieu of a presentation with beautiful places along the River, with a voice over. He also agreed to assist with the video. Staff can work with Lionel on the information necessary to make a video.

Penny Postoak Ferguson reminded the Commission that the City Manager requested a presentation to the Council in the First quarter of 2008, possibly in February or March on River Water Quality, which is an item that must go before the River Commission before being presented to the City Council. The intent was a B Session but the Chairman requested to go before the City Council during an A Session since there is more public represented. Penny suggested not to present the vision statement with the River Water Quality presentation but rather present it at a different time.

Penny also suggested that the other governing bodies adopt the Mission/Vision statement. Darryl Byrd also agreed with this recommendation.

Linda Billa Burke suggested communicating the Vision to the Bexar County's Commissioners Court as well. Darryl said it was a good idea since the County plays a big role on the funding side on the river improvements projects. He sees the commission as advocates for the river making sure that it can live up to its great promise and also to share the vision with others outside of the public realm i.e. civic and community groups, neighborhood associations, private sector and people doing the actual development on the river.

Darryl Byrd agreed and further suggested an advocacy role of the Vision, involving a presentation to neighboring groups, civic groups and others within the next 6 months. He also offered his assistance.

The Chairman requested staff to bring back to the Commission in January, information regarding how to do outreach to all these organizations.

David Straus voiced his approval of the Mission/Vision statement.

David Straus made a motion to approve the Vision and Darryl Byrd seconded.

Briefing on Capital Projects (Consultant with Master Plan and Updated Items in Budget)

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Paula Stallcup gave a briefing on River Walk Capital Improvements Master Plan (RWCIMP). Staff is in the process of working with Beaty Palmer Architects on a plan that will identify all of the known and unforeseen capital improvements along the river walk, primarily in the river as well as in the extension.

Penny asked for the background of why the committee was formed.

In 2004, there was a settlement agreement from a lawsuit from various river walk property owners who were contending that the river was theirs as well. Since then we have entered into a number of patio leases and the revenues from those various patio leases along the river walk are what previously have been funding capital improvements i.e. sidewalk repairs, wall repairs, replacements. Information from the last river draining and from Erwin of Public Works has been helpful in identifying, where those needs are.

We are beginning to implement the first phase of the study in the extension. The first phase of the plan will be finished in mid January (where they are analyzing the various studies done) and also doing additional assessments and concept design for those replacement areas especially for things like ADA bridges, inaccessibility near La Mansion (there is no ADA access at gate 4 by the International Center), also, the new walkway that leads up to the stairs is not ADA compliant. The conceptual design and additional assessment will be completed around the April and the consultants will be costing that out in time for budget.

Penny asked if it would be April or May that the River Commission could look at the results.

Paula stated in the May time frame. The stakeholder review will be in June and will return to the River Commission as well as River Walk Capital Improvements Advisory Board and other stakeholder organizations that would like to get feedback on this plan. In terms of funding, there was \$500,000 that was approved in 2007 bond program and we were able to get approx. \$2.1 million in general fund Certificates of Obligation funding in the six year capital improvement budget, \$725,000 in FY 08 and \$1,475,000 in FY 09. Lighting alone was \$1.5 million. Public Works has identified \$1 million in projects.

David Strauss wanted clarification on property lines. Steve Whitworth stated that there was confusion where some of the owners felt like their deeds went to the middle of the river but the City was successful in a lawsuit. The City's position was that the City owned the bed of the river and the property lines are normally where the retaining walls are along the river and that is the reason why the retaining walls were built where they were.

Steve clarified the definition of retaining wall for Linda Burke.

Trey summarized that Paula will be working with the architects between now and May, prioritizing and coming back to the commission in May with a listing of the architects thoughts on where money should be spent to improve the river walk area and get the River Commissions' and other stakeholders involvement and feedback.

Penny indicated that it will help with the budget process because they will be in the budget process at that time. The consultant will give funding options. This will be a multi year process because there will be multi millions of dollars that are in need.

Darryl asked if there is any sort of mandate given to the architect to use materials that are efficient as possible and more "green" and looking into the future when replacing items.

Paula commented that most of the work is from the infrastructure side, but need to be cognizant of energy conservation when they get into actual fixtures and lighting units.

Penny stated that it would be helpful to give the consultant the vision statement adopted by the River Commission maybe with Julian present to see what their thoughts are.

Trey commented that Beaty Palmer has done a lot of work on the river walk and are sensitive to this issue.

Technical Advisory Committee on Water Quality and Clarity Report

Linda Billa Burke reported the committee will take a tour of the river to look at outfalls and will come back with a mini mission statement for this committee and decide what the true definition of what water quality is. (Outfalls are when water drains into the street and then falls into the river walk from pipes.)

