



Beaufort County conducted an in-person Public Meeting on Thursday, June 27, 2024 in conjunction with a Virtual Public Meeting from June 10, 2024, through July 12, 2024, for the proposed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Sidewalk project. This was the third public meeting held for the project.

The project is a proposed 5-ft sidewalk on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive from US 21 (Sea Island Parkway) to Jonathan Francis Senior Road with a 10-ft boardwalk over the creek. This sidewalk is approximately 1 mile long and will connect to the existing sidewalks, providing improved access between the community's resources such as the library, medical center, churches, Penn Center, and historical district on US 21. An enhanced crosswalk is proposed for the existing crosswalk at the Penn Center.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive is a SCDOT-owned and maintained roadway with a dedicated present right of way. It is anticipated the sidewalk would be located within the present right of way where possible, but new right of way is required for drainage improvements or to save trees.

Meeting Summary:

Time Period:

- Public Meeting: June 27, 2024, from 5-7 pm at the St. Helena Branch Public Library, 6355 Jonathan Francis Senior Rd, St Helena Island, SC 29920 – An informal, drop-in format meeting hosted by Beaufort County Engineering along with representatives from J. Bragg Consulting, Inc. and Infrastructure Consulting and Engineering, PLLC. Citizens were provided an opportunity to review the exhibits and have a one-on-one question/answer session with project representatives. There were 24 attendees.
- Virtual Public Meeting: June 10, 2024, through July 12, 2024 – 32-day virtual meeting hosted on www.BeaufortCountyPenny.com

Advertisements:

- E-mail Newsletters were sent to 647 recipients on June 10, 2024; 651 recipients on June 26, 2024
- Councilman Glover's Community Newsletter distributed on June 10, 2024
- Press Release for public meeting published on June 12, 2024
- 8 "Yard" Signs were placed on June 10, 2024

Public Comments:

29 total comments were received by submitting the comment form during the public meeting or by an online comment form, mail, and e-mail. Comments with a valid mailing address will receive a mailed response. The following is a summary of comments received:

- 26 comments were submitted at the Public Meeting.
- 3 online comments were submitted.

On the Comment Form, they were asked if they were "In Favor Of" the project by answering "Yes" or "No", if they lived near the proposed project "Yes" or "No", and if they would utilize the proposed 5' sidewalk "Yes or "No." This is a summary of those who responded to the questions:





Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Drive Sidewalk		
Questions	Yes	No
Do you live near the proposed project?	17	11
Would you utilize the proposed project?	23	5
Are you in favor of the proposed 10' pathway?	21	6

Notes:

- One person wrote in “?” for the question “Do you live near the proposed project?”
- One person wrote in “church” for the question “Do you live near the proposed project?”
- A remaining concern was for the trees that would be removed.

Stakeholder Coordination:

Following the public meeting, the County also performed additional stakeholder coordination with the Penn Center, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and Brick Baptist Church in association with the National Park Service.

Recommendation:

Based on the comments received from the meeting and previous meetings, it is recommended that the County proceed with the 5-ft sidewalk on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive from US 21 (Sea Island Parkway) to Jonathan Francis Senior Road with a 10-ft boardwalk over the creek.

Comment Summary:

Note: Comments are copied as is with no edits.

Thank you for the information -- please keep the process up - we need to keep interested

We need less cement, not more. The full scope of tree removal isn't covered in the renderings.

11' Easement!

See Attachment "Memo to Beaufort County"

Reference: SCOOT Reference Manual

Easements: 13 feet from the edge of the road Eminent Domain: We don't want your money. Objectives and Background:

1. The east side of MLK Drive is a residential, business and historic area
2. Custom Design the sidewalk with input/ approval from the community
 - A. Work around large trees
 - B. Work around Existing fences
 - C. Work around all fixtures. Except mail boxes
 - D. Work around all yard and street signs
 - E. Install side walk one {1} foot from the edge of the road. Very Possible
 - F. Drainage Plan Approval: Avoid adding to the flooding in yards.
 - G. Sidewalk material specifications: Concrete or Asphalt.
3. Tree Replacement/ Landscape Plan Approval
4. CANCEL PROJECT IF THE COUNTY IS NOT WILLING TO INSTALL A CUSTOM DESIGN SIDEWALK ON THE EAST SIDE OF MLK DRIVE





Thank you,
St. Helena Island Community

I think it's a good idea!

As Beaufort teeters on losing all of its small town charm, I don't believe in the removal of any more of our trees.

- * This project will increase safety
- * It will provide more opportunities for walking tours bringing more money to the local economy

1. I agree with the proposal because it is also good for safety and allow people to exercise without getting struck by cars.
2. It is also a National Landmark, Historic District (Penn Center)
3. It is good for tourism

Need light with arrow at intersection 21 & Martin Luther King Dr

I'm fairly ambivalent but it probably will add safety during Gullah Festivals, etc.

I think it is pass do

I believe that the project construction on one side of MLK will affect the trees on the opposite side. Both sides should be addressed

Excellent Job, keep up the good work.

I do not feel that 5' width is not enough space for pedestrians & bikers to use without incidents.
I am impressed by the county's ongoing process to improve our communities.

After listening to the reports and seeing the proposed plans, I now see that some of our valueable trees will be saved.

A mostly useless and arbitraty use of tax money. This is following a concerning trend of paving over areas that already have great beauth and public access

Pastor of Brick Baptist. I understand what is being proposed. A meeting with Brick/Park Services & your representative will be scheduled.

Trees especially old live oak trees are a beloved part of the natural beauty of St. Helena Island. But trees should not take precendence over the safety of SHI residents who must walk along MLK for various reasons. I have personally observed pedestrians dodging cars, and held my breath when driving down MLK in the dark for fear of accidentally hitting a walking person with dark clothing on. The small number of trees that will be removed is outweighed by the lives that will be saved. Safety first.

The plan looks excellent and will be a valuable addition.

