

Greenways and Trails Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 31, 2009 – 2:00 PM
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission office
411 Hamilton Boulevard, Suite 2001, Peoria, IL 61602

Welcome & Introductions

Mr. John convened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. Those present were:

Jim Ash – AECOM	Rick Nolan – McLean County Planning
Amy Benecke-McLaren – Peoria Co. Highway Dept.	Jon Oliphant – City of Washington
Doug Damery – Washington Park District	Tim O’Hanlon – League of IL Bicyclists
Lori Havenga – TCRPC	Kathi Lowder – Peoria Co. Planning Dept.
Roger John, Chair – bicycle/running groups	Chuck Pahl – Village of Hanna City
Ty Livingston – City of East Peoria	Kristen Penniston – Peoria Co. Planning Dept.
Phil McAlearney – Hanna City	Mike Rucker – Recreational Trail Advocates
	Lindsay Wallace – TCRPC

Trail Status Updates

Rock Island Trail Extension: Mackinaw Valley Trail

IDNR is working to get grant funding approved to create a rider’s guide for the portion of the trail network from Morton to Bloomington-Normal. Funds will go from IDNR to TCRPC, then most will be passed on to LIB to create user’s guide. Most of the network will be on roads initially.

Rock Island Trail Extension: Heritage Trail

After the Mackinaw Valley Trail user’s guide and work is completed, TCRPC and LIB will do the same steps for Heritage Trail from Toulon to the Heritage Canal Trail.

Hanna City Rail-Trail

- Chuck Pahl and Phil McAlearney summarized the rail corridor’s history.
- Staff has recently walked parts of the trail to document the condition of the trail, culverts, and bridges.
- An unknown company has been removing rails over the past month; IDNR has said it will ask Union Pacific (UPRR) if they know who is removing the rails and why.
- UPRR has asked IDNR to state an initial price for rail purchase, so UPRR is working with TCRPC on details and will set up a meeting with the Hanna City Trail committee to discuss purchase price.

Kellar Branch

Mike Rucker gave an update of the Kellar Branch. He has heard that several groups will jointly ask the STB for corridor abandonment. He is cautiously optimistic about the trail’s progress.

East Peoria River Trail

Ty Livingston gave an East Peoria update. East Peoria is waiting to hear about grant funding for a portion of the River Trail through DCEO. East Peoria has funds to pave most of the trail and plans to open but not yet pave the trail along the levee. The City has an agreement with Buffalo Wild Wings to fill in a low area and will not put in a retaining wall as Buffalo Wild Wings had previously requested.

Washington

Jon Oliphant and Doug Damery discussed Washington's progress.

- The plans for the Wilmor Road trail extension are nearly done and construction should be started later this spring.
- Improvement to North Cummings, north of US 24, should be started later this spring.
- A connector road between Old Kern road and New Kern road is being developed and will probably be built with a sidewalk by the end of 2009. The short new road segment will be near Hillcrest Golf Course.

Other

Mike Rucker showed a map of the Lakeview Wilds group's plans to develop a trail on Peoria Park District land in north-central Peoria. The trail would go behind Lakeview Museum north to Evergreen Square and the Metro Center on Glen Avenue. The group hopes it would eventually connect to the Rock Island Trail and is planning to raise funds to turn some of the land into a park.

New Business

Medina proposed trail

Medina Township has asked TCRPC to add a potential trail by Mossville to its Greenways & Trails Plan. Attendees discussed the map with the proposed trail and had questions about the location and reasoning behind the request. They asked that a township representative attend the next meeting to explain the request and plans.

RTP reauthorization info

The national transportation bill that allocates funding amounts for different types of transportation is scheduled to be reauthorized this year. Attendees asked how the Task Force could promote the inclusion of funds for non-motorized transportation in the reauthorization bill. Individuals and their respective groups can write letters of support and/or pass resolutions to this effect. The Task Force voted unanimously to ask the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission to pass a resolution that supports multimodal transportation in the reauthorization bill.

Complete Streets bill status

Complete Streets bills are currently being discussed in the U.S. Senate and House. Illinois already has a Complete Streets law. Attendees discussed asking the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission to pass a resolution that indicates the Commission and Task Force's interest in working with IDOT on Complete Streets projects and encourages IDOT to develop standards for Complete Streets. They decided to investigate whether IDOT is developing

Complete Street standards and discuss this topic more at the next meeting.

Long-Range Transportation Plan update and questionnaires

TCRPC is updating the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan. The LRTP will work to better integrate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure with roads. The Task Force's participation will be crucial to showing the importance of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Members can help by filling out questionnaires now, attending LRTP meeting(s) in the fall, and bringing others to the meetings.

Upcoming Events

The next Recreational Trail Advocates meeting will be Monday, April 6, at 7:00 PM at Paparazzi's in Peoria Heights.

Other

Please invite people who may be interested in greenways and trails to future meetings or put them in contact with TCRPC staff.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM.

—Submitted by Lori Havenga

Greenways and Trails Task Force Priorities Suggested at January 2008 meeting

- Promote greenways and trails connectivity within and between communities.
- Get representation from every county and more municipalities, especially Pekin and Creve Coeur.
- Identify funding opportunities for trail projects.
- Create a promotional video that shows economic benefits of trails in order to promote local greenways and trails projects.
- Provide information about our activities and priority projects, especially to new and potential state representatives.