



Carolina Thread Trail identifies potential destinations

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By Justin Vick

MOORESVILLE – Iredell County officials have identified several Mooreville area landmarks as potential links with the Carolina Thread Trail, a network of greenways connecting 15 counties in the Carolinas.

Sites such as Hager Creek, Lowe’s Corporate Headquarters, Lowes YMCA, Rocky River Headwaters, Stumpy Creek Access Area and Cornelius Road Park are among 20 destinations listed in an online survey to help officials determine what should go in Iredell’s segment of the trail.

Sites in Troutman such as Daveste Vineyards, Lake Norman State Park and Zootastic are being discussed, as are northern landmarks like Downtown Statesville, Eagle Mill, Fort Dobbs and YMCA of Iredell County/Statesville.

Planners distributed surveys to people who attended a public workshop on Tuesday, Nov. 30, at Pine Lake Preparatory. Participants broke into small groups to give suggestions over proposed routes.

Eric Rosentreter, an avid cyclist, would like to see developed trails near his neighborhood off Brawley School Road extending to Davidson or even North Davidson Street in Uptown Charlotte.

“If I could do that without getting myself killed, I’d make a daytrip out of that,” Rosentreter said. He’d also like to see pedestrian and bike trails that are easy for Brawley Peninsula residents to access that are separate from roads.

Amanda Huggins, a member of Carolina Thread Trail consultant Alta Planning & Design, served as a facilitator for one of the groups.

“For our group, it was not as much about location as it was about trails themselves being safe,” Huggins said. “I think they were trusting the lines were in the right places, but they were more concerned about what it would actually look like when it was built.”

Another concern mentioned at Huggins’ table was how to get people from larger neighborhoods in high traffic areas to parts of the trail.

“Somebody in our group made the point that you have this critical mass of people in the southern portion of Iredell County – do you take advantage of that critical mass? You have the people, is that where we should build the first priority trails and expand from there?”

Iredell's portion of the trail is in the master planning process, which began in the spring with the launch of a countywide steering committee. John Cock, southeast regional manager with Alta Planning & Design, said once this phase is completed by February or March, the plan would go before town and county boards for approval.

"That enables the county to be eligible to apply for Carolina Thread Trail money to do detailed planning at the corridor levels, land acquisition, construction and matching grants to basically implement this piece by piece," Cock said. "You need the map to be eligible for the next round of funding."

More than 600 people took the survey, with showed that most preferred fundraising, donations and matching grants as the preferred funding mechanism for the trails.

Town Commissioner Rhett Dusenbury agrees. He was among town leaders attending Tuesday's public workshop.

"I'm all for anything that will improve the quality of life in the town of Mooresville and Iredell County; however being that we're in tough economic times now, I'd prefer funds be generated from the grant process and personal contributions."

The county has already received a \$250,000 donation from Lowes Corporate Headquarters that went toward trail development in Iredell – marking the first corporate donation a county has receive the project, officials said.

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