



Oakland County Trails Advisory Council
Oakland County Parks and Recreation Administration Office
2800 Watkins Lake Road, Waterford, Michigan 48328

Minutes

August 24, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Brian Marzolf, Vice-Chair, at 9:00 a.m. in the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission Room.

PRESENT:

Brian Marzolf	Auburn Hills Parks and Recreation/ Clinton River Trail
Jenny Frederick	Highland Township Planning
Kristen Bennett	Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Cory Johnston	MI source
Ann Barnette	Milford DDA
Andrew Mutch	City of Novi
Stephanie Loria	Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission
Kristen Wiltfang	Oakland County Planning & Economic Development
Juliane Bagley	Polly Ann Trail
Sue Malone	Road Commission for Oakland County
Chris Benedict	Springfield Township
Jason Iacoangeli	White Lake Planning

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of minutes from May 25, 2011 was moved by Kristen Wiltfang and supported by Kristen Bennett. The motion passed on voice vote.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions were added.

TRAIL NETWORK UPDATE

Paint Creek Trail – (Kristen Myers)

Stephanie read an update sent from Kristen Myers: The Paint Creek Trail is having their 6th Annual Labor Day Virtual Bridge Walk on Monday, September 5, 2011. They are expecting 250 people. It is a free event with a suggested donation of \$5 per family to kick off the bridge replacement fundraiser. They are trying to raise \$75,000 of \$320,000 needed to replace one of the railroad bridges on the trail in Rochester.

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Polly Ann Trail – (Juliane Bagley)

Juliane reported that they are having their Rural Pearl of a Ride on Saturday, September 24; this is the rescheduled date from July 23, 2011.

They have installed new LED pedestrian crossing signals for the trail in Oxford Township. Due to numerous inquiries from the public they have installed signage at the crossing to let pedestrians know it is still their responsibility to check for traffic, and that traffic does not have to stop at the trail intersection, but is required to yield to crossing pedestrians. They have also put notifications of this on their website.

They started repairs to two areas of trail washout on Monday, August 22. The areas are between Drahner and Indianwood Roads and between Joslyn and Clarkston Roads. They hope to have repairs completed in the next 2 weeks.

They are in the process of drafting their own Other Power Driven Mobility Device (OPDMD) policy; they expect to have that finished by their September 19th meeting.

They have a new website www.pollyanntrailway.org, and merchandise available which include new shirts and hats.

Their biggest complaint of the season is the dog and horse waste on the trails. Brian asked if there is a policy in place regarding waste on the trails; Juliane stated that the policy states that owners clean up after their pets. This seems appropriate for dog owners, but horse owners are less likely to do so, as they would have to dismount their horse to clean up the waste.

Juliane also indicated she plans on volunteering more with the Friends Group for the Lapeer County Polly Ann Trail. They are in need of assistance, as they are trying to install a new trailhead at Imlay City.

Clinton River Trail – (Brian Marzolf)

There is a very active Friends Group for the Clinton River Trail. Their “Look and Feel” project has utilized the services of a design team to help set guidelines for trail wayfinding and amenities – creating a consistent “look and feel” throughout the 16 mile trail. The project is nearing completion and they have compiled a ton of information. There is detailed information regarding the signs, trash receptacles, and kiosks. They will be putting together some costs estimates and hope to put a grant together soon to fund those improvements. Brian stated that Kristen Wiltfang has been a huge help. For more information please visit <http://www.clintonrivertrail.org/PDFs/LookFeel%20Guidelines%20Report.pdf>. They hope to share information regarding their active Friends Group and the benefits/outcomes of their Look and Feel Project at the next OTAC meeting on October 26th, 2011.

The CRT Friends Group will hold their 7th annual Fall Classic Ride and Walk on September 17th. The event begins and ends at Riverside Park in Auburn Hills; lunch will be served. There are several biking route/distance options available and a 5K walk. You can register online at http://www.clintonrivertrail.org/PDFs/fall-flyer-2011_fin1.pdf.

A new vault restroom is now present along the trail at Leach Road. The restroom, valued at about \$20,000, was paid for by a Rochester Hills company. It is a very nice amenity addition to the trail for year-round use.

