

New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting of July 27, 2023

(Present: Members—Goebel, Welch, Fowler, Flinn, Myatt. Advisors: John Kent (Streamwatch), David Bradley (Durham Stormwater), David Anderson (New Hope Audubon). Others (please excuse spelling): Hofmeier, Dowdy, Baker, Vazquez, Ballou, Davies, Hughes, Alvarado, Unitas, Ellison, Cruso.

- (1) Introductions were made and Healy expressed delight about the number of people interested in the work of the Committee.**
- (2) Myatt said that the Arrowhead neighborhood rezoning proposal was still part of the choice universe of the Durham City Council and County Commission. They will deal with the plan at a working session at the end of August. Myatt said that DOST had submitted comments. Healy offered to write comments on behalf of the NHCCAC, based on the New Hope Plan.**
- (3) Pickett Road development. Goebel said that application to combine two wetland parcels had been withdrawn. A request was received from a Pickett family member to see the New Hope website. The land at the site was at one time the site of a sausage factory, which was located in a cinder block building at rear of site. Goebel said he had heard that Ascension Development had pulled out from the project, which they call Pickett Lofts. Healy will check this. Kent asked about long term strategies. Goebel said that the city has been studying watershed, with New Hope Creek only done recently. There is a 300 page document available. It was noted that this was a Federal rather than a local initiative so it is unclear how much local interest there might be. The wetland Pickett Rd. parcels are among the top 3 acquisition priorities as is one owned by Durham Academy nearby. There may be interest in acquisition by Triangle Land Conservancy or Conservation Trust of NC. Healy noted that it is often in landowner's interest to sell or donate unbuildable parcels at the end of a development process rather than at the beginning.**

Kent said there must be emphasis on water quality. Fowler said that Duke Biology Department had been recently doing water quality research upstream in Duke Forest.

- (4) Healy said that progress has been made, see below, on appointing new members to the NHCCAC. We have new designees from Orange County and DOST and Duke University and Chapel Hill are working on it. Healy noted that we have two landowner positions open, but that there is some flexibility in moving appointments from Friends of New Hope Creek to landowner slots and vice versa. He emphasized that prospective members should have interests that go beyond a particular project or subarea to encompass an interest in the corridor as a whole. He said that membership on the NHCCAC involved one meeting a month (likely last Thursday of**

the month at 4 pm) and occasional participation in project analysis or testimony.
Healy asked anyone interested in being considered for appointment to contact him by email at healy@duke.edu

Membership—New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee

Selected by each of the following groups: (total of 12)

Duke University—Sara Childs working on this (Jim Fay, Nicholas School?)

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (in early days a rep. from NC Wildlife attended)

Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Commission (per Marcia Purvis—will take up at Sept. meeting)

Durham Trails and Greenways (Fred Myatt)

Orange County Parks and Recreation Council (Louise Flinn)

Friends of the New Hope (Bob Healy—Orange; John Goebel—Durham)

New Hope Corridor Landowners selected by other committee members (Walter Fowler/Gail Boyarsky—Orange; **vacant**; Charlie Welch—Durham; **vacant**)

Advisors: Ed Harrison, John Kent, Jane Korest (Durham real estate); Brendan Moore (Durham Trails); Sandra Wilbur (Durham stormwater); Julie Tuttle and Steve Hall (New Hope/Eno corridor study); Carl Kolosna (Durham Stormwater); Bo Howes (Triangle Land Conservancy)

- (5) Healy said that while the NHCCAC does not endorse candidates, it would be helpful if persons interested in the New Hope try to educate candidates and endorsement committees on the existence of the New Hope Plan, our website www.newhopecreek.org and what we have been doing recently. He said it is important that elected officials understand our relation to the plan, the fact that we are not an “environmental group” but rather an official advisory body and that we have consistently advocated for development, including affordable housing, if it can be built in appropriate locations (e.g. adequate infrastructure, public transportation, access to services, lack of impact on corridor functions, including water quality and wildlife passage/habitat).