

## St. Louis Post-Dispatch

### Forum gives residents view of proposal for Dardenne Greenway

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Janet Kolb, a frequent hiker and biker, says she likes recreational trails but wants to see specific plans before fully backing a greenway along Dardenne Creek.

Kolb was among a few residents who attended a forum Tuesday sponsored by the Great Rivers Greenway District to publicize plans for the project, called the Dardenne Greenway.

She said her family owns creekside property near St. Charles Community College, where the district held the forum.

"I favor trails," said Kolb, president of Dave Kolb Grading Inc. "I'm a trail-type person. I try to walk every day."

The district and its consultant, SWT Design of St. Louis, hope to have the greenway's conceptual plan done this year. A construction timetable is yet to be set.

In general, the district will ask affected property owners for easements. Nancy Ulman, the district's manager for the project, said buying the easements is an option.

Hunter Beckham, of SWT Design, said the easements will vary in width. The greenway's texture will vary from unpaved nature trail, to multiuse paved trail, to city streets and even water. Users could use canoes to follow the creek from St. Peters' Lakeside 370 Park to the creek's mouth at the Mississippi River.

For guidance, district officials will study comments people make at public forums this month.

The district sponsored three similar forums last fall and plans to hold more this fall.

Running nearly the entire length of Dardenne Creek, the 36-mile trail is to become part of what eventually will be a regional network of recreational paths for cyclists, runners and walkers. The Dardenne Greenway and many other recreational trails being planned will eventually interconnect in what the district calls the River Ring in the St. Louis region.

So far, the only completed part of the Dardenne Greenway is within the BaratHaven development in Dardenne Prairie.

Voters established the Greenway District in 2000 by passing a special sales tax in St. Louis, St. Louis County and St. Charles County. The tax produces about \$10 million annually.

A similar tenth-of-a-cent sales tax supports trail projects the Metro East Park and Recreation District is completing in Madison and St. Clair counties. Eventually, the districts' trails on both sides of the Mississippi will complete the 600-mile River Ring.

Kolb said she supports the district's goal.

"I think people need to get out and walk and bike and hike away from traffic," she said.

Forums scheduled on Dardenne greenway

Great Rivers Greenway District officials plan two additional forums in St. Charles County to publicize plans for the Dardenne Greenway.

The first is scheduled for today at the New Melle Community Club, 4700 Highway Z, in New Melle. The second is set for Tuesday at the University of Missouri Extension Service, 260 Brown Road, in St. Peters. Both forums begin at 4 p.m.