



**COMMITTEE MEETING ~ NIRPC AUDITORIUM
JANUARY 26, 2012
MINUTES**

MEMBERS & GUESTS – Tim Morgan, Mark O’Dell, Dave Byers, Don Parker, Paula Armour, Walter Lenckos, Bruce Spires, Bob Huffman, Jenny Orsburn, Craig Zandstra, Tim Cole, Craig Hendrix, Eric Ehn, Jerry Rosko, Chuck Ventura, Brian Niksch, Denarie Kane, Gregg Calpino, Dan McGuire, Roy Robinson, Angie Pool
STAFF - Mitch Barloga, Steve Strains, Meredith Stilwell, Lakisha Girder

Tim Morgan called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. with self-introductions.

PED – PART I

SOUTH SHORE TRAILS - UPDATE. Don Parker reported the name and brand change to South Shore Trails became official on December 14, 2011. The hope is to bring increased visibility and public participation. A 2012 planning workshop is scheduled to be held at NIRPC on Saturday, January 28.

FEATURE PRESENTATION II: NIRPC Public Involvement - La’Kisha Girder, NIRPC

The 2007 NIRPC Public Participation Plan is currently in the process of being updated. This is mandated by FHWA and FTA. An outline reflecting the portions completed and still needing work was highlighted and the current plan was shown and planned improvements and updates to the plan noted. In addition to sections about the 2040 CRP and Environmental Justice being added, updates and additions will be made to graphics, goals and objectives and public involvement techniques. Presentations regarding the Plan will be made to Various NIRPC Committees January to March to receive feedback on how NIRPC can improve outreach, suggestions for new techniques and sources, and to seek volunteers for the Public Participation Task Force. Meetings with the Task Force will be held in March and April. By May a completed draft should be published for the 45 day public comment period and hopefully the edited plan can be presented to the NIRPC Board for final approval at their July meeting. Questions and comments may be directed to La’Kisha at lgirder@nirpc.org or Hubert Morgan at hmorgan@nirpc.org. *The Public Participation Plan will be designed to feed back into the 2040 CRP and keep as a living document, but will also include NIRPCs involvement with other plans and programs. In addition, it will have a lot to do with selecting projects and putting project lists out for public review. One goal is for outreach and involvement efforts to go beyond meetings at NIRPC to include more meetings out and about in the region.*

PEDAL

NWI BIKE MAP 2011 – UPDATE ~ Mitch Barloga

The map is slated for release at Cornucopia 2012 in April. Information submitted from people who rode region routes is being synthesized. More time is being taken in a hands-on approach to the region’s rural routes to give better understanding of the full breadth of available roadways for bicycle travel. The addition of horse trails has been suggested, and although not currently included, will be looked at. Over 100,000 copies will available for distribution.

TE MINIMUM DESIGN STANDARDS:

The minimum design standards being considered are not overwhelming mandates, but more common sense designs to ensure trail projects are completed in a consistent manner across the region. Mitch noted as projects are approved conversations regarding standards is encouraged. Suggested minimum design standards presented included:

- Striping down middle of trail – *many trails do not have. Without a stripe people do not stay on the proper side. Striping can be solid or dashed and color does not matter.*
- Roadway buffers – *separation between bike/ped lanes and roadways is needed. Some trails currently have bad buffering or no buffering.*
- Crosswalks where trails cross roadways – *ample notice needs to be placed for oncoming vehicles to yield for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. At minimum zebra striping.*

- Signage – *helpful to trail users and important for noting location in emergency situations.*
- Maps – *indicate where users are on a trail. Can be basic metal cut signage, and also include trail etiquette.*
- Street Signage – *possibly included in a better/best category. Mile markers, historical significance, pet etiquette, etc.*
- Trailheads – *should include at least a parking lot to accommodate a few cars and informational signage.*
- Bicycle parking – *needs to at least be available at trailheads.*
- Neighborhood connections – *needs to be encouraged strongly. If one exists and is readily available, the minimum design standard would be to make the connection. If involving new land purchasing or imminent domain available will most likely be a case by case situation.*
- Benches – *many trails do not currently have benches.*
- Maintenance standards – *needs to include quick removal of snow, slush, and ice.*

The anticipated time frame is in relation to the grant cycles and with the next TE cycle possibly launching in March 2012, Mitch would like to have the standards set by the end of February. *Determined standards would need to be approved by TPC and the NIRPC Board. Concerns were raised regarding adopting a one size fits all standard for separation between road and pathway as right of way acquisition is often dollar driven and other impediments could be faced. Mitch indicated there have been situations where the ability for a separation was there but not explored and this category could be a case by case determination. Tim Morgan commented that adopting a statewide minimum trails standard was brought up at the IPRA Conference Trails and Greenways Committee section meeting and suggested possibly piggy-backing with IPRA.*

PED – PART II

FEATURE PRESENTATION I: *The Cardinal Greenway - Ms. Angie Pool, Executive Director*

The Cardinal Greenway is a non-profit and private owned and is the longest rail-trail in Indiana and spans almost 60 miles from Marion to Muncie to Richmond in East Central Indiana. 52 miles of that is continuous paved greenway. The last 20 mile segment is still technically owned by INDOT. In 1993 a group of Muncie business men which included Ball Brothers Foundation members envisioned a pedestrian/bike paved pathway and purchased the CSX railway when it came up for sale. In 1998 the first 10 mile section of paved trail was laid and the remainder of the trail completed as funding was obtained. There is a section which is unpaved and owned by a group of farmers who were determined not to have a greenway on their land, but the hope is to eventually be able to make a connection on the gap. Stimulus (ARRA) funds awarded in 2009 allowed 20 miles of the Greenway to be paved. Angie noted that a solid reputation with INDOT is a plus and money is more likely to be received because they realize your ability to complete projects. *Marta Moody from the Delaware Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission is on the Cardinal Greenway Board and has a good relationship with INDOT. Marta helped write the stimulus money (ARRA) grant application.*

Trail mile markers are large field rocks and are placed every half mile. Interpretive signs reflecting the history of the trail are mainly placed close to trailheads with a few others throughout the trail. The trail is 8 feet wide in the country and 10 feet wide in the city; some areas in Muncie are 12 feet wide. Prior to 2008 Ball State University students conducted a count which reflected over 250,000 trail users.

