

DATE: December 5, 2018

To: Nicole Ard, City Manager
City Council Members

From: Public Safety Advisory Committee

RE: Indian Creek Trail Letter of Recommendations

In late July 2018 the Greenbelt City Council and City Manager asked Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) to study issues as to the safety and security of the Indian Creek Trail and to make recommendations to the council. At its August 15th meeting PSAC voted to send a contingent of its committee members to walk the trail as a fact-finding mission.

On Saturday, August 18th, then PSAC Chair Cindy Comproni and Members Stan Zirkin and Eunice Pierre walked the completed Indian Creek Trail. Several things became immediately apparent. First, the lack of lights on the trail created security concerns. Second, the PSAC contingent saw the need for mile markers so that police could locate persons who are encountering problems. Finally, there were several areas where overgrown vegetation created a safety hazard by providing areas of limited visibility where a would-be perpetrator might hide.

At our next meeting in September the rest of the committee members were briefed as to these recommendations and, by unanimous consent, agreed that these issues had to be addressed. However, before submitting our recommendations to council PSAC decided to invite a member of the city government to provide more information in connection with our concerns.

On October 2 Terry Hruby, the City's Director of Planning, attended the monthly PSAC meeting. Addressing the lighting issue raised by PSAC, Ms. Hruby indicated that the Indian Creek Trail is designated as a recreational trail and, as such there will be no lighting on the trail. We raised the possibility of having the city purchase solar lights to be installed at various points along the trail. She said that that might be a possibility. With respect to mile markers she said that there are plans by the city to seek grants to have mile markers along the trail. However, in view of its status as a recreational trail there will not be emergency call boxes.

Finally, we raised the vegetation issues. Ms. Hruby indicated that there were environmental concerns that would hinder the ability to remove or trim some plants but that other invasive plants which are not subject to environmental protections would be cleared and trimmed periodically.

Ms. Hruby also provided information on the WMATA trail, which is slated to be completed in about two years and will connect to the Greenbelt Metro. The WMATA trail will allow residents from Greenbelt Station to use the trail to walk to

Metro. She stated that since the WMATA trail is not planned as a recreational trail it will have lights and emergency call boxes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. As to the Indian Creek Trail, the city should install solar lights at appropriate locations along the trail; should install mile markers whether or not grants are obtained; and should maintain a regular program of trimming vegetation not protected under environmental regulations. In addition, the committee recommends bike patrol and Call Boxes at the entrances.
2. The WMATA trail will require further study after its completion. Lighting and call boxes will alleviate some security concerns. However, the mile markers and maintenance of vegetation cutting program recommendations will probably have equal applicability to the WMATA trail.

Thank you for allowing the committee to work on this request.

Sincerely,

Public Safety Advisory Committee