There is still a trail detour in Rochester Hills at M-59, due to bridge work.

The grand opening ceremony of the bridge over Telegraph Road in Pontiac was very nice. The completed bridge looks great. There was an issue with trail users not stopping before crossing Pontiac Drive on the west side of the bridge. Kristen Wiltfang indicated that the City of Pontiac is in the process of installing stop signs for trail users at the intersection of Pontiac Drive and the Clinton River Trail.

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West Bloomfield Trail – (Dave Burley)

Stephanie read an update provided from Dave Burley: Survey, topographic and soil boring work is complete on the extension to Haggerty Road. This approximate 2.5-mile trail extension will take it to the end of the township. Design phase will begin soon. The trail extension was graded by the salvage company and is walkable although rough. Security gates have been installed. This section of the trail has some of the most beautiful scenery in all of West Bloomfield. Design is expected to be completed before winter with bidding planned for January to February.

Kristen Wiltfang stated that she visited Marshbank Park in West Bloomfield and they have made significant improvements including boardwalks, a kayak launch, and soon to-be-completed fishing pier. They also have two new picnic pavilions and a community room building, and are trying to incorporate geothermal and solar power into those structures.

Headwaters Trail Inc. – (Susan Julian)

Report not available from Susan Julian

I-275 Metro Trail – (Julie Edwards)

Report not available from Julie Edwards

Woodward Corridor Trail – (Todd Scott)

Kristen stated that the Woodward Avenue Action Association (WA3) was awarded a grant for developing a Complete Streets Plan for the entire Woodward Corridor.

Lakes Community Trail – Deanna Magee)

Report not available from Deanna Magee

Huron Valley Trail – (Chris Doozan)

Report not available from Chris Doozan

OTHER COMMUNITY TRAIL AND PATHWAY UPDATES:

Highland Township – (Jenny Frederick)

Highland Township is working on their non-motorized pathway plan. Their draft plan will be reviewed by their Planning Commission, then go through open review, and then submitted to the Township Board for approval. Jenny is to send Kristen Wiltfang a copy of the mapped non-motorized routes.

Independence Township – (Cory Johnston)

Independence Township is collaborating with Oakland County Parks to develop a safety path along Sashabaw Road to connect Independence Oaks-Main Park to Independence Oaks-North Park. The township has to decide between funding this safety path project, or providing matching funds for MDOT's repaving project on Dixie Highway, from Telegraph to I-75. Unfortunately the township doesn't

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have money to fund both of those projects. Cory thought, based on his attendance at the last Township Board meeting, that the township was leaning towards funding the Sashabaw Road pathways project.

Stephanie Loria indicated she has been meeting with township representatives this year regarding this project. OCPD is still uncertain of the location, width and surface material of the pathways to be developed within the county parks, connecting with the new township sidepath.

City of Novi – (Andrew Mutch)

Novi is starting to implement their Non-motorized Master Plan that was adopted this past spring; they are currently installing signage to show people how to get through various sub-divisions and parks to get across the city, instead of using the main roads.

The city has also just approved construction for a new pathway along 9 Mile Road, between Haggerty and Middlebrook Roads, which will create connection to the I-275 trail. Originally, Transportation Enhancement funds were secured for this project. However, the city ran into some problems with the residents along that pathway; they disagreed with the 10ft. wide path that was required. So instead the city dropped the TE funding and installed the 6ft. wide pathway, which was more along the lines of some of the other paths in the area. A 6-foot wide pathway was not ideal, but they are able to get the pathway in and set up that connection. That should be going out to bid this fall or maybe in the spring depending on weather.

Oakland County Parks and Recreation – (Stephanie Loria)

Stephanie stated that she has an Eagle Scout that is going to build map boxes that will hold Oak Routes Trail Maps. The map boxes will be installed this fall at 12 of the Oakland County Parks. She got the idea from Kristen Myers who had an Eagle Scout construct map boxes to hold Paint Creek Trail maps. Oakland County Parks does not currently have Oak Routes map boxes in their parks system, and it's difficult to find commercially-manufactured boxes that will accommodate the size of those maps.

