

Parks With Purpose Community Task Force Newsletter: Meeting 3 Summary and Update

August 27, 2018 | Norman and Betty Camp Education Center

“My vision is that we would have a place for young people. . . to begin exploring, become nature-orientated and caring about protecting nature as a center-point, preserving those creatures that live and breathe just as we do.”

-Dr. Norman Camp (1933-2018)

Participants at Aug. 27 meeting

Community Task Force members: Norman, Betty, and Norman Camp Jr., Frances Carmichael, Amin Davis, Claudia Graham, Wayne Shore

Staff and Technical Advisors: Eric Butler, Claire Cooney, Randy Senzig, Stacie Hagwood, Louie Rivers, Bill Flournoy Christy Perrin, Jazmin Varela, Kevin Boyer, Theo Jass, Sarah Shefte

Actions and decisions

- The next meeting will be held October 29 at St. Ambrose Church, dinner at 5:30pm, program from 6:00 pm-8:00 pm.
- A list of potential projects for possible implementation was created by the group.

August 27 meeting summary

On August 27, we had our third meeting to discuss priorities for the Parks With Purpose grant from the Conservation Fund. First, we went around and shared a little about ourselves, including something interesting we did over the summer. Then, Louie recapped the trip that he, Christy and Sarah took to Atlanta for the Peer Exchange hosted by The Conservation Fund in July. They toured park sites in Atlanta and participated in discussions with grant recipients from all over the country about how to best serve the communities where grant recipients are beginning projects. Louie expressed his hope that next year, community members might be interested in attending a similar conference hosted by The Conservation Fund along with project staff. Christy thought the conversations that took place surrounding job training at the conference were helpful. Sarah shared some of the interesting aspects of Atlanta parks seen on the tour, such as rain gardens and informational environmental signage in parks.

Walnut Creek Wetland Park Update

Stacie Hagwood showed a map/plan for the Walnut Creek Wetland Park. She said that the City of Raleigh parks planning is in negotiations on contracts for schematic design. The original \$1 million budget is stretching a little thin as a large portion of grant funding given to a project like this gets spent on consulting and permitting. They are leaning towards connecting the existing trail behind the Center to the Walnut Creek Greenway. They are applying for a matching funds grant to help things along. The process is moving along slowly but the current focus is pursuing more grants and funding sources to expand what they can do. If additional funding comes through the ultimate outcome will be a boardwalk stretching all the way to Walnut Creek from the Center, and trails that connect Rochester Heights to the creek as well.

Wildlife in the Neighborhood Presentation

Neha Patel and Eric Butler, Shaw University, gave a presentation on wildlife in the neighborhood. They are using strategically placed cameras in the woods of the Wetland Park that take photos when they sense movement to see what kind of fauna are wandering through certain areas. Their footage has caught many raccoons, deer and hawks, among others. Meeting attendees from the community related their neighborhood wildlife experiences as well. The group again echoed the desire to create opportunities for youth environmental education. This coming year, Eric would like to place cameras on the south side of Walnut Creek to provide comparisons with the north side. He would engage a class in analyzing the data.

Asset Mapping Results

Jazmin presented several maps that she created using the results of the mapping exercises with the goal of prioritizing the next phase of the project. There were 77 locations highlighted during the mapping sessions and she presented them in several different maps grouped by 8 common themes. The results showed that many people are interested in local schools as possible project sites. Of the sites, 33 were south of Walnut Creek. Jazmin highlighted the need to focus on areas in the public domain, such as parks and public spaces, because it is much easier to implement community projects on public land with the support of the local government.

Everyone studied the results of the mapping exercises with their table groups and discussed what was important to them. There was a lot of interest in the area surrounding the Wetland Park. Someone mentioned that the lack of access to Walnut Creek in Rochester Heights was particularly startling when looking at these maps.

Once the small groups had time to discuss, they selected favorite ideas to write down and stick on the wall and move around as Jazmin dictated different categories, such as projects that could be considered “shovel-ready,” projects that would take longer than a year and projects that would cost more than the total budget. She assured the group that this activity wouldn't eliminate these possibilities; the exercise was merely challenging the group to think critically.

Top Preferences Survey Results

To finish, Christy shared the results of the top preference activity results from the June 11 meeting and invited discussion. There was some surprise expressed that community member and technical advisor top preferences did not all align. Louie affirmed that it's important to have

distinct voices speaking up in this discussion representing different perspectives with varying concerns about the project outcomes. Again there was discussion around possible programs to mitigate gentrification.

Related news and opportunities

A ceremony celebrating the renaming of the Walnut Creek Wetland Center to the Norman and Betty Camp Education Center, and remembering Dr. Camp, was held there on Sept. 22, after the Big Sweep Clean-Up. It was widely attended with standing room only. It also included the first public showing of the Partners for Environmental Justice documentary. The film is now available for streaming online at go.ncsu.edu/walnut_creek.

Check out [this blog post](#) from The Conservation Fund’s Kelsi Eccles! Here is an excerpt:

As a young black girl with a passion for the environment, I was raised with the awareness that many people in my community aren’t connected in the same way to their environment. . . People from my community are still disproportionately affected by the lingering legacy of racism and inequality that is evident in the environmental and social vulnerabilities we experience.

For information about the Urban Park with Purpose Community Task Force or Walnut Creek Wetland Community Partnership, contact Louie Rivers at lrivers@ncsu.edu or Christy Perrin at Christy_perrin@ncsu.edu | 919-513-1152

Appendix: Meeting 3 activity results

Stakeholders placed these projects under the achievable <u>within 12 months time frame and within the \$250K budget</u>		
ID	Asset Name	Description
71	Nature playground at Walnut Creek Wetland Park	Nature playground
29	Thin vegetation	Thin vegetation south of Walnut Creek to provide clear line of sight and pedestrian/bicycle access to WCWP from Rochester Heights and Biltmore Hills neighborhoods.
43	Water Quality & Flood Control Issues	Ongoing water quality and flood control issues at WCWC near State Street.
3	Biltmore Hills Park	Education, exercise and play

46	Bone Yard Lakes	Interpretive narrative at "Bone Yard Lakes" on NC DOT property to recognize the Brumley Brothers use of the "Walnut Creek Lowlands" for natural resource interpretation and specimen collection.
66	Neighborhood wayfinders to parks and greenways	Walking signs and markings in neighborhoods
65	Outdoor gathering and exercise space needed for seniors on Bailey Street	Outdoor gathering and exercise space needed for seniors
71	Nature playground at Walnut Creek Wetland Park	Nature playground
76	Access to Walnut Creek	Access to Walnut Creek
75	Improve old farm trail in park	Improve old farm trail in park
40	St. Augustine University	St. Augustine University
41	Shaw University	Shaw University needs inclusion
Stakeholders placed these projects under the <u>more than 12 months time frame and within the \$250K budget</u>		
74	Rochester Heights access to Walnut Creek Wetland Park	Provide access to WCWP from Rochester Heights
72	Boardwalk within Walnut Creek Wetland Park	Extend boardwalk to greenway and beyond with learning gazebo in wetland
Stakeholders placed these projects under the <u>more than 12 months time frame and more than \$250K budget</u>		
27	Creek Restoration	City or other entity can apply for grant funds to evaluate Walnut Creek for restoration opps and needs.
25	Green Street potential project	City of Raleigh plans to design /construct stormwater "green street" near WCWC.
Stakeholders placed these projects under the <u>more than 12 months time frame but they made no calls on budget</u>		
30	Dix Park Planning	Dix Park planning needs to support the work of PWP.
46	Bone Yard Lakes	Interpretive narrative at "Bone Yard Lakes" on NC DOT property to recognize the Brumley Brothers use of the "Walnut Creek Lowlands" for natural resource interpretation and specimen collection.

64	Arboretum on Peterson	Community native plant arboretum, w seating
69	Rocky Quarry Rd greenway access at new YMCA/school	Provide access to greenway/Bone Lake from Rock Quarry Rd . Rich eco resources.
45	Improve access between Fuller Elementary and WCWC	Continued/improved access between Fuller Elementary and WCWC for education, community gathering, and exercise/play options
74	Rochester Heights access to Walnut Creek Wetland Park	Provide access to WCWP from Rochester Heights
73	Ligon Middle School flooding solution	GI to stop Ligon Middle School basement flooding
44	Run-off management at Fuller Elementary	Run-off management during Fuller construction and as a intentional outcome of design and construction. Potential green infrastructure (GSI) elements (rainwater, rooftop harvesting, raingarden/Bioretenion and educational signage). Potentially involve school (Fuller Elementary) science classes with GSI plantings.
36	Shaw University	Shaw University - Access to WCWP
69	Rocky Quarry Rd greenway access at new YMCA/school	Provide access to greenway/Bone Lake from Rock Quarry Rd . Rich eco resources.
72	Boardwalk within Walnut Creek Wetland Park	Extend boardwalk to greenway an beyond with learning gazebo in wetland
Other Ideas		
76	Access to Walnut Creek	Access to Walnut Creek
19	Water Level Monitoring Station	more water quantity but still monitoring
64	Arboretum on Peterson	Community native plant arboretum, w seating
70	Teaching garden on Peterson at Walnut Creek Wetland Park	Teaching garden
30	Dix Park Planning	Dix Park planning needs to support the work of PWP.
47	Land Acquisition	Acquire single parcel (20-30 acres) parcel of open water wetland to complement WCWP as different type of wetland for expanded educational opportunity as extension of the existing complex. Will need access boardwalk and platform.