



Beaufort County conducted an in-person Public Meeting on Thursday, November 4, 2021 at the St. Helena Branch Public Library. This is the second meeting conducted for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Pathway, one of the 14 priority pathways presented during the first Pathway Project Virtual Public Meeting held October 19, 2020 through November 20, 2020. A virtual meeting page was also created in association with the Public Meeting.

The project is a proposed 8-ft multi-use pathway on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive from Jonathan Francis Senior Road to US 21 (Sea Island Parkway). This pathway is approximately 2 miles and will provide a safe route for residents and tourists in the area. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive is a SCDOT-owned and maintained roadway with a present 33' right of way from the centerline of roadway or total 66' width. It is anticipated the pathway would be located within the present right of way with minimal or no new right of way required.

The meeting creation was a collaboration of the County and J. Bragg Consulting, Inc. with an overview exhibit provided by Infrastructure Consulting & Engineering, PLLC and a typical section exhibit prepared by J. Bragg Consulting, Inc. Other meeting materials were also prepared by J. Bragg Consulting, Inc.

Meeting Summary:

Time Period:

- Public Meeting: November 4, 2021 at the Saint Helena Branch Library, 6355 Johnathan Francis Sr. Road, Saint Helena Island, SC
 - In-person meeting conducted by Beaufort County staff, County Administrator Eric Greenway and Capital Projects Coordinator Brittane Fields, and Sales Tax Program Manager, Jennifer Bragg, PE, and Councilman Glover. The meeting was a presentation of the proposed pathway followed by a question & answer session. 58 attendees signed-in.
- Virtual Meeting Page: October 22, 2021 through November 19, 2021 – Hosted on www.BeaufortCountyPenny.com
 - Meeting page hosted the exhibits shown at the Public Meeting and provided an online comment form.

Advertisements:

- Press Release for Public Meeting published on October 27, 2021.
- E-mail newsletter was sent out to 484 recipients on October 25, 2021.
- E-mail newsletter reminder was sent out to 492 recipients on November 2, 2021.
- Flyers were mailed to 75 property owners on or near the project.
- 6 Sales Tax “Yard” Signs were placed on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

Public Comments:

Comment forms were provided at the Public Meeting and it was also explained how citizens could comment by submitting the comment form the night of the meeting, mailing/e-mailing, hand-deliver, or commenting online. This is a summary of comments received:

Public Meeting: 67 comment responses were submitted as follows, with one citizen providing two comments, two citizens revised their comment, and one citizen submitted 3 copies of the same online form:





- 12 comments were submitted at the Community Meeting.
- 16 online comments were submitted (2 were duplicates).
- 3 comments were hand-delivered to Beaufort County.
- 19 comments were mailed to Beaufort County Capital Projects (11 of these were duplicates of previously emailed responses).
- 16 comments were emailed to Beaufort County Capital Projects (one person sent 2 comments).

Note: One form was submitted by email that did not include a name and contact information. It appears that it was the form used to photocopy and pass out to several other commenters.

Of those 67 responses, 53 were unique responses which includes a Letter of Support from Bethesda Christian Fellowship.

Comments with a valid address will receive a mailed response.

On the Comment Form, they were asked if they were “In Favor Of” the project by answering “Yes” or “No”, and if no, were they in favor of a reduced width pathway/sidewalk “Yes” or “No”. This is a summary of those who responded to the questions:

Questions	Yes	No
Are you in favor of the proposed 8’ shared-use pathway?	19	33
If no, are you in favor of a reduced width pathway/sidewalk?	22	12

Note:

- First Question: 1 person did not answer the first question.
- Second Question: 19 Yes responses are from citizens who are against the proposed 8’ pathway. 1 person checked “Yes” and “No” to the second question. 1 “Yes” response is from a citizen who wants the proposed 8’ pathway and is also in favor of the reduced width. 1 “Yes” response is from a citizen who checked neither “Yes” or “No” in the first question. 11 “No” responses are from citizens who do not want the pathway and also voted “No” to the first question. 8 “Yes” responses specified a 5’ reduced width pathway. 2 “Yes” responses noted that their response was dependent on certain criteria.

