



Committee Meeting ~ NIRPC April 28, 2016 Minutes

Members & Guests – Bob Huffman, Jeff Sheridan, Will Farrellbegg, Craig Hendrix, Craig Zandstra, Julie Mandon, Zully Alvarado, Jill Murr, Dalia Zygas, Joe Rurode, Mark Schreiber, Walter Lenckos, Don Parker, Steve Antonetti, Mark Gordish, Robert Boklund

Staff – Mitch Barloga, Meredith Stilwell

Mitch Barloga called the meeting to order.

Ped

A. South Shore Trails Update

Don Parker reported they are currently planning for bike to work month which is observed in May nationally and June in Chicago.

B. G & B Map – 2016 Edition Update

Active Transportation Alliance has released a draft copy of the map update which features new graphics and colors. A public open house for review and comments on the map will be held on May 4th at NIRPC. The final version will most likely be ready for print at the end of May, with an additional printing in July.

Pedal

A. Feature Presentation: More Miles!! 2016 Trails Update

There are currently 145 miles of paved trails in northwest Indiana with all or part of 9 trail corridors operational. Approximately 30 miles of trails are funded for imminent development with approximately 9 miles slated for construction and 8.3 miles of re-paved trail this year. Updates include:

- **C&O Greenway:** Phase II Merrillville, Broadway to Mississippi (1.2 miles) – The C&O Greenway is proposed to run from Oak Ridge Prairie in Griffith to the Town of Winfield and will be about 12 miles. 1.5 miles is currently complete in Merrillville. Phase II will run from Broadway, under I-65 and eventually to Mississippi Street. Trailheads will be developed and a new sidewalk constructed along Mississippi Street. A hook will be installed to connect with a park in the Forest Hills subdivision.
- **Marquette Greenway: Hammond, 142nd to 150th St.** – This stretch of the trail is currently being constructed. A funded project will continue east along the Toll Road to the South Shore train station at Indianapolis Boulevard. Hammond will pick it up and continue to where the old IHV Railroad was.
- **Gary Green Link Phase II/Marquette Greenway: Gary, Polk St. to Broadway (1 mile)** – There is currently a ½ to ¾ mile segment of the Green Link in the downtown part of the City. Phase II will be a side path/shared route facility running from Polk to Fourth Ave and then to Broadway. The remainder of the trail will run underneath the Toll Road at Broadway and continue east to Miller Woods.
- **Oak Savannah Trail: Oak Ridge Prairie, Griffith Parking lot to Colfax (1.5 miles)** – The Oak Savannah Trail feeds into Griffith east from Hobart. The Oak Savannah Trail Extension will run down an old maintenance road, west down the Reeder Road Corridor and pick up at the C&O at Colfax.
- **Dunes Kankakee Trail: Porter US 12 to US 20 (1.5 miles)** – The finished section runs from the State Park entrance to the bridge over the Dunes Park South Shore Station. There will be roughly a two mile connection to the Visitors' Center and from the Dunes Park station.

- **Erie-Lackawanna Trailhead + Sidepath:** Crown Point, 93rd & Chase St. (1.5 miles, 10' sidepath) –A new roundabout will be built at the 93rd and Chase St. intersection with a new trailhead parking lot installation that will connect to a new trailhead location and be a gateway feature for the City. A 10' sidepath installation will run from the trail down 93rd to Main Street and then continue to Madison St.
- **Westchester-Liberty Trail Phase II:** Chester to 5th Street (3/4 mile) – Phase II runs close to Chesterton High School and will allow for safe biking and walking to school. Phase III will continue the trail to SR 49 and eventually to the Dunes Kankakee Trail.
- **Valparaiso Pathways Network:** Sidepaths are being installed along Evans, Burlington Beach & Vale Park Ave. (2 miles) –
- **Little Calumet Levee Trail Paving:** (approx 8.3 miles) – Part of the tax money collected in Lake County for Little Calumet River Levee maintenance is going to pave the trail.
 - Munster: Portions currently in place are mostly limestone. There will be a new segment paved from Manor to Calumet Avenue and also a portion north of the River and south of the river to Cline Avenue. There will also be putting in a five car trailhead parking lot.
 - Gary: Beginning in July the portion of the trail from Chase Street to MLK Drive which is currently limestone will be paved. It will be a 10' wide asphalt trail on top of the levee.
 - Mitch relayed his concept for making the Little Calumet Levee Trail a contiguous trail from Munster to Three Rivers Park in Lake Station which he presented to the Little Calumet River Basin Commission Executive Director, Dan Repay. This concept is part of a larger initiative known as the Calumet Greenbelt. The proposed trail would continue at grade across Cline Avenue eventually connecting to Three Rivers County Park.

