

Agenda

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Regular meeting

7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2025

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



1. Call to order and confirmation of quorum

2. Agenda changes and approval

3. Minutes review and approval

Minutes from regular meeting on Oct. 15, 2024

4. Discussion items

- A. Review 10-year anniversary press release and benefits analysis and discuss master plan components
- B. Adopt 2025 Meeting Schedule
- C. Election of Officers (Chair, Vice Chair)

5. Parks and recreation-related reports

- A. Board of Commissioners: Robb English
- B. Planning Board: Hooper Schultz
- C. Intergovernmental Parks Work Group: Staff

6. Park steward reports

- A. Gold Park: Cole Kenworthy
- B. Cates Creek Park: Richard von Furstenberg
- C. Murray Street Park: Hooper Schultz
- D. Kings Highway Park: Robb English
- E. Hillsborough Heights Park: David Weinberg
- F. Riverwalk: staff
- G. Turnip Patch Park: Wendy Kuhn

7. Staff updates

Kayak launch updates, FY26 budget update: basketball court and shelters at Cates Creek Park

8. Adjournment

Interpreter services or special sound equipment for compliance with the American with Disabilities Act is available on request. If you are disabled and need assistance with reasonable accommodations, call the Town Clerk's Office at 919-296-9443 a minimum of one business day in advance of the meeting.

Minutes

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Regular meeting

7 p.m. Oct. 15, 2024

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present: Chair Cole Kenworthy, Vice Chair Richard von Furstenberg, Wendy Kuhn, Hooper Schultz, Nevin Daryani, David Weinberg, Paul Weinberg and Commissioner Robb English

Staff: Public Space and Sustainability Manager Stephanie Trueblood

1. Call to order and confirmation of quorum

Chair Cole Kenworthy called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Public Space and Sustainability Manager Stephanie Trueblood called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

2. Agenda changes and approval

There were no changes to the agenda.

Motion: Member Hooper Schultz moved to approve the agenda as presented. Member David Weinberg seconded.

Vote: 7-0

3. Minutes review and approval

Minutes from regular meeting on Sept. 17, 2024

Motion: D. Weinberg moved approval of the Sept. 17, 2024, minutes as submitted. Member von Furstenberg seconded.

Vote: 7-0

4. Parks and recreation-related reports

A. Board of Commissioners

Commissioner Robb English reported the town board discussed initiated text amendments. He told one proposed amendment would allow detached accessory dwelling units (ADU's) on private streets with conditions. No action was taken. The other proposed amendment would allow multi-use development in general commercial zoning with a special use permit (SUP), which the board denied. Also, the board received an equity update from Central Pines Regional Council. The board approved the partnership with the council.

B. Planning Board

Schultz updated the board of a proposed change to the Paliouras Tract Master Plan. No decision was made. Then, Schultz described two other text amendments discussed by the board. They recommended approval for detached ADU's on private streets with conditions and recommended denial of a proposed text amendment

that would allowing multi-use development in a general use district wit allowing multi-use development in a general use district with an SUP.

Commissioner Robb English arrived at 7:09 p.m.

C. Intergovernmental Parks Work Group

The meeting was canceled because lack of quorum, and the next meeting will be April, 2025.

5. Park steward reports

Board members reported on the conditions of the parks for which they serve as stewards. Trueblood noted any small repairs that needed attention and gave brief reports on small repairs that had been made since the previous meeting.

6. Staff updates

Trueblood reported:

- Town park flooding occurred from the two hurricanes, and town maintenance cleared the debris.
- Town utilities crew members are working in Asheville.
- The board passed the Parks and Recreation Board recommendation on park occupancy.
- Fiscal Year Budget for 2025 preparations have begun. Trueblood will suggest lower cost improvements in the park master plans to fund.
- Kings Highway Park kayak launch was broken by hurricane Helene damage and will be replaced.

7. Adjournment

Motion: Member Wendy Kuhn moved to adjourn at 7:52 p.m. D. Weinberg seconded.

Vote: 8-0

Respectfully submitted,



Stephanie Trueblood
Public Space and Sustainability Manager
Staff support to the Parks and Recreation Board

Approved: Jan 21, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Oct. 11, 2024

Contact:

Public Space and Sustainability Manager

stephanie.trueblood@hillsboroughnc.gov or 919-296-9481

Updated Oct. 23, 2024, to include Walkable Hillsborough's contribution.

Happy Birthday, Riverwalk!

Town's greenway celebrates 10th anniversary

HILLSBOROUGH — Ten years ago, people of all ages crowded on the freshly built boardwalk and looked on from the parking deck to celebrate the new greenway along the Eno River.

"The opening of Riverwalk was a game changer for the town," former Hillsborough Mayor Tom Stevens said. "It opened up the Eno River, the trail system and park system in the area. It is a wonderful part of living in this town."

History and Construction

In 1991, the dream formed for a greenway along the Eno River, recalled Margaret Hauth, who carried the vision after becoming the town's planning director in 1992.

"The idea for Riverwalk started long before construction did," Hauth said. "Residents had ideas for a string of connected parks and increased walkability across town. From there, we had the basic idea for Riverwalk."

The community group Walkable Hillsborough increased public support and awareness of walking's importance, a feasibility study for the greenway was conducted, and the town planned to build the greenway on conservation easements. However, it was determined that easements would not be compatible with a greenway and the town needed to buy land. It took time for the town to negotiate the acquisition of property.

The first section of Riverwalk was built in 2008 with the construction of Gold Park and the trails within it. Five years later, construction of the second and third phases began, connecting Gold Park to Calvin Street and to a publicly accessible private trail that leads to the Historic Occoneechee Speedway Trail. A final section connecting Gold Park to Occoneechee Mountain State Natural Area was finished in 2019.

The town wanted the greenway to have a natural feel as soon as it opened, so thoughtful decisions about tree-clearing, the boardwalks and the bridge were made. A special machine was used to remove trees and to chip them in place without felling them. This allowed a

narrower path to be made and the remaining trees to be left undamaged. Additionally, a coastal machine to create piers was used to lay the boardwalks, allowing for the unique curves seen on Riverwalk. For a weathered look, staff selected steel with a Corten finish for the Wendy Olson and Charles Burger Bridge, which crosses the Eno River near Weaver Street Market. Olson and Burger advocated for a walkable Hillsborough and a greenway.

“The most stressful part of the whole project was when the crane installed the 110-foot bridge over the Eno River,” Public Space and Sustainability Manager Stephanie Trueblood said.

“Everything else up to that point was math; but once that bridge was in the air, everyone was stressed. I remember that people came to watch the installation from the parking deck, so that was extra pressure.”

Construction of the majority of Riverwalk ended in the summer of 2014, and the grand opening took place Oct. 11 of that year.

Maintenance

To ensure safety, an independent inspector checks the bridges on Riverwalk every three years and staff inspect the greenway at least once a week to identify safety and maintenance needs. Public works employees collect trash several times a week.

“The greenway was placed within nature, so nature still happens around it,” Trueblood said.

“There are trees that need to be managed, there is wildlife in the area, and there are times when the Eno floods.”

Riverwalk was built in a floodplain to provide recreation in an area that otherwise would not have been developed. It was designed to withstand flooding. After storm events, public works crews clean the greenway to remove mud and other debris. Community members can help reopen the greenway sooner by heeding closures.

Funding

The total cost of building Riverwalk over the years — including pedestrian and stormwater improvements to Allison, Calvin and Nash streets and the initial construction of Gold Park and the trails within it — was about \$6.6 million. Grant funding helped pay for nearly half the cost.

The town received three North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grants from the state, totaling \$1.3 million. It also received \$1.3 million from the Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality Program of the U.S. Department of Transportation. Additional funds were provided from the North Carolina Recreational Trails Program, Upper Neuse River Clean Water Initiative, Classical American Homes Preservation Trust (now the Richard Hampton Jenrette Foundation) and SunTrust Foundation (now the Truist Foundation).

“It was a significant cost for a town our size; and ultimately, we had to make sacrifices in other areas,” Town Manager Eric Peterson said, noting the greenway was identified as a priority by the town’s board, staff and residents.

The town completed final payments on the two loans it secured for the greenway in fiscal years 2023 and 2024.

Benefits

“The Riverwalk greenway has been a game changer for Hillsborough when it comes to tourism, economic development and connectivity,” said Shannan Campbell, the town’s planning and economic development manager. “To have a greenway that connects Occoneechee Speedway through downtown, West Hillsborough, Gold Park and over to Occoneechee Mountain is invaluable.”

Riverwalk’s downtown portion is part of the N.C. Mountains-to-Sea Trail and was the first section of the statewide trail system to be constructed in Orange County. The handicap accessible trail also is one of the few sections of the state trail to be located in an urban environment.

A planned transaction of land from the Richard Hampton Jenrette Foundation to the state and the Archaeological Conservancy also will connect Riverwalk and Hillsborough to Eno River State Park. That land, which includes the Historic Occoneechee Speedway Trail, is connected to Riverwalk by a pedestrian bridge that the foundation built over the river.

The Eno River Association is facilitating the sale of the land, which is expected to occur by the end of this year. The majority of the land — including the speedway and James M. Johnston Nature Preserve — will be added to Eno River State Park. Land containing Indigenous archaeological sites will be owned by the conservancy.

The state park’s expansion and connection to Riverwalk is expected to further benefit Hillsborough. Already, Riverwalk has become part of the community’s identity and has helped the town attract events like the Hillsborough Half Marathon, public art projects and weddings.

Riverwalk stretches about 3 miles east-west through town. A north-south greenway with the name Ridgewalk is proposed.

“We look forward to the possibilities of the future Ridgewalk to offer the same opportunities for our residents and visitors alike,” Campbell said.