PRESENTATION: Installation of “Sharrows” on Milford Roads – Ann Barnette, Executive Director, Milford DDA

Ann has been the DDA Director in Milford for 17 years; she has a background in city planning urban design.

In 2004, the city of San Francisco, California began experimenting with the shared lane markings called 'Sharrows', meaning 'share the road' and developed a symbol consisting of a bicycle symbol with two chevron markings above the bicycle. They studied the impact of two different symbols on the road - the pavement marking with the image of a bicycle with two chevron arrows in front was found to be the most effective, keeping motorists away from bicyclists, and bicyclists away from parked cars on the side of the road. Placement of these shared pavement markings requires some public education and installation of vertical signage. Many other cities have them, including some in Michigan: Flint, Traverse City, and South Haven.

Sharrows have improved the positioning of bicyclists and motorists on streets without bike lanes, reducing the incidences of aggressive motorist behavior, wrong-way bicycling, and 'dooring' of bicyclists near parked cars. It also prevents bicycling on sidewalks. Shared lane markings are supported by AASHTO and is now included in the most recent version (2009) of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

The MUTCD indicates that if shared lane markings are used on a street with parallel parking, the centers of the markings should be placed at least 11 feet from the face of the curb, or from the edge of

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the pavement where there is no curb. If the shared-use markings are placed on a street without on-street parking [that has an outside travel lane that is less than 14 feet wide], the centers of the markings should be at least 4 feet from the face of the curb, or from the edge of the pavement where there is no curb. The MUTCD also indicates these markings should only be placed on roads with speed limits of 35 mph or less.

Ann showed a map of Milford and the surrounding parks and recreation areas. Milford sits between Highland State Recreation Park, Kensington Park, and Proud Lake Recreation Area. There is an incredible greenbelt all the way around Milford. The Milford DDA board recognized the economic and quality of life values brought by outdoor activity and connectivity to the surrounding green spaces; this was an emphasis in their redevelopment plan. The DDA wants the Village of Milford to become a trailhead for the Milford Trail, and establish a physical link between the path and downtown.

Realizing they were a missing link in the developing regional trail system, the Milford DDA initiated the Milford Trail Committee, which raised \$150,000 in less than six months for construction and future maintenance of the Milford Trail. They also helped obtain a DNR grant to fund the pathway in the Village of Milford to the pathway in Milford Township.

Ann described the many reasons for choosing to install sharrows instead of bike lanes or a connecting pathway at this time.

Ann stated that they want to re-educate motorists that cyclists are allowed on road, and that they are required to share the road. The DDA Board proposed a shared use path to link the bike path through downtown but it would have required a 10ft. path through a neighborhood. They received a lot of neighborhood resistance to this idea. They then proposed to build a bike lane which would have widened the road but the cost in just the Village alone was at least \$600,000. Then they came across the idea of installing sharrows. These were found to be cost effective, around \$19,000 and perfectly positioned for Milford streets – no road widening needed. Since the Village owns all of their roads, they did not have to consult with MDOT or the RCOC. The have low speed limits (25-35 mph) and pedestrian-oriented streets. They also have low to moderate levels of bike ridership now; not enough cyclists to justify the installation of bike lanes. The sharrows are a good interim measure for Milford to be a bike trailhead.

The sharrows were applied as thermoplastic pavement markings that are heated so that the decal and the asphalt are infused. This method of application, while a bit more expensive, lasts up to three years, and is more durable than cold decal application or paint.

There is a 2-3 block gap between the boundary of the DDA District and the existing Milford Trail, along Commerce Road; therefore this limits where the DDA can spend their monies. The sharrows have been in place for about three months after they received unanimous approval from the DDA and Village Council. The sharrows were installed on General Motors Road, Huron Street, Main Street, and Commerce Road – this is the “Inner Loop”. Future routes for consideration are further north along Milford Road, and on roads east/northeast of Milford Road in the Village.

