



**COMMITTEE MEETING ~ NIRPC AUDITORIUM  
MARCH 22, 2012  
MINUTES**

**MEMBERS & GUESTS** –Mark O’Dell, Don Parker, Craig Hendrix, Brian Niksch, A.J. Bytnar, Mark Heintz, Dorreen Carey, Jake Dammarell, Dan McGuire, Eric Ehn, Joe Nordman, Bruce Spires  
**STAFF** - Mitch Barloga, Steve Strains, Bill Brown, Stephen Sostaric, Joe Exl, Meredith Stilwell

Mitch called the meeting to order at 1:36 p.m. with self-introductions.

**PED**

**SOUTH SHORE TRAILS - UPDATE.** Work is being done for the Region Ride which is Saturday June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Planning is also underway for events to be held in May which is bicycle month and specifically Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup> is bike to work day. The next meeting will be held on April 2, at 7:00 p.m. in the NIRPC Boardroom.

**SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL FY 12 CYCLE & WORKSHOP** – The FY 12 cycle is underway and ready now. A free workshop by NIRPC staff is being held on March 27<sup>th</sup> at the NIRPC office and INDOT Safe Routes to School Coordinator, Michael O’Loughlin, will be present to answer questions. Applications are due to NIRPC by 4:00 p.m. on May 27<sup>th</sup> with no exception. Bringing school representatives to the workshop was encouraged.

**PEDAL**

**NWI GREENWAYS AND BLUEWAYS MAP 2011 – UPDATE**

The map has been out for public review and comment and three map open houses were held in Portage, LaPorte, and Schererville. The map has been received well by the public and Mitch encouraged the group to look at the map. The map has many sponsors and includes blueways in addition to greenways. The hope is still to have the maps out by Cornucopia.

**NIRPC TE APPLICATION REVIEW & FUNDING SPLIT - DISCUSSION**

There has not been a call for projects yet and INDOT is possibly waiting on an extension since MAP21, the new transit bill, appears to be dying. If not figured out by March, there is a possibility of an ongoing resolution. The Funding split was discussed and Mitch noted that whatever the Committee decided would go before the Transportation Policy Committee and possibly to the NIRPC Board for adoption. Discussion in the last meeting brought forth suggestions of and 80/20 or a 70/30 split for the next round. Better environmental projects are being sought after and Joe Exl indicated that although he didn’t feel these types of projects were ready for a 50/50 split yet, the Environmental Management Policy Committee should discuss to make a recommendation as well. Don Parker motioned to propose to the TPC a 75/25 split. With second by Mark Heintz and vote by the Committee, the motion passed to propose a 75/25 split to the TPC. Joe noted he will discuss the motion with the EMPC and briefly discussed the updates to environmental project section of the TE application which will now include a portion regarding preferred projects. The Portage project which received TE funding in the last cycle has faced difficulties with Federal Highway.

**AMERICAN DISCOVERY TRAIL RE-ROUTE – UPDATE**

An application has been sent to the National Society for a re-route of the American Discovery Trail through part of Indiana. The Trail is a route from Delaware to California that is make up of roads, trails, and walking trails. Most of the Indiana portion is off-road trails. Mitch discussed the proposed route and the temporary route which would run along the Erie Lackawanna and through a more populated section of the region. Hopefully, an approval announcement can be made at Cornucopia.

## **FEATURE PRESENTATION: DEALING WITH NIMBYS**

Mitch gave a presentation to the group on overcoming public skepticism at the trail planning stage. Many times the public's fear of a trail being built by them fall into four categories and can many times be alleviated through education. The four categories of concern include:

1. Crime – *Law enforcement support trails and there is typically less crime because there are more people around to observe activity.*
2. Property values – *The Home Buyers Survey lists trails as #2 on the list of what's important to homebuyers.*
3. Liability – *Every state has a Recreational Use Statute.*
4. Privacy – *Privacy can be addressed with different types of fences or visual restricting green plantings.*

## **PADDLE –**

### **NWI PADDLING ASSOCIATION – UPDATE**

With information supplied by Dan Plath, Mitch gave an update on NWIPA. A park kids program on paddle education involving the National Park Service begins this weekend. Kayak lockers are being installed at Beverly Shores. Work is being done in an attempt to open the East Branch of the Little Cal for paddling season, and there will be a paddle on Robinson Lake on June 23 in honor of Coastal Awareness.

## **GRAB BAG**

Two videos on texting while walking were viewed by the group.

Don Parker requested unfinished business from the February Meeting regarding the trail map and upgrading a stretch of trail to high priority be brought back to the table for discussion. In response to Don's request, Mitch noted that the priority designations would not be of concern until the next TE cycle and the previous discussion included a request from Walter Lenckos to provide information on how the decision to upgrade priorities for trails was reached and has yet to be provided. It was decided to table a discussion on the issue again until Mitch is able to provide the requested information to the 3PC.

Mitch informed the group that a 3PC co-chair was needed from Lake County. Bruce Spires from Merrillville was asked if he would accept the responsibility. Upon his agreement, the Committee voted Bruce Spires as the Lake County co-chair for the Ped, Pedal, Paddle Committee.

## **THE NEXT 3PC MEETING IS CORNUCOPIA '12, APRIL 26, 2012 AT LOST MARSH IN HAMMOND!**

Mitch adjourned the meeting at 2:44 p.m.