As a privately owned trail, operation and maintenance is up to the Greenway and because of limited staff and funds, the bulk of maintenance for the trail is volunteer driven. Money has been raised through the years to purchase equipment.

Angie discussed their procedures for hosting events and requirements for entities requesting use of the Greenway for events. They have to be very detailed in their requirements for liability and revenue sake. The Greenway also hosts its own events; one being the Greenway Tour in July which is a non-competitive ride that has grown to about 500 riders and involves mostly people from outside of the area who want to take a look at the Greenway. Walk Indiana takes place on the Cardinal and White River Greenways and is Indiana's only walking marathon. Last year's event had 400 participants and this year's event will be held September 8, 2012. Since the Greenway staff is so small, partnerships with other organizations is important to help with organization and logistics.

One goal of the Cardinal Greenway is to make connections not only with neighborhoods, but with other trails to eventually reach northwest Indiana's trail network. The Greenway is part of the American Discovery Trail. Angie provided copies of a newspaper section devoted entirely to information on the Cardinal Greenway. *The full 100 foot right of way is purchased from CSX most of the time and sometimes buildings are included. Rory Robinson*

mentioned there are also horse trails on the Greenway and Angie noted that in addition to what is already developed, there will also be 16 miles of horse trail as part of the Richmond section. Richmond and Wayne County are very excited about the horse trails and agreed to help maintain the trail. Mitch mentioned Veteran's Trail is this regions only actively funded horse, bike, and ped trail and noted building equine trails in rural areas is very helpful. The Greenway stops in Marion and the trail system is disjointed from north central Indiana to the north/south trails. There is a big void is getting to North Judson which is a core area since a half built bike and equine trail currently runs out of North Judson and will eventually be finished to Rochester. From there, the big void is from Rochester to Marion. Mitch has a meeting with a representative from the American Discovery Trail who has visions of connecting the Cardinal with this area. Angie is very willing to share her information on how to maintain trails utilizing volunteerism and will be speaking at INDOT's road school in March on impacts of trails on a community. She noted trails are one of the top three amenities a business looks for when coming into a town. Mitch thanked Angie for taking the time to present at the meeting and stated the Cardinal Greenway is probably one of the best examples of a privately owned trail in the country.

PADDLE – **NWI PADDLING ASSOCIATION – UPDATE.**

In the absence of Dan Plath, an email handout of NWIPA activities was given to the group for review and Mitch thanked Tim Morgan for working with NWIPA to develop an overnight camping spot on the 140 acre park property along the Kankakee River. Tim cited that while still early in the planning stages the idea is to have an elevated platform (chickees). Mitch stated there currently are no camping sites along the Kankakee River and it would be great to have a site in each county.

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

Several active projects are in the TIP currently and the required INDOT quarterly reports for motorized projects need to not only be forwarded to INDOT, but to Gary Evers as well. Non-motorized project reports should be forwarded to INDOT and to Mitch. Gary reported that hearing what other MPOs are doing, it appears that communities with group 3 or group 4 bridge, TE, or Safe Routes to Schools projects may be reporting directly to NIRPC rather than INDOT who would then forward the information to the district office. Although not there yet, this would enable a report to be filed in one location. Last quarter some reports went to INDOT and not to NIRPC and vice versa, and some were not sent out at all. This is a priority area for INDOT and NIRPC is taking heat to get quarterly tracking organized and to be more proactive in tracking federal aid projects through completion of construction. Field visits are still being considered or bringing everyone who has a federal aid project in for one day a quarter with their consulting engineer to determine the status of implementing projects. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available. *There is a quarterly report form for NIRPC as well as one for INDOT and while at least one of them needs to be completed, the INDOT form is probably the best to complete for now. NIRPC is not yet at the stage of forwarding completed reports to INDOT so it is the community's responsibility to make sure reports are going to INDOT as well as NIRPC until hearing further information in writing from NIRPC.* Gary reported INDOT is looking at a solicitation for bridge, TE, Group 3 and Group 4 most likely in late March or early April. More details will be coming. They are also looking at a consolidated application in the event a project might qualify for two or three different sources of funding. Quarterly post-letting reports for Group 1 and Group 2 CMAQ construction will be due at the end of July.

Mitch stated TE methodology standards needs to be revisited and up for debate again with the new round of funding. The first round of funding in 2011 was split 80/20 with the next round to be 50/50 with environmental and other projects. Gary reported there will most likely be a solicitation for CMAQ projects for LaPorte Co. in the spring with the idea of turning projects in for eligibility in July. Whether CMAQ funds for LaPorte non-motorized projects has to be addressed with new elected officials to get programming guidance for the future.

CORNUCOPIA '12: THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012 – Location: Lost Marsh in Hammond

The program will run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with lunch provided. Sponsorships are being sought. Contact Mitch if interested.

THE NEXT 3PC MEETING WILL BE HELD FEBRUARY 23, 2012

Co-Chair Morgan adjourned the meeting at 3:19 p.m.