Initially they received some negative public response; most complaints were regarding expense, but through discussions they highlighted the significance in cost from \$600,000 to \$19,000. Other complaints were ‘bicycles don’t obey traffic rules’ and that ‘Milford (roads) are already too congested’, but Ann stated the slower driver speeds enhance safety for all motorized/non-motorized users. Another complaint was the sharrows wouldn’t increase ridership. Ann stated they didn’t expect that it would, but felt that if they were going to support an overall public program that invites bicycles and walkers; they needed to provide the infrastructure to make them feel safer and welcomed into downtown Milford.

Ann said they do have a problem with people riding bicycles on the sidewalks in downtown; this is something prohibited by their village ordinance. Many times bicycles also do not yield to pedestrians. Many drivers appear to be confused by the new sharrow markings – not sure what to do. And bicyclists on the road may not know they are supposed to ride in the center of the sharrows. Also, many ‘car-

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centric' valued people do not know they need to share the road with bicyclists. They have installed two signs at village entrances, indicating a bike symbol and the words "share the road". More education of drivers/bicyclists is needed.

Andrew Mutch suggested that the Secretary of State needs to update their Driver's Education tests to incorporated knowledge of these new road features for non-motorized users.

Ann indicated bike racks are soon to be installed downtown. A few local merchants have placed some functional, but not aesthetic, bike racks in front of their stores. The DDA is looking at purchasing portable, smaller bike racks that can be loaned to local businesses; this is more dynamic and useful for the fluctuation of different downtown merchants.

Brian Marzolf asked Ann to share this presentation by email; there are several communities where the sharrows could be very beneficial. Ann's presentation can be downloaded from:

http://www.meetmeinmilford.com/1/Oakland_County_Michigan/news.asp

GROUP DISCUSSION: Federal DOJ Ruling on "Other Power Driven Mobility Devices" – Example Trail Management Agency Policies

Stephanie Loria stated that Oakland County Parks is working on their draft policy regarding Other Power Driven Mobility Devices (OPDMD). Both Paint Creek Trail and the MDNR already have a policy which helped draft OCPR's policy. OCPR is a parks system with many individual trails and pathways in each park; it differs from how an OPDMD policy would apply to a linear trail. OCPR had to evaluate all 64+miles of our trail, based on what we know the trail is like (i.e., width, existing use/purpose, and surface), and using the 5 assessment factors that the Department of Justice (DOJ) requires you to use to determine if certain OPDMDs can safely be allowed.

OCPR concluded that any device that is 36 inches wide or less is allowed because anything more would take up too much width on the trails. And that factor alone will eliminate other devices, such as ATVs and golf carts. However, there are certain golf carts that are less than 36 inches wide which are used for people with mobility disabilities. OCPR is proposing that the OPDMD device has to be electric powered; operated at 5 miles per hour if people are around; and up to 10 miles per hour if people are not around. OCPR has a couple of exceptions; such as using gasoline-powered golf carts for many of our golf courses, which also exceed 36" width. OCPR is proposing these devices could be used for golf course recreation purposes by someone with a mobility disability.

OCPR is in the process of revising the policy with staff input. Park operations staff and Oakland County Sheriffs will be included in discussions about the policy. They will need to know what they are allowed to do when they encounter someone with an OPDMD, so they as not to inadvertently discriminate against anyone. The DOJ rule states that you are not supposed to ask someone about their mobility disability and can only ask if they are using the device for their mobility disability. We can ask if they have proof that they have a mobility disability but they can opt to show you or not. Implementing this with park staff will take some time. OCPR is also considering and discussing what types of new/revised signage will be needed at the parks, considering that there is already so much signage at our parks that individuals probably would not notice. The law states that we are to provide our OPDMD allowance policy before an individual arrives at the site, so at minimum it has to be posted on the website. The law indicates it is not required to be posted at the parks/trail site, but OCPR probably will post something. OCPR anticipates this to be adopted as a Commission Policy this fall and will likely have some sort of a "frequently asked questions" page with a link to the policy.

Juliane Bagley stated that the biggest issue that Polly Ann Trail is running into is that some of their council members have children/relatives who are disabled. Since they are not able to be on the trail unless they are with adults, a "single rider" restriction on an OPDMD would not allow for those children to have access. So there is a talk of allowing golf carts with maximum passenger limits, and include gas or electric devices. The Polly Ann Trail Council's thoughts are that the Paint Creek policy is very

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strict and wouldn't allow access to many disabled people. The Polly Ann Trail is considering having individuals come to them for permission and issue a permit.

