



MINUTES

Joint City Project Team and Kinni Corridor Project Committee Meeting

Thursday, Jan. 5, 2017 at 4-5:30 p.m.

City Hall – Training Room

The City Project Team and Kinni Corridor Committee met on January 5, 2017.

The City's Buddy Lucero called the meeting to order.

1. Meeting Minutes

Two sets of meeting minutes were presented for approval:

- Kinni Corridor Committee Meeting Minutes from Nov. 30, 2016
- City Proj3ect Team Meeting Minutes from Nov. 10, 2016

Both sets of meeting minutes were approved.

2. Committee and Team reaction to December 8 Kick-Off Open House event.

Buddy Lucero debuted the video the City has started to develop, using photos, individual discussions etc. The video will be developed over time and will be available on the project website.

The City Project Team and the Committee discussed their impressions of the December 8 kick-off event. Overall, the response to the event was positive. People learned about all of the planning issues. Trails and recreation was a big area of interest. Some were surprised by the amount of input from outside of the planning area. Overall, the event attracted broad perspectives and was very civil – not contentious. The information stations had a nice mix of committee members and staff.

People seemed happy and interested in participating, learning and listening. Gary Horvath indicated that a lot of people at the sediment station were assuming the sediment are contaminated (the recent study found very limited contamination), highlighting the need to re-affirm that study.

Dave Fodroczi offered that an event like this could be done on a Saturday in the future. He did not think the space was a problem. Some committee members expressed their interest in being able to participate in addition to helping to present the information. The Glen Park renovation project was a popular topic. Mary Zimmerman has heard people comment after the event that they had meant to attend and wish they had, reinforcing the need to use the website and social media to reach those not in attendance.

3. Summary of Public Response: Surveys, Comment Cards and Maps

Mark Lobermeier briefly summarized the preliminary survey results, noting that over 1300 surveys had been received along with 47 comment cards. He specifically mentioned the following:

- 53.4 % of survey respondents were not from River Falls; 30% were from outside the area
- Hiking, kayaking, canoeing and fishing were identified as the top active ways to experience the river.
- Only 12% of respondents were unfamiliar with planning related issues and discussions.
- Respondents prefer social media as the best way to stay informed, followed by email and the website.
- Only 33% expressed interest in the tech talks.
- Dams and Hydros, River Ecology and Recreation/Tourism were the most popular topics for the tech talk series.
- 1260 individual comments were received. Over 850 comments related to changing something related to the river and the surrounding area; while 685 comments related to leaving something unchanged relative to the river and the surrounding area.

Scot Simpson spoke regarding the surveys, requesting a good cross-tabulation of the data, and analysis of comments from residents.

Mark also spoke to the comments received in the mapping exercises. The comments were broken down by the three parts of the project area: Upper Kinni (upstream of Main Street and the Highway 35/65), Middle Kinni (between the Powell Dam - below Lake Louise - upstream to Highway35/65), and Lower Kinni (below the Powell dam on Lake Louise). In all three segments, recreation ranked as the number one issue. All three segments also included comments regarding preservation of open space and the hydroelectric facilities and lakes.

The survey also included preferences for the tech talks:

- River Falls Dams and Hydros 201 (dam removal and alternatives to removal, hydro relicensing process)
- River Ecology 201 (fish, birds and animals)
- Corridor planning impact on recreation and tourism
- River Ecology 101 (sediment, hydrology, temperature, bio-chemistry)

- River Falls Dams and Hydros 101 (dam history, hydro power, renewable energy and future trends)
- Corridor planning impact on "Main Street" businesses and orientation to the river
- Corridor planning impact on corridor neighborhoods and private/public property in and beyond the City limits
- Corridor planning impact on City and regional economic development

4. January Tech Talk– Jan. 26, 6:30 pm

Plans for Tech Talk No1 – Corridor Planning 101 - were discussed. The Committee was agreeable to advertising the event as described.

Mark Lobermeier presented a proposed schedule for the next tech talks along with proposed topics. The date of the March tech talk was moved to March 9 to avoid conflicts with spring break. Buddy asked the committee for feedback regarding the topics. Kevin Westhuis suggested we discuss river corridor success stories. Rita Kozak mentioned that on April 21st and 22nd the St. Croix Summit will be held at the University. The Committee decided against holding a tech talk during River Falls Days. Other suggestions included the Lake George plan and renewable energy. It was agreed that the topics suggested will be incorporated into the main tech talk comments as presented.

5. Launch of Project Website

Mary Zimmerman provided a handout regarding the status of the website which is set to go live very soon. Mary indicated that she would be adding links to more organizations. Jason Egerstrom suggested that a two-sentence description be added to each of the documents on the website.

The committee liked the “Explore-Understand-Engage” theme.

6. Mission and Vision Statements – February Agenda

Mark and Buddy indicated that the Mission and Vision would be discussed at the February meeting.

7. Media Requests and Group Presentations

Buddy spoke to the committee regarding requests they may get from media for interviews, information etc. Buddy indicated that he and the City staff are available to assist Committee members as necessary to ensure consistency of messaging, etc.

8. Looking Forward: Next Steps

The next steps for the Committee include the January 26 Tech Talk and the next Committee meeting on February 16.

9. Public Comments:

Michael Page, President of the Friends of the Kinni, complimented the committee on a great public meeting, noting that he has heard a lot of great remarks about the process. He also indicated that the draft report related to dam removal is expected at any time.

10. Proposed Meeting Schedule

Mark presented a calendar from January 2017 through March of 2018. This will take the project through the decision regarding relicensing of the hydro facilities. The Committee approved of the schedule, which will be posted on the Project Web site, including changes to the dates for the tech talks discussed earlier in the meeting.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned around 5:30 pm