

Monroe County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Panel

Meeting Minutes for March 9, 2021 @ 1:30 p.m.

Loop Trail Update – Lucie met with Brian. The County was not selected for this round. She said that she will work on refining the application for another round. Brian said that there were several issues MDOT had with the application and did not want to just award part of the funding. These concerns were the easements with the DTE lines, historical preservation concerns involving an unmarked cemetery, and the River Raisin bridge on Raisinville Road. He said that the applicant can be submitted at any date, but that he thought the next decisions would be made in July and December, and that he would check on this.

Bike and Trail Plan – Florence said that she is still working on locations to engage underserved communities. She stated that she may also drop off a survey or do a digital survey. She asked SEMCOG if they had someone within their organization who had advice on how to address the underserved population. Alex said SEMCOG is currently looking into approaches and suggested using neighborhood & church groups or providing information at town halls or by snail mail. He said that SEMCOG would be able to go over this with her and provide advice. He also suggested asking the City of Monroe for advice. Florence said that she has done work with the City in the past involving a randomly selected survey. Mayor Clark suggested MCOP as a good resource for information.

U.S. Turnpike – Jim said the bridge has a wide shoulder and shouldn't be an issue. Lucie said that Matt addressed this at the last meeting. Jim said that the road leading up to the bridge on our side is the issue. Lucie said that this should already be reflected in our Plan. Rusty suggested engaging Berlin Twp. Brian said that short-term we should be looking at incorporating the connection and long-term looking at ways to improve the route to make it more bicycle-friendly. He also suggested staying in touch with stakeholders on the Wayne County side like Downriver Greenways and Brownstown Township.

N. Custer – Lucie confirmed that we are looking at a paved shoulder along North Custer.

M-50 signage – Brian said that there was a stakeholder meeting where projects were talked about. Region 2 Planning Commission is interested in connections and the City of Sylvania in Ohio is too. He said that they will try to set up another meeting, but everyone seems to be on board. Alex suggested finding a way to get Lenawee County involved and discussed the possible connections into Lenawee County and that these should be reflected in our Plan. He mentioned that several parties at the meeting had no idea that Monroe County was planning bicycling connections.

Jim mentioned the proposed Douglas Road connection into Ohio and said that it was awful bicycle riding. Alex said that everyone is in unison about the Memorial Highway connection, but that the Toledo connection still needs to be worked on. Florence asked if anything in the President's relief plan would be able to be used for bike/ped. infrastructure. Alex said that we still need to find this out.

Brian said that this group will try to meet again this month. Alex mentioned that SEMCOG is organizing a working session about our Plan with Lucie. Lucie said that she has reached out to Lenawee County already to be included in our group's discussions. Alex suggested asking the City of Sylvania if they want to attend our meetings, too.

I-275 – Lucie and Jim have talked about this and she said that she will incorporate Jim’s ideas about the safest route in this part of the County into the Plan.

Dunbar – Florence said that this is still in the parking lot.

Bike Safety – Florence mentioned a recent bicycle accident in Toledo, Ohio by a possibly impaired driver and stressed the need to address bicycle safety. She said that she has reached out to some local bicycling groups about possible surveys and that one group was open to it.

City of Monroe – Mayor Clark said that he will continue to join in to these meetings. He says that it has been slow finding members so far for the City’s bike/ped. group. He stated that the City hopes to make bike/ped improvements in the coming years. He mentioned that Telegraph Road is not a good route for bicycling and that they will probably have to find an alternative north/south route. He said that he hopes that the City’s future group will investigate and find the best routes to use. He mentioned working with Frenchtown Twp. about improving and extending the sidewalks on Telegraph.

Frenchtown Twp. – Mayor Clark said that Frenchtown has been receptive about cooperating with the City and that they are open to working with our group and bike/ped goals. Alex said that right now they are holding off as Frenchtown is dealing with other things, but that we should reach out to them soon. Florence said that she will reach out to them soon.

Summerfield Twp. & City of Petersburg – Dave Uhl said that he will reach out to both of them. He says that he has already given Summerfield a call, and that he will stop by both locations soon.

Erie Twp. – Lucie said that there is no change at this point. Jim said that he reached out to their supervisor Gary Wilmoth briefly and that he was positive.

U.S. Bike Route 25 – Brian said that the ball is in the Road Commission’s court right now on this one, as MDOT is deferring to the Road Commission. He explained the purpose of the U.S. bike route system as a system of interconnected routes across the country to serve long-distance bicyclists, and that Ohio needs agreement with Michigan to extend these bike routes.

Legislative Issues – None were mentioned

Round Table:

MCRC – Matt said that the Summit St. TAP grant will be pushed back to 2023 in order to coordinate with another project.

SEMCOG – Distracted driving legislation was brought up by Alex. He also said that SEMCOG will be more plugged in to Washington now due to the new administration. Florence brought up that many people in this state are still not aware of the 3-foot legislation. Alex said that SEMCOG is working on getting the word about this out, but that enforcement of this law is difficult. Alex also mentioned that SEMCOG is updating its transportation safety plan and setting up a subcommittee.

National Park Service – Rusty said that the new visitor center is having a soft opening in May in which only a part of the center will be open and there will not be a celebration of a grand opening.

Addition from SEMCOG – Brian said that SEMCOG is also working on a Great Lakes Way website that incorporates trailways and water trails that shows interconnectivity and key destinations.

Village of Dundee – Dave said that he has talked to Downriver Cycling Club and that their cyclists will be stopping at the Old Mill during one of their upcoming rides. He said that the Village is planning on passing out pamphlets and said that materials from other members of this group could be passed out too. Lucie said we should have a table there about our Plan. Dave said this ride will take place on May 2.

Dale asked about S. Dixie Highway and whether it could be used as U.S. Bike Route 25 since it used to be U.S. 25 and it has historical significance. Jim mentioned Summit Street and said that it would be a safer North/South connection into Ohio than Douglas. Florence said that we will keep this item on the agenda.