

**Proctor Creek Greenway Trail Public Meeting
March 22, 2017**

Below are the Questions and Answers from the March 22, 2017 Public Forum hosted by the City of Atlanta.

Q: Who is going to clean up the kudzu and ivy along the trail route?

A: When we are out there working we will have right equipment and will be cleaning up as we go with the construction. Where the City is granted an easement and not acquiring a parcel by fee simple ownership, invasive plant control depends on the agreed-upon terms of the easement. The BeltLine has partnered with Trees Atlanta in the past to develop a maintenance plan for invasive species removal and tree plantings. This program has included volunteer engagement for clean up as well as use of goats for invasive removal. While we cannot commit Trees Atlanta at this early stage, replicating this proven model of invasive removal and trail maintenance is an option we'll pursue.

Q: The Corps of Engineers has placed flags along the creek. Are the Corps projects related to the Greenway Trail?

A: The City has partnered with the U.S. Corps of Engineers (USCOE) for a 3-year ecological habitat restoration study of the Proctor Creek watershed.

Comment: Stephanie Stuckey reached out to the USCOE lead on the project, Todd Boatman, and he isn't aware of any flag markings along the watershed related to the habitat restoration study. However, there may be a few flags to delineate wetland areas. The USCOE is authorized to spend up to 10% of project funds on recreational support, so there may be an opportunity for them to support the Greenway trail. But no commitments have been made at this point

Q: How do we access the trail corridor and how do we minimize the impact on neighbors along the trail, specifically with regard to construction traffic and noise.

A: PATH will be primarily accessing the trail from two access points - Johnson Road at River Park Trail and an industrial site near the MARTA station via Gary Avenue. Neither of these entry points will be going through residential areas. Construction activities will be in compliance with City noise regulations as well as allowable times for construction operation

Q: How long is the whole Proctor Creek Greenway corridor and what is timeframe to building other phases and connecting to The Silver Comet?

A: The trail is approximately seven miles long. The first phase is building a quarter of it.

- If the City and our partners build the kick off segment and provide funding for it through TSPLOST revenue and other city-related sources, excitement and engagement will provide momentum for more funding to complete the trail.
- Ed McBrayer is working with a GA Tech class to create proposed designs for the bridge and another class is working on ideas for how to connect the bridge to the Silver Comet Trail.

Q: Any negotiations with state about the abandoned CSX line?

A: This information is confidential at this point since it involves active real estate negotiations between CSX and the State. PATH has asked that consideration be made to the connectivity to the Silver Comet trail.

Q: Will there be any sort of police presence on the trail?

A: We highly recommend any jurisdiction we are in to have bicycle policeman patrolling the trail. The Atlanta Police Department assigns a special PATH force to patrol the BeltLine. We do not have any commitment that PATH will also patrol the Proctor Creek Greenway Trail. We have been fortunate over the years that there hasn't been a lot of criminal activity on the trail.

- Will be closed at dark in accordance with Atlanta Parks Department regulations. Safety is a paramount concern, and we will be working with APD on ensuring that the trail is safe and secure.

Q: Will there be any other passive use of the trail after the first phase and/or other activities?

A: We cannot allow usage of property that we do not own/control yet as this is private property.

Q: I've heard that a lot of people are concerned about storm water in Proctor Creek. Will the trail be applying for any variance? Are there any provisions being made for storm water coming off the trail?

A: For this initial phase, we are not constructing within the 25ft state water property so a variance is not needed.

- We learned with the trail behind Piedmont Hospital (BeltLine Northside Trail) to tilt the trail away from high side with gravel under it to flow out underneath the trail. This has proven so successful that the GA Environmental Protection Division has established this as one of their standards.
- For us to use Watershed funds for the design, PATH is required to have pervious areas and implement green infrastructure to control storm water flow.

Q: Could we go back and specifically review the access points as to what is accessible from Grove Park neighborhood and park?

A: MARTA, Hollywood, Grove Park Road.

Rebuttal: None of this sites are accessible from park, Grove Park road has a barrier.

A: Points out on map access point behind Grove Park elementary.

Rebuttal: Will need a spur if it's really going to connect the neighborhood.

A: PATH agreed to work with the Grove Park neighborhood association to design and build a spur trail connecting them to the Greenway during this initial phase.

Q: What is the timeline for Phase 1 and how many timelines are there?

A: There are six phases overall. Plan is to be finished so Mayor Reed can cut the ribbon on the kickoff segment before he leaves office 12/31/17. Showed slide of timeline for this year:

- City of Atlanta Permitting (April)
- Advertise for Bid (April)
- Finalize Acquisitions (May)
- Construction: Summer / Fall

Statement: Tony Torrence from Proctor Creek Stewardship Council promises to bring this project back before the neighborhoods, especially those that were missed initially/not in the room tonight to ensure the project is right and meets our needs. Community deserves to be engaged in the process.

A: Stephanie presented the Greenway plans recently to the Proctor Creek Stewardship Council to get feedback and has regularly attended Stewardship meetings for the past two years. Tonight's forum is intended to engage the community, and we'll continue that engagement throughout the process.