Recommendation:

Although it appears more comments are not in favor of the project, 19 of the 33 “No” on the first question were in favor of a reduced width pathway/sidewalk which yields 41 comments in favor and 26 not in favor. Since the majority of the comments are in favor of a reduced width pathway/sidewalk, it is recommended to proceed with a 5’ sidewalk including a 10’ boardwalk at the creek. The 10’ boardwalk allows ease for passing another pedestrian or bicyclist on the structure while with a 5’ sidewalk a user could step on the grassed shoulder if needed to allow someone to pass.





Comment Summary:

Note: Comments are copied as is with no edits.

There are too many problems with the described proposal for me to vote in favor of moving forward with this pathway. While I understand some of these items are not in the scope of the capital project, those items will be detrimental to the pathway. One such example is an SCDOT problem regarding the flooding on Dr. Martin Luther King Drive in the section between Penn Center and Hwy 21 will cause the pathway to be washed out and damaged. This flooding was exacerbated with Hurricane Matthew when SCDOT crews pushed the sand out of the road causing it to be piled up on the edges of the road. I personally spoke to a road crew member at that time and he indicated "eventually the rain would take care of the problem". It has been 5 years and the problem is not resolved. Another major concern is the ongoing upkeep of the pathway. I have witnessed the lack of upkeep and cleaning to the existing sidewalks on Hwy 21 on Saint Helena Island. The sidewalks are not kept up and have broken concrete, places where they are uneven, and trash everywhere (including broken bottles). Unless there is a dedicated plan for the maintenance and cleaning of the pathway, it too will fall into disrepair.

Today, I get trash thrown regularly into my yard. I cannot imagine what it will be like with the pathway out front. And lastly, the proposed pathway would take a considerable section of my front yard. I do not want to lose the front yard of my home.

I oppose the shared pathway at this time.

Respectfully,

1. The total width of the pathway/sidewalk should not exceed 5 feet.
2. The pathway/sidewalk should be installed on the east and west side of MLK drive on Penn Center campus to prevent injuries to tourists.
3. The width of the pathway/sidewalk should not exceed 5 feet to prevent flooding to the property's owner yard.
4. The iron and rope fences on Dr. MLK drive should not be relocated to install the 5 feet pathway/sidewalk (127 & 131 MLK, Penn Center Campus, Ebenezer Church)
5. A pushbutton pedestrian crosswalk traffic light should be installed before tourist and Penn Center volunteers gets killed trying to cross MLK drive.
6. The average sidewalk width near Foolish Frog, Wal-Mart, St. Helena Island Post office, Gullah Grub, the National Cemetery is 5 feet or less.
7. The sidewalk/pathway at 127 & 131 Dr. MLK Dr. should be installed between the live Oak Tree and the road. (6 feet of space is available.)

The safety of non-automotive transport will be greatly benefitted by this pathway. The overall visual will undoubtedly be pleasing to the community as a whole.

I am a native of St. Helena Island that has been here all of my life. I am one year short of being 90 years old. In my entire life, I have never heard of anyone being killed walking Dr. Martin Luther King Drive. The road needs improvements, but a pathway should not be put in to take people's land. Improve the entire roadway and put in a pathway that does not tear down trees and take away the front yards of Gullah/Geechee people that live and have businesses on Dr. Martin Luther King Drive. People need to simply slow down on the road.

Flooding Issues need to be taken care of. The design need to be approved by the people on St. Helena!!\

Thank you for the Info

The danger of people walking or riding a bike on Martin Luther King Dr., is very dangerous due to the narrow road & many trees so close to the road. The pathway/sidewalk will eliminate that danger, especially during special events. Definitely in favor.

3 total responses were received; 2 appear to be the same photocopy that includes the include numbers 1-3 and the third seems to be a revised copy in which number 4 has been added.

1. Total width of the pathway/sidewalk should not exceed 5 feet.
2. A push button pedestrian crosswalk traffic light should be installed.





- 3. Average sidewalks on St. Helena and Lands' Islands are 5 feet or less.
- 4. The width of the pathway/sidewalk should not exceed 5 feet to prevent flooding in the property owners yard.

