

# Trail study results OK'd

## Residents, officials raise concerns about location of some paths

By Joe Noga

[jnoga@sunnews.com](mailto:jnoga@sunnews.com)

**BROOKLYN** — Officials voted Monday to accept the results of a feasibility study aimed at connecting hiking and bicycling trails throughout the city, but assured residents that the move in no way meant the proposed trails would be constructed in their back yards.

Proponents of the Big Creek Green-

way Trail Alignment and Neighborhood Connector plan told council members that adopting the report generated by their year-long study was not binding in any way. Rather, it is an expression of their intent to see green trails formulated in the city.

Councilman Greg Frey commended Friends of Big Creek and other groups behind the study, but said there are still several questions that need to be an-

swered before the city moves forward with any sort of trail system.

"They've done marvelous work in trying to develop this study," he said. "But there's a lot of devil in the details on this. There will be a lot of issues before we get to making green trails in the city."

Monday's action basically involved council members putting their stamp of approval on the study, saying they would like to see trails in the city, and

See **TRAIL, A4**

## TRAIL

From A1

agreeing to move forward in that capacity.

The caveat to that approval is the understanding that prior to any applications for funding or any engineering or architectural work, council must give its consent.

But residents and some council members voiced their displeasure with some of the trails proposed in the plan. They said trails that run along a CEI easement behind residential neighborhoods such as Winter Lane are unacceptable to them.

Council President Rich Balbier, who lives on Winter Lane, said he has not met one resident who is in favor of the trails.

"I'm against any trail that goes behind any private residence. Period," he said.

Winter Lane resident Bill Hutkay also objected to parts of the proposal.

Hutkay said he has concerns about his family's safety and that every neighbor he speaks to opposes the trail behind their house.

"It would take away from our privacy," Hutkay said. "I, for one, would not like strangers walking behind my backyard while my grandchildren are outside playing."

Friends of Big Creek Chairman Bob Gardin said he was disappointed that some residents voiced their opposition to the study without looking at

the overall benefits of the plan. He urged council members not to lose sight of the bigger picture.

"I think some of the council members picked up on more of the negatives than anything else." He said. "They don't look at how it provides safe transportation alternatives."

Councilwoman Kathy Pucci said the study is comprehensive and it contains a number of alternate routes that would not interfere with private property.

*Brooklyn Sun*  
April 16, 2009