

LOCAL

Breaking ground for the future Gateway

EMILY WEAVER

eweaver@kingsmountainherald.com

On a cold and windy afternoon Thursday, over 60 people gathered to loosen the soil for the future Gateway Trailhead in Kings Mountain at the corner of Quarry Road and Battleground Avenue.

Several years of dreaming, planning and hard work led to the climactic groundbreaking at 4 p.m. Many dignitaries and officials were on site to talk about the future trail and what it will mean to the community.

President of Gateway Trails, Inc., David Ozmore said, "This trail is the passion and baby of Shirley Brutko."

Vice president of the trails, Brutko added that she was so thrilled everyone was there to witness this important event in trail history. "Do you see that mountain in the background?" she asked the crowd, pointing to a distant peak behind them. "This trail will one day lead there."

"I've been involved in this because this is a good project,"

said Mountain Region Trails Specialist, for the state of NC, Dwayne Stutzman. "This is economic development at its basic form."

Cleveland County Commission Chairwoman Mary Accor read a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson. "Few people know how to take a walk. The qualifications are endurance, plain clothes, old shoes, an eye for nature, good humor, vast curiosity, good speech, good silence and nothing too much," she read. Accor added that it's time we learn how to take a walk.

"This trail will promote walking, biking and even horseback riding. This is a gem," she said. "Kings Mountain Gateway Trail will succeed."

She thanked Brutko for her vision and the vision of others that have led to this point. But in addition to the dream, the trails needed much more to succeed - it needed the generosity of landowners. "Chemettal Foote is donating an equivalent of 27 acres," Ozmore said.

See Gateway, Page 4



EMILY WEAVER/HERALD

Members of Gateway Trails Inc. broke ground Thursday afternoon at the future trailhead in KM. Left to right, Shirley Brutko, David Ozmore, Don Crawford, Ashley Harris, Larry Hamrick Jr., Dennis Patterson, Jerry Ledford, Michael Wells, Rosemary Suess, Bill McCarter, Paul Carson, Margot Plonk, Larry Hyde, Mary Wade Smith, Dwayne Stutzman, Houston Corn.

Plans for Gateway Trail unveiled

EMILY WEAVER

eweaver@kingsmountainherald.com

After the groundbreaking ceremony for the future Gateway trailhead near downtown Kings Mountain, many community members and trail planners met at 5 p.m. in the Joy Performance Center for the trail's master unveiling.

Landscape planning architects Mike Macnabb, Jon Wood and Karen Weston-Chien from Haden-Stanziale displayed a conceptual diagram of the future trailhead and map of the trail at the front of the theatre. About 30 parking spaces will be available at the trailhead, including the option of an additional 14 spaces, if expansion is needed. The site will also include rest rooms and an office building, a map kiosk, bike rack, a covered shelter with picnic tables, access to a possibility of two trails, and another picnic area underneath the existing pine trees on the Martin Marietta property.

In addition to the main trail access, the site will also have a one-mile loop with inclines, called a "fitness trail" for those

who want to exercise, but stay close.

Weston-Chien explained the Gateway Trail is an "opportunity to be the gateway to three park jewels that are in close proximity to the city of Kings Mountain." Those parks are the Kings Mountain State Park, KM National Military Park and Crowders Mountain State Park.

"The proximity to downtown really makes this trail interesting because there will be the regional draw that then can be connected to your downtown," she said. "That connection is important and it's not very far either."

Wood said that there are two different types of trail: a greenway trail and a nature trail, which is narrower (about four-six feet wide) than the greenway. "A standard greenway trail is about 10 feet wide and has about a two-foot shoulder on each side," he said, showing an example of the Catawba Creek Greenway Trail in Gastonia. He added that they would probably combine both trail types (greenway and nature) into the Gateway.

The first phase of the trail, which is about five miles, follows

the perimeter of the Chemettal Foote property, he said. "It crosses over the existing bridge (over I-85) that connects the two pieces of Chemettal Foote property and continues to hug along their property line until we get out to Galilee Church Road." The trail would then continue on down towards City Lake and Davidson Lake with extra side loop trails around the lakes. The last phase will connect to Boulders Access at Crowders Mountain State Park, and then to the parks in SC.

Sitting areas are planned at half-mile intervals along the trail. In different areas, off the beaten path, there may also be mountain biking trails. Another trailhead may be incorporated at the abandoned rest area, Wood said. If possible, they may try to incorporate a boardwalk along Davidson Lake.

For trail aesthetics, Wood showed pictures and options of bridges, boardwalks, overlooks, seating and landscaping to the crowd. For education, the trail may incorporate interpretive programs or signage for history, native wildlife and plants; and mining and geology.

After they finalize the master

plan, the future of the Gateway Trail will be taken to the city next month and county in January for approval. Wood said that they plan to file for their PARTF Trust Fund Grant, which is about a \$500,000 matching grant, by January 31. "We'll probably start

the first trail segment in 2009," he added. The trail will be open from sunrise to sunset. The City of Kings Mountain has agreed to take partial ownership of it, providing security, and Cleveland County has agreed to take partial ownership, providing liability.

Perfect Smiles for
your Perfect Day

*You are
Invited...*

1 Day Special Offer Only

\$500 OFF for New
Invisalign® Patients

December 5th, 8 am - Noon

525 S. New Hope Road, Gastonia

Hannon•Orthodontics

Choose Invisalign®, the nearly invisible way to straighten your teeth.

Enjoy the Smiles of your Dreams!

Call today **704.865.8521**

Limited to the First 15 Appointments