Resources

Learn more about Riverwalk and the proposed Ridgewalk greenway:

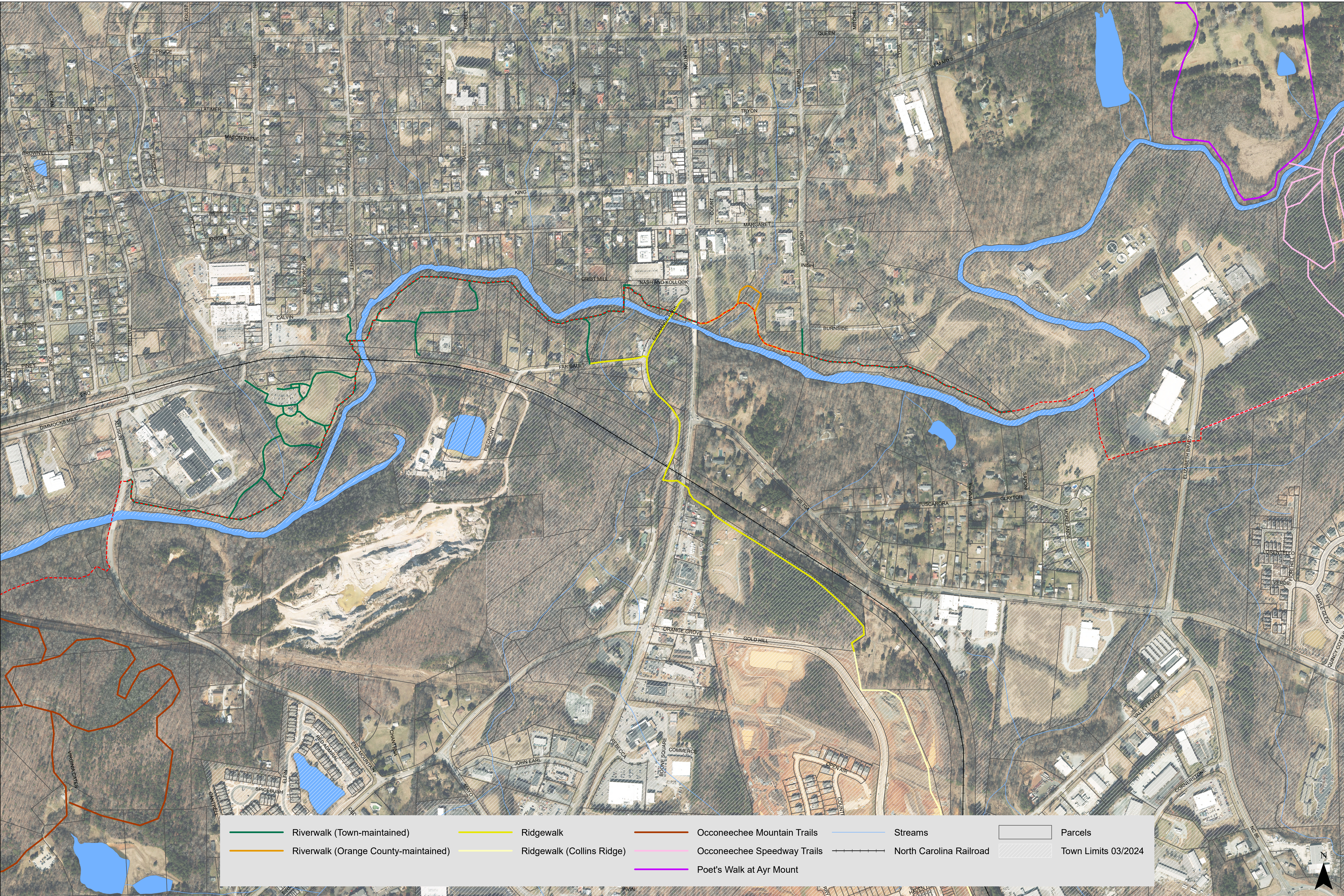
- [Riverwalk](#) page
- [Ridgewalk Greenway](#) project page.

- [Ridgewalk benefits analysis](#) — This analysis for the proposed greenway includes information on Riverwalk and what it has meant to the community.

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Caption: Former Mayor Tom Stevens welcomes the community to the Riverwalk greenway at the grand opening in 2014.



	Riverwalk (Town-maintained)		Ridgeway		Oconeechee Mountain Trails		Streams		Parcels
	Riverwalk (Orange County-maintained)		Ridgeway (Collins Ridge)		Oconeechee Speedway Trails		North Carolina Railroad		Town Limits 03/2024
					Poet's Walk at Ayr Mount				

Meeting Schedule: 2025

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Meetings start at 7 p.m. in the Board Meeting Room of the Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St., unless otherwise noted. Times, dates and locations are subject to change.



Regular meetings

Regular meetings typically occur the third Tuesday of the month.

Jan. 21	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
Feb. 18	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
Mar. 18	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
April 15	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
May 20	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
June 17	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
July	No Meeting
Aug. 19	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
Sept. 16	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
Oct. 21	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
Nov. 18	Town Hall Annex Board Meeting Room
Dec.	No Meeting