MINUTES
ECUSTA TRAIL ADVISORY BOARD 2.0

Thursday, November 20th, 2025 – 3:30 pm
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present:	Aaron Baker, Co-Chair, Council Member Mac Morrow, Co-Chair, Council Member Larry Chapman, Transylvania County Commissioner Dee Dee Perkins, Transylvania Development Authority John Ditillo, Friends of Ecusta Trail Sheila Carland, Transylvania Economic Alliance Doug Miller, Heart of Brevard Meredith Carli, At-Large Appointment Rebekah Robinson, Conserving Carolina Chris Burns, Ex-Officio
Absent:	Madeline Hanley, At-Large Appointment
Staff Present:	Maureen Copelof, Mayor, Ex-Officio Madalin Baker, Board Clerk Aaron Bland, Assistant Planning Director David Todd, Assistant City Manager
Guests:	Mark Tooley, Friends of the Ecusta Trail Lonnie Watkins, NCDOT Laura Rice, Friends of the Ecusta Trail Director

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A. Welcome and Call to Order

Committee Co-Chair Mac Morrow welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:31 PM.

B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Board Clerk Madalin Baker.

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as written by L. Chapman, seconded by D. Perkins, passed unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the August draft minutes by L. Chapman, seconded by D. Perkins, passed unanimously. Motion to approve the October draft minutes by S. Carland, seconded M. Carli, passed unanimously.

E. Public Comment
Melanie Purcell, Charlie Purcell, and Richard Purcell of Greenway Bike Rentals shared their plans with the Board to start an E-Bike rental service along the trail in the future.

Tad Fogel shared that Cycle NC will be on site at Brevard College for their Mountain Weekend event to be held in August of 2026.

F. New Business

1. Watermark Trail Signage Proposal – Vote
   Laura Rice presented signage updates (Attachment A). L. Chapman asked what is defined as a "short" leash, and L. Rice shared the rule is 6ft, but the language is simplified on the signage. D. Miller stressed the importance of preparing an MOU document with FOET, if the FOET phone number is to be posted on the trail signage as intended. D. Miller asked when the signs would be installed in Hendersonville, and C. Burns shared they will be installed in June. A motion to approve the signage proposal was made by D. Perkins, seconded by A. Baker, passed unanimously.

G. Unfinished Business
None.

H. Remarks / Future Agenda Considerations

W. Hooper shared all sub-contractors for the trail design are fully funded and notified to proceed. He shared the city remains concerned about the cost of constructing the trail and encouraged Board members to be vigilant in fundraising and investigating grants.

L. Chapman encouraged Brevard's new police chief to coordinate with the County sheriff regarding law enforcement procedures on the future Ecusta trail. He congratulated M. Copelof and A. Baker on their recent election day victories.

D. Miller urged the City once again to enter a formal MOU with Friends of the Ecusta Trail, saying it is a critical next step.

J. Ditillo shared some concerns regarding e-bike use on the trial, and encouraged board members to do further research and consider the impacts of e-bike use thoughtfully. He encouraged re-evaluating City ordinances to match the evolving landscape around e-bike use. M. Carli asked J. Ditillo to identify his precise reason for concern, asking if it was related to speed or power of the new e-bikes in question—she cautioned the Board against prohibiting or discouraging e-bike users excited about the trail. P. Ray noted that the trail easements the City has secured are specifically non-motorized land easements, which limits the nature of the bikes that can travel on the trail. C. Burns shared Hendersonville staff have created an app for trail users, in part to track

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e-bike-related complaints. He noted speed complaints seem to be more regarding manual bikes than e-bikes so far, but that it is too early in their data collection to tell yet. He noted Henderson county remains firm in prohibiting motorized vehicles on the trail. M. Carli noted that trail accessibility for the greatest number of users would be ideal, rather than prohibitions that lack nuance and ultimately might discourage trail use.

L. Rice shared her excitement about her new position and that she was happy to be at the meeting.

C. Burns shared the City of Hendersonville will vote on a $10M GO bond in March to be allocated towards streets and sidewalks.

A. Baker followed W. Hooper's concerns regarding construction funding, asking if there is any indication from Henderson County that they have cost concerns. L. Watkins shared NCDOT has estimates slightly higher for Transylvania County trail portion because of differences in the design/build process.

M. Morrow shared his time on the Board has been fun and thanked the Board. M. Copelof thanked Mac for his dedicated involvement with the Ecusta Trail project, noting his help with the land acquisition process was especially invaluable. She said the trail would not be happening without Mac's dedication, leadership, and vision.

I. Adjourn

The next meeting was set for January 28th, 2026. A. Baker motioned to adjourn, seconded by M. Morrow, passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

X _____
Aaron Baker, Chair

Minutes Approved-_____

X _____
Madalin Baker, Board Secretary

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