Stephanie suggested that she post on the OTAC webpage (through DestinationOakland.com) current OPDMD policies once they are finalized and list other groups who are in the process of drafting them. The OTAC group agreed this would be a good idea.

Brian suggested that the OPDMD issue should be on the OTAC agenda for future meetings, so as to provide updates on everyone's status on policy development.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kristen Wiltfang

September 9, 2011 - Planners Gathering in Auburn Hills at Greenblendz, Inc. USDA Certified Organic & Kosher manufacturer located in Auburn Hills. They manufacture over 100 products for multiple companies, one of which is ecoSTORE USA. For more information please visit: http://www.oakgov.com/peds/calendar/planners_gathering.html

September 21, 2011 - Heritage Conference at the Silverdome
Examine the factors which led to the abandonment, demise and re-purposing of several area "white elephants."
For more information please visit: http://www.oakgov.com/peds/program_service/heritage.html

October 6, 2011 Green Infrastructure Celebration at Springfield Oaks Park - Ellis Barn
Dr. Herbert Broda is the keynote speaker.
For more information please visit:
<http://www.destinationoakland.com/Lists/Events/DispForm.aspx?ID=1147&Source=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.destinationoakland.com%2FPages%2FSpecialEvents.aspx&ContentTypeId=0x01020043806926227A814E8CAEF762A200D0A1>

The city of Ferndale has a Bicyclist Guide which talks about some of the safety issues, how to ride bike lanes, how to lock up your bikes and other valuable information. Kristen will contact the city to request more of the Bicyclist Guides.
For more information please visit: <http://ferndale.patch.com/announcements/downtown-ferndales-third-thursdays-bicycle-night>

Stephanie Loria

Pathways for Play

A very unique way to incorporate exercise and learning in the development of your trail with play pods. Sponsored by American Trails it has a lot of great suggestions for trail design and how to engage children along the trails. To request a free guide please visit: <http://pathwaysforplay.org/my-path-nature.aspx>

October 2 – 5, 2011 – Mid America Trails and Greenways Conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana
For more information please visit: <http://www.cityoffortwayne.org/publicworks/matag-conference.html>

October 19-21, 2011 –Michigan Association of Planning annual conference in Grand Rapids, MI
For more information please visit: <http://www.planningmi.org/>

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November 1-3, 2011 – National Recreation Park Association (NRPA) Conference in Atlanta, GA

For more information please visit:

http://www.nrpa.org/Congress2011/?utm_source=Homepage&utm_medium=Coverflow&utm_content=Congress740x265&utm_campaign=Homepage_Coverflow_2011

At the next OTAC meeting (October 26), John Cherry, Grant Coordinator with the MDNR, will make a presentation to us regarding new guidelines for MDNR grant applications.

Stephanie requested feedback for future OTAC topics; please email suggestions to (lorias@oakgov.com) or submit them to her on paper before leaving the meeting.

Cory Johnston

Michigan Complete Streets Coalition – Lunchtime Webinar Series

Those who should attend are community health professionals, bike and trail advocates, disability rights advocates, professional community planners, engineers and designers, local government staff and officials, state agency professionals (MDOT, MDCH, MSHDA, others), school leaders, non-profits, and anyone with an interest in advancing Complete Streets in Michigan.

For more information please visit: <http://michigancompletestreets.wordpress.com/2011/08/18/complete-streets-lunch-webinars/>

Cory inquired if OTAC was going to support Oakland County's Resolution for Complete Streets. Kristen Wiltfang indicated that there is an existing Complete Streets and Bike Lanes Task Force for Oakland County. This group has met twice this year. Some of the participants include: Todd Scott, Janet Waters, Julie Edwards, David Evancoe, Dennis Kolar, and Mindy Milos-Dale. Kristen said she also participates and provides comment.

The meeting adjourned at 10:19 a.m. motion by Stephanie Loria and supported by Brian Marzolf.

Minutes taken by Theresa Lowrance - Administrative Services - OCPR; Edited by Stephanie Loria – OCPR.