- 1. The width should Not exceed 5 feet in front of 127-131 MLK property
- 2. For sidewalk/pathway at 127 & 131 MLK should be installed between the live oak and the road - 6 ft of space is available.
- 3. Install the sidewall down to the intersection pass the library. There should be enough funds left. There material cost should be less than \$450,000

We feel like the St, Helena Island Gullah/Geechee community should be given the funds to do what is best for their sustainability. They are the ones that knows what is best for the future of their community! Working together for a better plan that would benefit everyone will be a win win!

It would be practical to combine the DOT efforts with this project to handle the flooding that occurs along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive so that all issues are taken care of at the same time.

I believe this to be an important help in possibly saving lives and preparing us for future efforts without harming the cultural beauty of the Island and sustaining the natural beauty of the environment and the mighty oaks of our heritage.

I support this effort as long as guidelines are in place to protect personal and religious lands along the way and it does not negatively impact the Historic Penn Center, Incorporated.

Put a sidewalk on Sea Side Rd near Folly Rd

I own the home located at 231 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and I oppose the pathway/sidewalk construction. The traffic on MLK, Jr. Drive is congested and hazardous to pedestrian traffic. There has been numerous accidents on the corner of Martin Luther King and Club Bridge Road and several cars have ran into my fence on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. At high farming season, the truck traffic along this route can be hazardous as well as the street is very narrow. Furthermore, a pathway that extends past Jonathan Francis Rd. in the direction heading to Club Bridge Road would literally put your Pathway in quite a few homeowners front yard, including my own. I strongly object to this pathway/walkway.

I oppose the pathway proposed for Dr. Martin Luther King Dr.

I am in favor of the pathway/sidewalk. I would like to see the pathway all the way to the end of Landend Road. Weill be great for biker and those who walk.

How will this affect my Taxes will security be put in on this pathway update the pedestrian crosswalk Please look at the other plans that was showed at the meeting to make this work for the Poperty Owners in the area. I hope this isn't the street of a four lane highway to Lands end it is not safe to walk in the area of Penn Center with cell phone speed of cars travel this has come before the community 3xs already.

I am in favor of a Multi-Use Path on one (1) side of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. Traveling from US 21 (Sea Island Pkwy) to Jonathan Francis Senior Road, this Multi-Use Pathway being constructed on the Right Side (Bethesda Christian Fellowship Side) would be sufficient for the Activity Intended. It would also alleviate the removal of so many trees thus Creating and Sustaining at the same time. This Project cannot be done without strengthening the Dirt Walls in front of Bethesda Christian Fellowship and and Frizzell Hall as I see it.

Neither can you elevate the Propose Multi-Use Path to avoid flooding, which happens two or three times a year, without endangering surrounding properties.

Major Construction on Both side of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive is in reality Purposing more than is feasible. I believe that the opposite side should be Facially Enhanced.

This sidewalk will remove a safety hazard problem from walking on the highway.

I am concerned about the concept and design of the pathway, especially along Penn Center Historic Landmark - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. as well as the flooding. Thank you.





Emailed Comment Form: The pathway is again proposed by people who "do not" live in the immediate area. There should be more focus on the proposed improvements given by the St. Helena Community through the Gullah Geechee Nation. *= if the community is not directly involved in the reduced width pathway/sidewalk design, then "NO". The community should be involved in any design before it even being proposed for a vote.

From Direct Email I attended the MLK Sidewalk Pathway meeting on November 4, 2021 at the St. Helena Branch Library and wrote an initial response. In that response I wanted to see a different set of options before agreeing to this sidewalk pathway. However, since the meeting I have visited the area in length for the proposed sidewalk pathway and am "ABSOLUTELY AGAINST" the proposed sidewalk pathway. It would be impossible to lay a pathway without encroaching on and appropriating peoples private property, destroying acres of the natural environment, and creating additional non-resilient flood areas on St. Helena Island which is already facing the negative impact issues due to climate change. Also consider the negative travel /transportation impact that would be created during the construction of this pathway. As for the safety of those who wish to walk along MLK Drive it would be better to reduce the speed limit from 35 MPH to 30 MPH, and have local law enforcement monitor and enforce the new speed limit. Therefore, again I vote "NO" on both of the alternative pathways along MLK Drive presented at the meeting.

Respectfully

As a Native of the island, myself and many others strongly feel that the sidewalk/ path would take away from the integrity of our beautiful island. Thank you.