Q: I have participated in many, many plans over the years, I didn't hear anything in the plans about the Westside Park which will be the largest park in the city. Not clear how the path will overlay with the park as part of park structure.

A: The BeltLine's Subarea 9 Master Plan includes the Westside Park which was the result of extensive community engagement and was adopted by NPU's G, J, K, and L and City Council. The Plan is also incorporated into the Connect Atlanta Plan and the City's Comprehensive Development Plan. The Greenway Trail runs through the southern and western boundary of the Westside Park.

Statement: One of the things Atlanta has been known for is its Civil Rights Legacy. There was a commission formed that would try to find a way to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Corretta Scott King who lived in this community. There was talk of naming the Westside Park after them. She is hoping this process that reenergizes us to close the largest disparity gap in America and starts a new legacy to engage and not disenfranchise.

Comment: Naming Rights for parks is a City Council issue. All of the parks master planned by Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. (ABI) were named geographically (Westside, Fourth Ward, Boulevard, etc). Residents should advocate with their city council person on this.

Q: Will Proctor Creek Greenway feed into the Westside BeltLine Trail?

A: The Greenway will connect to the Westside BeltLine trail at Maddox Park, but is not part of the current phase of BeltLine under construction. ABI will be working on alternative pathways while they acquire the necessary rights-of-way.

Q: If CSX becomes available, will there be more focus on connecting them together?

A: With CSX negotiations currently in process, we can't speak on it. But we do not currently have federal funding.

- Paul Morris announced the BeltLine does have money to acquire the balance of the BeltLine corridor through TSPLOST revenue. At present, there is no funding for design or construction.

Comment: Please note that the CSX negotiations aren't germane to completion of the Proctor Creek Greenway Trail.

Q: When will we get an update on access for the neighborhood like Grove Park?

A: Ed McBrayer committed to building the spur. PATH or City of Atlanta will find the money to make this happen.

Q: Stephanie, now that the plan has gone public, it might be time to establish relationship with those 5 NPU's to share the technical data with them. Are you open to these suggestions?

A: Today's presentation and Q and A information will be available after tonight. Stephanie is happy to make commitment to present to appropriate NPU's.

Comment: The affected NPUs have already voted to approve this trail as part of the Subarea 9 Master Plan and Westside Park Master Plan.

Q: All these changes will make tremendous changes to neighborhood, what are plans to protect the neighborhoods from displacement?

A: Lots of entities are looking at housing in general and being thoughtful to existing residents. Example include Andre Dickinson's Inclusionary Housing Policy. The Atlanta Housing Forum working on financing affordable housing as well as BeltLine and Invest Atlanta. The City requires developers receiving funding from the City or City-related entities, they must set aside a certain percentage of the housing as affordable. This is a complex issue, but we're committed to protecting the residents in this community from displacement.

- Paul says they are learning a lot through the Westside Future Fund process. A lot of energy is being devoted to protecting homeowners and renters. There are tools that he can share off-line that will be used here to keep folks in place. We are also having discussions about expanding homestead exemptions for seniors. We need to protect small businesses, as there is no safety net for them but most affected by change.
- Everyone wants these quality improvements in neighborhoods but not at our expense. There is a chance here to advance one important part of the puzzle by building a trail that will be a beautiful amenity to the community without sacrificing displacement if done right.

Q: Are they going to employ people from the neighborhood to build and maintain the trail?

A: PATH has not done that in past. We go through a procurement process, and workers have to be qualified to do work. For maintenance, we hire landscape companies but can work with Stephanie and ABI to see how the community can be engaged to care for the trail.

Q: My concerns is the schools. Is there some type of plan to collaborate with schools and proposed builds with APS?

A: Trails serve as a safe route to schools in a lot of places. This was one of the reasons we had a trail for Boyd Elementary. We see schools as a critical destination and want to continue to provide other alternatives to school. The spur trail would also connect with Woodson Elementary and Westside Atlanta Charter School.

Q: I live in the Phase 2 area. You mentioned several factors in getting that part of trail built. For later phases of the trail, how far are you along in discussions to acquire those pieces of land?

A: As soon as we get started on phase one we will immediately begin looking into Phase 2. Our collective focus for the time being is to get this initial phase built.

Statement by Na'Taki Osborne Jelks: Wants to underscore that employing local residents is critical to both residents and Proctor Creek Stewardship Council. Perhaps this could be put in the RFP. There are a lot of elderly and people on fixed income. We want to make sure they are here to enjoy the benefits. We also fully support Grove Park residents. The spur to connect them to trail is critical

Statement: Is anyone here from NPU D? We have a non-functional body of NPUs. He would like to revitalize our greenspace/eco committee. We don't want to take over project but get our citizens back engaged.

Q: In terms of culture of city, please incorporate both cultural and ecology signage into trail and involve community

A: We are happy to collaborate with the community on these good suggestions.

All Q and A and comments will be posted on the City's TSPLOST site.