



WORTHINGTON BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the Monday, March 28, 2016 Meeting

Members Present: The members present were Michael Bates, Lawrence Creed, Ann Horton, Douglas Knight, Emma Lindholm, John Rist, Kelly Whalen and Jeannie Martin (Chair).

City Support Staff present was Celia Thornton (Project Supervisor). Also present were Ms. Lisa Daris (Executive Coordinator for the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund), Mr. Arthur Siegesmund of OPAL Trails (**O**lentangy **P**owell **A**nd **L**iberty), resident Mr. Paul Dorothy (179 Kenbrook Dr.) and Olentangy Trail user Mr. Jeff Tewart (1527 Newcomer Rd., Worthington Hills).

The minutes from the February 22 meeting were approved.

Ohio to Erie Trail Presentation: Ms. Lisa Daris, Executive Coordinator for the Ohio to Erie Trail Fund, came to share information about the trail, especially recent progress, with the board. The Ohio to Erie Trail (OTET) is a 330 mile network of trails from Cincinnati to Cleveland, mostly using land formerly occupied by railroads and canals. The OTET trail fund mission is to promote, develop and establish a multi-use, non-motorized network of regional trails and greenways linking Cincinnati, Columbus and Cleveland from the Ohio River to Lake Erie. At this point 92% of the right of way is secured and 83% of the trail is already constructed. Ms. Daris highlighted several areas that have recently experienced great progress in getting the trail off roads and onto trails (which is the ultimate goal):

- Mt. Vernon is removing a route from the streets and putting it back onto a path through town and they have worked with the Ohio Central Railroad to improve a railroad crossing.
- In Holmes County Route 62 will no longer be the route used by OTET. An 8 mile section of the Holmes County Trail north of Brinkhaven to Glenmont are being removed to make way for the paving of the old rail bed this spring. From Glenmont, the OTET will then use Route 520 into Killbuck, thus eliminating Route 62. New Route 1 Bike Signs will be placed as soon as the Holmes County Trail is finished to Glenmont. The right of way into Killbuck from Glenmont has also been secured and in 2017 the Holmes County/OTET will be off streets from Brinkhaven to Millersburg.
- Near Cincinnati Great Parks of Hamilton County has recently paved about 3 miles along Route 32 on the east side of the Lunken Airport Trail but a bridge is needed to cross the Little Miami River to connect with the Airport Trail's eastern corner. Once that multi-million dollar bridge is built, the OTET will go off streets for six more miles to Lunken, avoiding the street route of Mariemont and Fairfax.

- The OTET travels currently through streets of Galena (just north of Columbus), but plans are underway to pave a Trail through the town and funds have been secured from a Clean Ohio Grant for Trails and matching local funding. Construction is expected this spring.

Ms. Daris also shared that the previous section of the OTET that ran through Worthington has been re-routed and will now go through Westerville, where it can stay on trails rather than forcing riders to ride S.R. 161 and High Street. Mr. Rist asked how these projects were funded and Ms. Daris replied that it funds come from a variety of places- city government, grants, friends organizations, etc. Mr. Whalen asked if there were data on trail safety (crime, assault, etc.) and Ms. Daris replied that it isn't compiled anywhere. Mrs. Horton asked if being part of the OTET offered leverage in getting trail funding and Ms. Daris replied yes and said that she is asked write lots of letters of support. She left us with many fliers and maps along with the OTET website: www.ohioerietrail.org.

Mr. Arthur Siegesmund of OPAL Trails (**O**lentangy **P**owell **A**nd **L**iberty) then introduced himself to the board. Mr. Siegesmund is interested in keeping in contact with the Worthington Bike & Pedestrian Board so that we can communicate about new trails and help support each other and promote connections between our communities.

Olentangy Trail Request: Mr. Tewart, who regularly uses the trail and rides with a bike group called *Team Riverlea* (which refuses to ride on the trail due to safety issues), requests that the board recommend that Worthington institute a leash law along the Olentangy Trail. He would like the ordinance changed to state that all dogs must be on a six foot leash to prevent accidents with bikers on the trail. Since January 1, 2016 he has had 46 dog incidences while riding and shared that on one occasion he broke his hip because of a dog, and recently was sworn at and had a major altercation with a dog owner. He feels that the trail is multi-use and should be safe for all users. Mr. Knight asked about Antrim and if there were many dog/bike altercations there. Mr. Tewart said yes, to which Mr. Knight pointed out that it wasn't a Worthington section of trail, but City of Columbus. Mr. Tewart said that he would say the majority of the incidences occur on the section of trail passing by the Worthington Estates neighborhood. He said that MetroParks couldn't enforce anything through Worthington because of the lack of a leash law. Ms. Thornton pointed out that MetroParks doesn't have jurisdiction over the Worthington section of trail, so even with a leash law still might not have the authority to enforce ordinances. Mr. Dorothy interjected that he avoids the Olentangy Trail for the same reason and that a six foot leash is instrumental in making the trail safe from dogs. Mr. Tewart finished by stating that he doesn't want to see headlines that someone was killed on the trail in an accident when it is preventable by changing the leash law. He also noted that bikers need to be more courteous and signal when passing, and thanked the board for their time.

Sub-Committee Updates/Draft Work Plan Presentations: Ms. Martin began this part of the meeting with a reminder that the Bike & Pedestrian Advisory Board was created as an "advisory" board and should be based more in making recommendations than heavily hands-on on many projects. She took the time to read the "duties of the board" as laid out by City Council and made comparisons in the differences between your average 501c3 and an advisory board. This led to an interactive group discussion that revolved around the following main points:

- Defining the Bike & Pedestrian Advisory Board Roles- more advisory or instigators and leaders on bike & ped initiatives?
- How to accomplish projects/goals in an "advisory" capacity. Specifically discussed were the strategic planning meeting goals and priorities (and the memo to Council from the January Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board Retreat).
- What can the board directly be involved in, or put into motion, and what needs permission (and at what levels).

- The sub-committee draft plans- sharing information and the ability to accomplish all of it in 2016. Are all the plans authorized or how do members know how to proceed?

Green on the Green Update: Ms. Martin has a meeting on April 4 with the Old Worthington Partnership (OWP) and City staff to discuss the possibility of the board doing data collection at the Green on the Green event.

Updates/Follow Up Items:

- Mobility Study – Ms. Martin currently has no new information to share.
- Update on Board Vacancy – City Council has not yet selected a new board member and hasn't indicated when it may be able to do so.
- City Charter Review – There isn't anything in the City Charter that would require a recommendation from the Bike & Pedestrian Advisory Board. However, other City staff may like the board's support or recommendations eventually on changing some City ordinances (right of way was given as an example).
- SRTS Conference Attendee – Ann Horton and Celia Thornton, along with a Council Member, will be attending the Safe Routes To School Conference April 5-7, 2016.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting of the Bike & Pedestrian Board will occur on Monday, April 25, 2016 at 6pm.