I would like to address the flooding along MLK Between The Little Bridge & Penn Center Safety Concerns with the cross walks Removal of Decayed Trees along MLK Driveway to Johnathan Francis Rd.

It would be nice if the Pathway could continue to Club Bridge Road

I would like to see some of the historical trees remove from over the highway coming through Pen Center. I would like to see something done about the water drainage in that area.

1. The total width of the pathway/sidewalk should not exceed 5 feet.
2. The pathway/sidewalk should be installed on the east and west side of MLK drive on Penn Center campus to prevent injuries to tourists.
3. The width of the pathway/sidewalk should not exceed 5 feet to prevent/reduce increased probability and higher risk for property damage by erosion to the properties of residential, commercial, and institutions in close proximity to the proposed pathway/sidewalk to include the campus at Penn Center.
4. The iron and rope fences on Dr. MLK drive should not be relocated to install the pathway/sidewalk 127 & 131 MLK, historic Penn Center and Ebenezer Church.
5. A pushbutton pedestrian crosswalk traffic light should be installed for the safety and to prevent harm or death to visitors, staff, tourists, and volunteers due to fast moving vehicles/drivers crossing MLK drive.
6. The speed limit should be reduced to 25 or 35 miles per hours (mph), posted, and enforced along MLK Drive.

Support the sidewalk but want it reduced to 5' instead. MLK is unsafe to walk.

Tourists come here and rave about THE NATURAL BEAUTY and HISTORY! They love the the antique they find in our RURAL LIVING! So why should we destroy it to "UPDATE", "MODERNIZE" or "SUBURBANIZE" OUR ISLAND! The money should be used to lift the roadway above sea level, WITHOUT STEALING PEOPLE'S PROPERTY by eminent domain! The money appointed for MLK should be used to SPECIFICALLY IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS OF THE ROAD FOR SUSTAINABILITY PURPOSES ONLY! I BELIEVE THAT THE RESIDENTS who live on, near, and use MLK to reach WALLACE, SCOTT, ORANGE GROVE, LANDS END, AND TOM B would love to have a part in these decisions!

If they can't walk along the same historically beautiful nature that they so praise, THEN LET THEM WALK ALONG HWY 21 (and ride their bikes) THATS WHAT THE BIKE PATH AND SIDEWALKS ARE THERE FOR! WE WANT TO KEEP OUR HISTORIC DISTRICT, HISTORIC!

PEOPLE WHO DON'T LIVE HERE SHOULD NOT MAKE DECISIONS FOR US, WHO DO LIVE HERE!





As owner of the properties at 127 and 133 Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, St Helena Island, S.C. 29920, I strongly recommend that the proposed sidewalks --not be installed ON our property.

--not be installed continuously IN FRONT of designated driveways and parking areas on our property, specifically on the right and left sides and front of the house and the building next to it.

--not exceed FIVE feet to prevent flooding of our land and correspond with the width of sidewalks installed near and in front of the Foolish Frog, Walmart, St Helena Island Post Office, Gullah Grub, and the National Cemetery.

--be installed on the east and west side of the Penn Center campus and that pedestrian cross walks and lights be installed on this property to facilitate and ensure tourist and visitor safety.

NOTE

If persons patronizing the Library and Health facility on Johnathan Francis Road must walk to Penn Center or on the highway which goes past Brick and Ebenezer Churches to Hunting Island Beach Road, I would suggest, for their safety, that a sidewalk be installed which begins on the grounds of the Library and Health Facility and from there runs onto the back of the old Nursery school or the house next to it which are located on Penn's Campus. I will attend future meetings on this project and with 5 to 7 days advance notice can be available to discuss this proposal and the implications of it on my property.

I am in favor of having the entire Dr. Martin Luther King Drive redesigned for safety and sustainability which can include a pedestrian pathway that has minimum negative environmental impacts. The St. Helena Cultural Protection Overlay District Committee discussed a meandering pathway through the Penn Center National Landmark Historic District almost two decades ago and what is presented in the images for this do not reflect that. The redesigning of Dr. Martin Luther King Drive on historic St. Helena Island must be resilient and sustainable which will require the pathway design to be coupled with an elevation of the current roadway which is inundated with water during king tides due to sea level rise. The St. Helena Island community should be engaged in a further dialogue with representatives from the SC Department of Transportation and Beaufort County in order to design the project in a manner that the community desires. This project should be done in conjunction with other resiliency efforts for St. Helena Island and the MIRR project that is taking place in order to insure effective use of the funding that has been allocated for St. Helena Island via the Penny Tax.

