

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MOTION 20170920 008a

Date: September 20, 2017

Subject: Upper Boggy Creek Trail Phase 1, SPC-2016-0567C

Motion by: Andrew Creel Seconded by: Mary Ann Neely

RATIONALE:

WHEREAS, specific trail widths are not specified for any trails identified in the Urban Trails Master Plan (UTMP); and

WHEREAS, while user data is not yet available, this trail will be the major commuter route through East Austin connecting multiple neighborhoods, job centers, and transit centers and is highly likely to be heavily used, therefore justifying a trail wider than twelve feet; and

WHEREAS, the existing trail will be replaced and the new trail will be moved farther from the creek than the current location; and

WHEREAS, the request meets the original intent of the ordinance, which is to balance impacts to the creek buffer with the environmental benefits provided by significant alternative transportation transit corridors; and

WHEREAS, the wider trail provides tangible benefits to residents of the area that may not have an alternative means of transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Officer of the City of Austin recommends approval; and

WHEREAS, a fourteen foot wide trail provides a safer means of transportation than a twelve foot wide trail considering the anticipated traffic;

THEREFORE, the Environmental Commission recommends variance from 25-8-261(B)(3)(c) with the following:

Staff Conditions:

Applicant will remove approximately 19,520 square feet of asphalt at 2801 E. 12th St. The site, which is in the Critical Water Quality Zone and 25-year floodplain, is currently used by the Public Works Department for construction staging and spoils. Applicant will restore with native grassland seeding and planting per City of Austin Standard Specification 609S.6, including topsoil and seed bed preparation, temporary irrigation, and weed maintenance.

Environmental Commission Conditions: The tree care plan be increased to five years.

VOTE 7-1

For: Creel, Perales, Thompson, Neely, Kitchin, Guerrero, B. Smith

Against: Maceo Abstain: None Recuse: None

Absent: Gordon, H. Smith

Off the dais: Istvan

Approved By:

Marisa Perales, Environmental Commission Chair

Maris Bul

December 8, 2016

Case Manager
Watershed Protection & Development Review Department
City of Austin
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, Texas 78767

RE: Upper Boggy Creek Trail Phase 1

12th Street to MLK Jr. Blvd

Site Plan and Site Development Permit Application

Engineer's Summary Letter

Dear Case Manager,

On behalf of the City of Austin, Doucet+Chan is pleased to submit the application materials required for site plan and site development permit review and approval for the referenced project. This letter summarizes the proposed development.

Introduction

The City of Austin (COA) Urban Trails Division and Public Works Department proposes to construct a bikeway and jogging trail along Boggy Creek from East 12th Street to the Capital Metro MLK Light Rail Transit Station. Starting from East 12th and moving north, the trail will be located within the Downs/Mabson Park, cross over Boggy Creek with a pedestrian steel truss bridge, convey within a recreation easement through the BTR development tract, and connect at an existing pedestrian railroad crossing at the MLK Transit Station.

Existing Site Conditions

Boggy Creek generally flows north to south with several short east-west bends. Due to the broad floodplain of Boggy Creek, much of the trail will be within the 100-year floodplain and Critical Water Quality Zone. Boggy Creek is defined as an Urban watershed by the City. This area is not located within the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone.

The proposed bikeway would cross the creek (with a steel truss pedestrian bridge) where the creek flows along a short east west bend that separates city parkland to the south from private land to the north. The existing Downs/Mabson ball fields and city park has an existing four foot wide jogging trail between the fields and the creek. Currently, this jogging trail does not connect to MLK Blvd., or cross Boggy Creek to continue northward. This trail will be removed in association with constructing the new trail. The property north of the creek crossing is owned by BTR Development who has granted the City a Recreational Easement for the bike path to convey through the property to an existing pedestrian crossing at the MLK Transit Station railroad tracks. The BTR Development tract has been developed with an urban community garden, which is a Sustainable Food Center teaching garden.

Proposed Development

The proposed bikeway project consists of constructing approximately 2,300 linear feet of bike lanes and jogging trail along Boggy Creek between 12th Street and MLK Blvd. In addition to connecting a bikeway from the south to the transit station, the proposed bikeway would connect the existing bike lanes on 12th Street to the bike lanes on Alexander Avenue, and this linking segment is a part of the City's Urban Trail Master Plan. The bike trail is proposed to be 14-feet wide and striped for two-way cycling along with a separate jogging lane. The trail will cross Boggy Creek via a steel truss bridge 120-feet long and 16-feet wide.

D+C have modeled the 25- and 100-year floodplain under existing and proposed conditions and there is no identifiable adverse impact (rise in floodplain elevation) associated with the proposed improvements.

The proposed bike trail is an allowed development activity within the floodplain and CWQZ in accordance with the Land Development Code and the Environmental Criteria Manual. A variance is required from the ECM as the proposed bike trail width is 14-feet while the ECM allows trails up to 12-feet in width.

While there is no requirement for water quality associated with this project, measures to protect and enhance water quality are proposed through establishment of native grow zones and shallow rain garden areas.

Tree removal is required for placement of the trail through the riparian corridor. Tree mitigation will meet or exceed City of Austin standards.

I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge that the plans are complete and accurate and in compliance with the City of Austin Land Development Code. If you have any questions or comments or need additional information, please contact us at any time.

Sincerely,

Doucet+Chan

Tom Curran, P.E.

Senior Project Engineer

