

TOWN OF STOKESDALE
Special Council Meeting
8325 Angel Pardue Road
Stokesdale, NC 27357

A special meeting of the Stokesdale Town Council was held Monday, August 1, 2011, 2011 at the Town Hall at 8325 Angel Pardue Road.

Mayor Randle L. Jones called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm. The following members of Council were present: Mayor Randle L. Jones, Mickie Halbrook, Bobby Richardson and James Attaway. Cheryl Steele was absent.

Mayor Jones said that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the A& Y Greenway feasibility study. He turned the meeting over to Mr. Chuck Smith with the consulting firm of Withers & Ravenel. Mr. Smith said that they had been gathering public input on the A&Y Trail thru public meetings and a survey. Approximately 160 responses from the survey had been received from both Summerfield and Stokesdale. Jennifer Wagner, Withers & Ravenel, said that they are similar results from each of the Towns. Survey answers showed that the A&Y Trail is very important and activities on the trail showed that walking and bicycling ranked very high. About 41% of both Towns said they were very willing to allow a greenway/trail easement on their property and about 35% said that they were not at all willing to allow an easement. Willingness to pay increased taxes to fund improvements had a 46% response as being "very willing" with about 47% answering that they were "willing" or "somewhat willing" to pay taxes. The most important function of a greenway trail had a response of 85% for recreational activities with alternative mode of transportation and economic impact receiving lower percentages. Natural surface was very high followed by asphalt. Natural surface is needed by equestrians and that may have resulted in it being ranked so high.

Mr. Smith said that a good number of equestrians responded to the survey. Guilford County ranks #2 in the State for the number of horses. There were comments from equestrians and there is support from them for this trail. Today they are trying to get Council's thoughts on the location of the alignment. When you consider the types of trail surfaces, the horses and some of the hard core hikers look at the trail as being a soft surface. A paved portion should be considered since there could be DOT funding for that type of trail. There can be dual surfaces with a combination of soft and hard surfaces. Oak Ridge has expressed an interest in having a connection to the trail. Because of the regional nature of this trail, there will be a lot of people who will use it. The American Tobacco Trail has been in use for about a year and it averages 75 users per hour. Mr. Smith said they felt that there were more uses if it did not run along Hwy 158 in the industrial areas. There are two possible ways that the trail could connect to the Mountains to the Sea Trail so they wanted to keep some flexibility in the area. It shows a crossing at the stop light at the 158-68 intersection because they felt that it would be safer. He said that they were unsure as to what would happen with the widening of Hwy 158. If the road is made into a four lane road, then the area that could be used for the trail would become roadway. Ms. Halbrook said that she was interested in how the area around the fire station would be handled. Orange areas on the map were proposed to be sidewalks. There could be a wider asphalt trail that would be suitable for more uses or dual trails being side by side with different surfaces. The Virginia Creeper Trail is 34 miles long. There can be an economic impact on the community because of the trail. Businesses such as bike shops and inns may spring up along the trail. Mr. Smith said that if Council had preferences for the location of the trail that he would like to hear them.

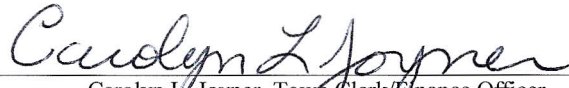
Mayor Jones said that the location of Hwy 158 would affect the trail as it would not be widened in the downtown area. DOT has looked at different locations for the road. He felt that with the topography and the open areas, the concept of a trail would go in areas away from highways. He felt that it should go through the downtown area because it was scenic with the older historic buildings. It would be a visual thing for those on the trail and businesses may benefit. Mayor Jones said that some families may ride horses and bring their bikes also.

Mr. Smith said that the plans were to have a preliminary draft of the document with the alignment and supporting information this month and another public meeting would be held in September with a more formal presentation of the alignment. They are not designing the trail during the feasibility study and it can be changed. Mayor Jones said that it should not be forced on anyone.

Ms. Lemmons asked if property owners could be notified about the meeting. Mayor Jones said that you can continue to get opinions and then contact the property owners at some time in the future.

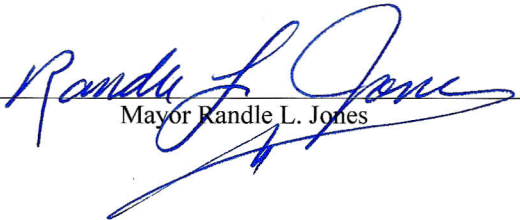
Mr. Smith said that the proposed trail is located along property lines so that it can be adjusted more easily.

Mayor Jones made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Attaway seconded the motion. All council members present voted aye. The meeting was adjourned at 7:24pm.



Carolyn L. Joyner, Town Clerk/Finance Officer

Approved:



Mayor Randle L. Jones