A better plan would be to run a nice nature path from St. Helena Elementary school to Ballpark road, ending up at the back of the library.

I am against the pathway from Sea Island Parkway up Martin Luther King on the left side to the library. It does not provide the safety that is needed along that area, which is: Two Speed bumps, one before Frissell on Penn's campus, and one after the library road Johnathan Francis, along with a crosswalk with blonkong lights in front of Penn's museum to the opposite side of the road. And last but not least, lowering the speed to 20 mph.

The pathway is needed, we only hope to minimize the Lost of trees. I would love to see the pathway extend to the library to allow access from the St. Helena Library through the woods intersecting into Penn Center's campus.

I think Martin Luther King Dr. needs the walking/bike path badly.

THIS IS AN EXCELLENT PROJECT

Hi,

I fully support the new path, but would like to make sure that no old trees are damaged or removed.

Also, just wondering why this path can't run all the way to the Fort Fremont Historical Preserve?





A total of 12 comments received included the following photocopied comments verbatim.

1. The total width of the pathway/sidewalk should not exceed 5 feet.
2. The pathway/sidewalk should be installed on the east and west side of MLK drive on Penn Center campus to prevent injuries to tourists.
3. The width of the pathway/sidewalk should not exceed 5 feet to prevent flooding to the property's owner yard.
4. The iron and rope fences on Dr. MLK drive should not be relocated to install the 5 feet pathway/sidewalk (127 & 131 MLK, Penn Center Campus, Ebenezer Church)
5. A pushbutton pedestrian crosswalk traffic light should be installed before tourist and Penn Center volunteers gets killed trying to cross MLK drive.
6. The average sidewalk width near Foolish Frog, Wal-Mart, St. Helena Island Post office, Gullah Grub, the National Cemetery is 5 feet or less.
7. The pedestrian traffic will increase therefore #5 must be implemented.



"Bethesda ~ The Place Of The Outpouring"



BETHESDA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

BENJAMIN FIELDS III
LEADER, DEACONS' MINISTRY

OLIVER BRADLEY, JR.
LEADER, TRUSTEES' MINISTRY

YORK L. GLOVER
CLERK

BARBARA HOLMES
SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

KENNETH C. DOE, PASTOR

2 NOVEMBER 2021

RE: DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DRIVE PATHWAY

TO OUR ST. HELENA ISLAND COMMUNITY AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC:

WHILE A FAMILY MATTER HAS ME OUT OF TOWN, I BELIEVE THAT THE MLK PATHWAY IS SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT TO WARRANT SHARING MY POSITION BY LETTER.

THIS ISLAND COMMUNITY'S SENSE OF INTER-PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY, AND MORE GENERALLY, OUR SENSE OF SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY ARE ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOOKING OUT FOR THE WELFARE OF ALL. WHETHER IN SHARING FOOD, CLOTHING, RIDES, TEMPORARY HOUSING, MORAL SUPPORT, ENCOURAGEMENT, OR EVEN CORRECTION, WE LOOK OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER.

ONE OF OUR WORST LAMENTS IS FOR SOMEONE TO SAY, "WE SHOULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING".

I SUPPORT THE PROPOSED MLK PATHWAY SIMPLY BECAUSE IT MINIMIZES THE LIKELIHOOD OF ANY OF US HAVING TO SAY, "WE SHOULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING", AFTER SOME UNFORTUNATE PEDESTRIAN/VEHICLE INCIDENT. DRIVING AND WALKING ON MLK WOULD BE MUCH SAFER WITH PROPER AND APPROPRIATE TRAVELWAYS AND SIGNAGE.

OF COURSE, THIS MUST BE DONE TASTEFULLY, WITH HISTORICAL SENSITIVITY, AND GENERALLY COMPLIMENTING OUR COMMUNITY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ATTENTION.

SINCERELY,

KENNETH C. DOE, OVERSEER

BETHESDA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP