

March 8, 2022 Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Panel Meeting Notes

Jeff McBee, Director of Monroe County Community Planning and Engagement introduced himself.

Loop Trail – Lucie said that the County has applied to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund to seek additional funding.

Cornerstone Route Signage – Florence stated that there are 464 signs over 103 miles. Lucie said that the signage plan has been the same since December, but that a bid package needs to be put together before we can get formal approval from the Road Commission. Matt said that there are no issues with the initial proposal, though.

Lucie showed a picture of the new sign with the medallion. She said that the arrows will now be at the bottom of the medallion. Ryan asked if there would now be room for the diagonal arrows on the medallion. Lucie said that the arrows would now just indicate simple direction since there is no longer room for a diagonal arrow. Sue suggested adding additional room by removing the word “Route” underneath “Cornerstone” on the sign. Lucie said that any changes are up to us and suggested that she thought “Cornerstone Route” should be in white. Another suggestion was to make the graphic of the State of Michigan smaller on the sign. Mary suggested moving some graphic elements around on the sign. Florence said that we can get edits back from the graphic designer before the April meeting and perhaps vote on them by email.

Lucie said that we will need to know how much money that we have and, if we don’t have the full amount, we may need to scale back our signage plan. Florence asked about the Ralph Wilson grant. Lucie said that we would hear if we received this grant in late April. Florence asked about DALMAC. Lucie said that we will hear about that one by the end of May. Lucie said that the estimated cost of the signage is \$120,000 and we currently only have \$70,000, but that the overall cost may change due to the changing signs.

Florence asked about municipalities partially funding the signs. Jeff said that each municipality is a separate entity and would have to make their own decision on this. He suggested that we could create a line item in the budget at the County level for the municipalities to pay into for the signs if they desire to, though.

Florence suggested that we ask for up to \$2,000 from each municipality. Jeff suggested that we categorize the municipalities into small, medium and large municipalities and ask them to pay based upon this classification. Jim said that asking up to \$1,000 from Luna Pier would be fair. Florence said that she will work on something regarding this idea. Jeff asked what the target amount to collect from the municipalities is. Florence showed the Task Force a chart that she created where the target amounts for each municipality could be adjusted.

Lucie mentioned again that the new signs may be more expensive since they are now redesigned. She stated that we need to finalize the signs so that we can come with the new cost for the signs. Dale asked if the marijuana industry could help contribute to the cost. Jim mentioned that most of the excise tax they pay goes to the State but some of it will eventually come back to the municipalities. He said that this is a per facility reimbursement and only applies to recreational marijuana establishments.

Jim mentioned that ARPA money could hopefully be used to fund this, too. Florence asked about Build Back Better. Jim says that the details about this have not come out yet. Florence asked Jeff about the ARPA infrastructure money. Jeff said that it might apply, but that the process for this is closed at the moment. Jim said that much of this money was just put in the general fund to cover lost government revenue.

Florence asked if money to help pay for the signs could come out of the County general fund. Jeff said that it could if the County approves it. Florence suggested making a request for this once we figure out the actual amount the signs will cost. Jim mentioned that this request might fall under the public health and safety category.

Jim suggested that we also ask ITC for financial support. Florence mentioned that Cabela's is no longer a possible contributor. Other task force members suggested DTE and Consumer's Energy, and Consumer's "Put Your Town on the Map" grant was mentioned. Sue said that the Community Foundation of Monroe is accepting grant requests too. Florence said that they are currently on our list, and that she would ask them if they fund recreation projects.

Florence asked about the possibility of having a rideout of the route to see if the sign placement will be adequate. Sue said that we need to have the location of the signs tied in to the map of the route on the app. Florence said that we should shoot for July 1st as a date to have this completed.

Lucie said that we will eventually need a contract in order to complete the project plan, and that we should know by May how much money we will have. Jeff asked if we are sending a letter to the municipalities asking them for funding assistance. Florence said that we are doing actual presentations with each municipality. Sue said that she will create a schedule for these future presentations.

Trail Project List – Sue said that she will meet with Mary B. and Lucie on this. Florence said that she is just looking for a list of grants.

MCRC 5-Year Plan Overlay – Florence said that Bill is moving out of the state so she is not sure if there will be a fall Lake Erie Ride. Lucie said that she will work on this since Bill was originally supposed to be working on this.

Frenchtown Charter Township – Mary K. said that she is confident that things will work out when we make our proposal to the Township Board.

City of Luna Pier – Jim showed a picture of the old interurban bridge and trail. He said that turning this into a trail facility is a long-term project and right now it is currently a good place to hike. He stated that bicycles would be able to avoid using the truck route if they used this route, and suggested that the County could use some of their money on this project.

Mary asked if this could be part of the Great Lakes Way. Jim said that it could. Lucie showed a map indicating that this route is already part of our County Plan.

City of Petersburg – Florence said that Stella Kirby of the City of Petersburg has been invited to the April meeting and is eager to participate.

Monroe County Road Commission – Matt said that the Summit Street TAP grant application has been submitted.

Other comments – Florence went over what could be discussed at the April meeting. Jeff said that he will look into opening a line item to collect funding from the municipalities.

Dale suggested some more possible improvements to the sign. Florence said that she would ask the designer about these suggestions.