

Project moves step closer to reality

By Charles D. Perry · cperry@heraldonline.com - Updated 07/18/08 - 12:31 AM |

Frank and Sharon Bynum stared at York County's route on the proposed Carolina Thread Trail.

They just moved to Fort Mill from Charlotte last year, so they're not in a position to judge what should or shouldn't be on the design presented Wednesday evening at Manchester Meadows.

But they know carving a 112-mile route isn't easy.

"Hopefully, it'll be a reality," Frank Bynum said. "It's nice to know they're shooting for the moon here."

Organizers of the Thread Trail, a proposed 15-county network of greenways and trails in North and South Carolina, offered a peek this week at what the local trail might look like.



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An arrow points the way to one of the trails at Anne Springs Close Greenway in Fort Mill. The greenway is a stop on the latest proposed route for the Carolina Thread Trail, a 112-mile trail linking scenic sites in 15 North Carolina and South Carolina counties.

Brattonsville, Cherry Park not included in design

The route weaves across the county, stopping at Worth Mountain, Kings Mountain State Park and the Anne Springs Close Greenway. But the trail doesn't pass through Historic Brattonsville, Carowinds or Cherry Park.

The design is a compromise between what people told trail organizers they wanted and what was geographically feasible.

Residents said Historic Brattonsville should be on the trail, but including that destination would add 27 miles to an already extensive project, said Tobe Holmes, the county's long-term planner. The colonial-era history center also would be the only stop on that leg of the trail.

The first Thread Trail paths in the county are expected to be built within two years, although some officials estimate the local project might take 40 years to complete.

Because the county already has a few trails, organizers hope the Thread Trail will join those passages.

"The good news is that we're not starting from scratch," said Ann Browning, the Thread Trail's project director. "There's lots of great work that's already been happening on which we can build."

Residents are seeing the latest design now, but the plans aren't finished and area officials hope to get more public feedback by July 31. Afterward, organizers will begin hammering out the final blueprints.

'A healthy idea'

The ultimate goal is to link the county with a network connecting more than 2 million people on a 7,300-square-mile natural highway. Chester and Lancaster counties also are slated to be part of the trail, but York County's plans are closer to completion.

For the Bynums, the Thread Trail can't come soon enough.

When they lived in Charlotte, they often walked the Sugar Creek Greenway. The couple knows the York County project is ambitious, but they like what they've seen so far.

"People want to be out in nature," Sharon Bynum said. "It just seems like a healthy idea."