B. Town of Lowell Trail Request

There is currently INDOT money on the table for projects outside of the urbanized area. The Town of Lowell is looking to build a trail that would be part of the Southlake Corridor. Mitch asked as a courtesy, that the proposal be brought before the 3PC for comments or suggestions which can be forwarded to INDOT. Craig Hendrix presented the Freedom Trail proposal which connects Freedom Park to Buckley Homestead. There would be several spurs that connect schools, the library, post-office and Town Hall to the trail. The trail would be completed in phases and would be a 10' wide multi-use trail with several challenging areas which might require boardwalks. A cost estimate was provided to the group. Connections to regional trails have not yet been identified, but is something the Town would eventually like to figure out. Mitch relayed an idea involving rails with trails using the CSX line. Mitch said it is a wonderful project for the Town and has given it his blessing. Don Parker stated this is a good plan which connects two major destinations and also connects to downtown. Mitch will forward comments to INDOT expressing the 3PC's solid support for the Plan.

C. Unified Trail Wayfinding Guide – Update

NIRPC is in the process of putting together a unified wayfinding guide. Mitch is working with several individuals from municipalities, park directors, engineers, etc. who have come together to help out with the effort. Alta Planning is putting the Guide together and is unique in that it is aimed to establish unified signage on all NIRPC funded trails throughout NWI going forward. The Erie-Lackawanna and Prairie Duneland Trails will be first for sign installations. The guide will hopefully be out within a month.

Paddle

NWI Paddling Association – Update

Zully Alvarado announced that the dedication of the Kankakee River as a National Water Trail will most likely be June 4th. The website is www.kankakeeriverwatertrail.org. NIPSCO granted \$5,000 to help hire a contractor for clean-up of the Little Calumet Wetlands. Shirley Heinz, Save the Dunes and NPS received \$210k grant to develop two paddling, ADA public access sites on the Little Cal East Branch. ADA compliant launches are also to be installed in Hobart and Gary, if the remainder of the funding can be obtained. The Deep River ADA Kayak launch will be installed in May and a ribbon cutting on June 18. A schedule of upcoming paddling events was provided. Team River Runner held six winter pool sessions and are now moving forward with outdoor events. The Wilderness Inquiry Canoemobile visit will be held during the summer at Kankakee River, Trail Creek, Marquette Park, Lake George and Wolf Lake.

Grab Bag

Project Updates

Construction drawings are ready for the Oak Savannah-Erie Lackawanna connection. The project will hopefully go out for bid in June with construction beginning in late summer. The purchase order from INDOT has been received and First Group Engineering is helping with acquisition on the Veteran's Memorial Trail from Broadway to Iowa Street.

A meeting was held with engineers on different design elements and amenities on the Chessie. There are 13 properties, but only five owners so acquisition should be fairly smooth. Construction will be late 2017 or early 2018.

Hobart is still waiting for NOAA's coastal grant agreement for installation of the ADA kayak launch on Lake George.

Porter County should close on 15 acres to the west of Brincka Cross Gardens which will enable the installation of a parking lot. 137 acres was closed on over the winter. Hopefully there will be a way to connect the two via Old Chicago Road eventually.

The Marquette Greenway bike trail in Hammond is under construction. The Calumet Avenue bike bridge crossing is under contract and is in the design and right-of-way phase and is anticipated for letting in 2018. The State Line connection between Chicago and Hammond is moving forward.

General Announcements (upcoming rides, events, etc.) –

The LaPorte night bike ride is July 22nd and is \$20.00.

The Next Meeting is Thursday, May 26, 2016

The meeting adjourned at 2:45.