



South Douglas Scenic Byway
Steering Committee Meeting
Dog River Library Community Meeting Room
August 20, 2021
12:00 p.m.
Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Community Members: Rick Cali, Pam Daniell, Ed Daniell, Paula Arnett, Kyle Gable, Vanessa Levingston, Emily Lightner, Altona Rone, Gwen Sommers Redwine, Jan Thomas, Bill Willis

Board of Commissioners: Ann Guider

Planning and Zoning Board:

Douglas County Staff: Sharon, Subadan, Ron Roberts, Allison Duncan

Ron Roberts welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Commissioner Ann Guider and County Manager Sharon Subadan, who joined us for this Steering Committee Meeting.

I. Draft Scenic Byway Application

Allison Duncan presented a slide deck with information on the Draft Scenic Byway Application. The information had been uploaded in advance to the county website, and handouts were available at the meeting. She introduced content for each of the six intrinsic qualities, and asked for feedback on anything else that should be included.

The Scenic Quality is described through the agrarian, forestry and rural residential uses in the area. Committee members suggested that the Corridor Management Plan explore incentives for long term preservation including tax advantages offered by conservation use valuation (CUVA) and permanent conservation easements, which may make a property owner eligible conservation tax credits through the State of Georgia. It was also suggested that consideration be given to appropriate setbacks and other land use controls that might be needed to preserve the scenic qualities of the area.

The Natural Quality of the corridor is described through significant water resources and water reservoirs in the area. There are sizable rock outcrops and steep slopes, particularly in proximity to Bear Creek, Annewakee Creek, Dog River, and the Chattahoochee River.

Historic and Cultural Qualities are captured through many points of interest that are readily visible both on and off the proposed corridor. These include historic buildings, cemeteries, and farmsteads located in and around the historic communities of Fairplay, McWhorter and Campbellton.

Archaeological Qualities in the area describe mostly subsurface resources, though committee members detailed numerous experiences of finding arrowheads and pottery sherds on private property in the area. There had previously been interpretive events focused on the Native American history in the area held at Sweetwater Creek State Park, and committee members



thought there were similar opportunities for greater placemaking and storytelling around the history of the Native tribes in the area. Telling a holistic story of the area has been identified as one of the Corridor Management Issues that will be discussed later in the meeting.

The Recreational Qualities of the corridor are experienced through resources including Boundary Waters Park, the Dog River Reservoir and St. Andrews Golf and Country Club. The Steering Committee raised additional issues around the Intrinsic Qualities that will be reflected in the Corridor Management Plan:

- Look for other examples of scenic byways that can be models for the South Douglas Scenic Byway; the Blue Ridge Parkway was cited as an example.
- Identify opportunities to partner with the local schools for education and outreach

II. Corridor Management Plan – Draft Issues

Allison Duncan shared a handout with the Draft Corridor Management Issues. They are included below.

- Tell the story.
- Balance preservation and growth.
- Ensure environmental protection.
- Direct resources to the implementation of outcomes.
- Protect property and development rights.
- Manage anticipated infrastructure improvements.
- Maintain the transportation function of the corridor.
- Communicate with stakeholders and constituents.

The draft application and meeting handout are both available on the project website and contain a longer description of each of these statements.

Feedback from the Committee captured the following ideas:

- Explore opportunities for oral history to document the experiences of all communities and the importance of their contributions to placemaking in Douglas County
- Ensure that communication is two way and the public is telling the county what they want this area to become
- The community doesn't need to always wait for the county to reach out; community members should be proactive to be certain that the county knows their goals

III. Corridor Management Plan Elements

Allison Duncan shared slides that detailed both required and recommended corridor management elements per the GDOT designation manual. She also suggested that the Corridor Management Plan drill down on issues regarding Future Land Use along with opportunities for placemaking, recreation and tourism. She invited members of the Committee to volunteer for subcommittee meetings around these two topics. Other discussion included:

- The sewer line that is being installed by WSA may impact land use and the demand for development in the area; buffers may help offset concerns about additional density



- The subcommittee could explore ways that technology could be incorporated into a guided trail or similar program to help the community experience the byway

IV. Public Open Houses

Two public open houses have been scheduled for

- Tuesday, September 14 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 16 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Both meetings will be held at the Douglas County Courthouse and will be free and open to the public. The information from these meetings will be largely captured on the website, but will also provide an opportunity for community members to provide their thoughts or concerns in regard to the Scenic Byway project.

Allison Duncan shared an image of the postcards that will be mailed to all of the property owners in the identified study area. Additionally, a letter and acknowledgement form will be mailed to owners with access directly to the proposed byway corridor.

V. Next Steps

Planning and Zoning staff is still offering tours for anyone interested in driving the proposed byway corridor. Notice for the Public Open Houses will be distributed and the staff will undertake the required stakeholder outreach identified as a part of the draft application. The next Steering Committee is scheduled for October 1 at 12:00 p.m. at the Dog River Library.