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# Waterfront Advisory Board Meeting Summary

## Meeting Time and Location:

We decided for now to meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month, from 6:00pm – 7:30pm, at the B:Hive, located at 285 Fairfield Ave. in Downtown.

**Our next meeting will be on November 17th from 6:00-7:30pm at the B:Hive.**

The Bridgeport Waterfront Advisory Committee met to move planning for a waterfront pathway and public access improvements forward. **The focus of the meeting was Johnson's Creek:**

1. *Decision to focus efforts in one major area* to get things moving, acknowledging that the other focus areas should also move forward. **General feeling that building momentum and visible change at Johnson's Creek** will be easier than some other locations because MetroCog is already working in this area and Trust for Public Land is also focused here. There is a commitment to the community here to finally get residents access to the waterfront.
2. *Milone and MacBroom* made a presentation regarding the **work they will be doing for MetroCog on the Johnson's Creek Shoreline Stabilization and Renaturalization project**. Jason Williams is a landscape architect with the firm and presented the general scope of work for design that the firm will be doing. The project represents a **major opportunity to get people to the shoreline and to open-up view corridors and access to the Creek**. The design phase will focus on public access along the easements that exist from Central Avenue to the waterfront. The City owns the parcels in this area and will work with tenants in the buildings to phase public access and consider long-term re-use of the site. Milone and MacBroom will get an estimate to MetroCog for the design phase in October. **By the end of 2018 they plan on having design documents and a cost estimate done**. Funding will still have to be obtained to move forward.
3. *General constraints along the Creek* and for the design project were discussed. The project is focusing on **environmental remediation** and once design concepts are explored, more testing will be done to determine the level of remediation to be completed. Phase 1 assessment work has been done. Phase 2 work will focus on the public access easements to the waterfront and then Phase 3 will look at shoreline restoration and possible walkway access at the water's edge, which will most likely need to be an elevated walkway because of **shoreline slope** and environmental conditions. The entire process of **Phase 1, 2 & 3 and RAP will take 6-9 months**
4. A discussion ensued about the *desire to see action and implementation now*. the design work and environmental studies are just the first step toward public access and then **money will have to be raised** for the actual project. The group discussed the

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need for **early tactical urbanism strategies for activating the waterfront**. These temporary methods could be implemented sooner rather than later and include:

- a. Good signage
- b. Programming of events and activities:

- c.
    - i. Could the easements host urban rock walls and gym area for the community?
    - ii. Other community programming can create a reason to be here – food trucks, community events. Look to local community organizations and existing events to see what would be a good fit here.
  - d. Capping easement access to the waterfront to **get the public to the water's edge**.
  - e. **Temporary closing of Central Avenue on weekends** and once per month to allow programming to take place on public street Right-of-Way to simplify access (no issues with environmental conditions) and to create momentum for the waterfront pathway efforts.
5. *The Trust for Public Land* also announced that they have received the go-ahead to **raise money for the Bridgeport Waterfront Pathway**. Great news!
6. *Suggested updates to online presence for Waterfront*: Discussion that the progress on the waterfront should **be readily available on the City's website**. Information should include the Johnson's Creek efforts and Sliver by the River as well.
7. *Potential for multiple supporters and stakeholders*: Mention was made that many of these efforts **serve multiple interests such as public health**. Let's get more stakeholders and potential funders involved by thinking about how the pathway serves multiple users and purposes (**see the Waterfront Master Plan for ideas here**).
8. *High cost of public pathways*: Trust for Public Land mentioned that a built-out pathway in other areas (many more suburban or rural than Bridgeport) **can cost \$1 million per mile**. We need to build a wide group of supporters for the pathway, from the city and beyond.
9. *Next steps*: CivicMoxie will **be providing support materials** for activating this section of pathway in Johnson's Creek, Milone and MacBroom will be providing **cost estimates for the design phase** of work to MetroCog, and attendees at the meeting, such as Groundwork Bridgeport and Trust for Public Land will be **investigating funding opportunities**.