Penny stated that river draining will be January 2-11, 2008 and the Technical Advisory committee plans to take a tour on January 4 at 1:00 for anyone interested. Erwin will show some of the outfalls. The committee is considering a process using smoke through the pipes to see where it surfaces. Penny also noted that there are a lot of things with quality and clarity that we could take on as a committee.

Darryl asked (regarding best practices for future development) if there is anything that is done different on the river with new projects that look at other conventional standards for storm water draining. He stated that he has been working on a project on the northern end with the City on some major storm water drainage projects that are very unique and create marshy areas where the water flows out and first flush where rain water flushes out and feeds marshy plants and works to improve the ecology. Mr. Byrd also asked if there is a way to put implement best practices since there will be so much development along the northern end.

Erwin answered that he has been working on the background for a year and a half on incentives for water quality as far as clarity but currently there are no minimum standards for quality. They have been targeting the 90% of contaminates in the first flush. (First flush is the first ½ inch of rain that comes off property where bird droppings and bacteria build up, which naturally flushes in and is separated and treated differently.) This is not currently required but they are using these as incentives and we also look to perform water quantity. Until council adopts anything, nothing is actually required. We are encouraging green roofs when we can and anything to absorb the first flush. It's very difficult in the downtown area and we are hoping that this plan will help and are also trying to come up with tools that can be used elsewhere.

Penny stated Erwin referenced a project that storm water has taken on looking at best practices for water quality and clarity and what Darryl talked about will be incorporated in that study. Once the study comes back to the Technical Advisory Committee it will be reviewed and

ultimately come to the River Commission. Policy recommendations from the Technical Advisory Committee or River Commission will then go to council.

Trey stated that there are no minimum standards right now in the river north and the smart code and may ultimately adopt the smart code for the river north area but having water quality at this level now. But by increasing storm water run off in the northern part of the channel due to development that water quality is going to get worse unless we implement something. He assumed that Linda's committee will be forthcoming with some of the regulations that might be necessary to protect it.

Linda stated that we need to find a balance.

Penny stated that of the three goals for water quality, the one thing we were not meeting is the bacteria levels.

Lisa Wong commented on the large population of birds (grackles) and cats. Penny stated that we are working with the Falconer on the grackle population and with Texas State Wildlife on the protected bird (yellow herring).

Steven Scheuer, Manager of External Communications, San Antonio River Authority, commented on behalf of the SARA. He welcomed the opportunity to participate on the Technical Advisory Committee. They have partnered with the City on many of the best practices mentioned. He hopes that when the River Commission makes recommendations to the council that they continue to look at the river as an entire system not just what happens at the river loop area and how the decisions may impact the downstream river and communities as well.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is going to take a tour of the River when it is drained. So that the TAC can take a look at the outfalls, that are leading into the River.

Penny offered to the River Commission if they would like to take a tour of during the draining. The tour will be Friday, January 4. The Committee will meet again after the tour in order to identify what the Committee ultimately wants to look at. Since they are trying to narrow down what their goals are.

Darryl questioned best practices with StormWater drainage and future development. Is there anything done with best practices rather than conventional development with StromWater drainage projects. For examples, marsh areas to take in drainage, etc.

Erwin clarifies that there are currently no water quality standards with the River. The Public Works department is currently exploring water quality standards with the River. Until City Council adopts standards, we currently have no standards.

Linda Billa Burke suggested having an inter-City Green beltway.

Erwin mentioned the San Antonio River improvements Project Plan in order to establish some guidelines for the River and frame standards for Water Quality and Clarity.

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The timeline of the results will be dependant on the negotiations between the City and the Consultant.

The Technical Advisory Committee would review the Plan and then make a policy decision would need to be decided upon.

Trey recommended a smart code is being explored for River North and could be adopted for the River. The Technical Advisory Committee would be forthcoming with regulations for the water quality because due to development at River North, ultimately the River down South will get worse.

The City is also working with a falconer consultant in order to target the grackles, which have an impact on the River Water Quality. An update will be given to the Commission on how the grackles will be handled.

Invitation to Briefing on River North

Trey Jacobson invited the River Commission members to an extended presentation of the River North Master Plan. Stephanos Polyzoides and David Sargent of the firm Moule & Polyzoides, Architects and Urbanists are the consultants who will be conducting the presentation.

This presentation will show the implementation since the last presentation. This will be meant to give a deeper understanding and more of an introduction to the plan. The briefing will be more in depth and detail.

Attached:

David Straus submitted a news clipping from the Express News related to renderings proposed for the Windcrest Area.

Executive Session

The River Commission recessed into an executive session to discuss the legal issues related to *Michael John, et. al. v City of San Antonio, et. al.*, in the United States District Court, Western District of Texas, San Antonio Division, Cause No. SA-07-CA-0380-FB, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2007.

Copies of these presentations are made part of the file and are available upon request.

Respectfully Submitted,



Penny Postoak Ferguson
Assistant City Manager
City Manager's Office



Dr. Julian H. Trevino, Chairperson