

Meeting Minutes

Huntingdon County Active Transportation Committee

Friday, April 26, 2024 @ 9:30AM

The following members were present at the meeting:

Jane Sheffield, Laura White, Laurie Nearhood, Chris Stevens, Matt Price, George Conrad, Nathan Querry, Zack Lee, Tracy Isenburg, Judy Scott, Alicia Grove, Laura White, Laurie Nearhood, George Conrad, Charles Harper, Brian Wiser, Zack Lee, Nathan Querry

Others in attendance included:

Jeff McCulley – President of the 9-11 Trail Alliance, Kylee Hawn – Huntingdon Daily News

I. Call to Order

Chairman Matt Price called the meeting to order at 9:31 A.M.

II. Review and Action on March 22, 2024, Meeting Minutes.

Matt asked the committee to review the March 22, 2024, meeting minutes for any additions or corrections to be made. Laura White had a comment regarding Union and Brady Townships. Following a response from Matt, he made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was carried unanimously.

III. Committee Member Terms of Office

Matt noted the terms expiring in 2025 and 2027. Chris Stevens, Debra Clark-Loner, Wendy Melius, and Nathan Querry have unassigned terms. Chris and Nathan recommended two years for their terms, so Matt added them to the 2025 list. He asked Alicia if she knew Wendy's preference. She did not but added that she was considering having Dan take her place on the committee. Matt reminded her they would need to fill out the volunteer form for the commissioners. Laurie will send her the form. This leaves two unassigned terms, Wendy, and Debra.

IV. Subcommittee Reports

Judy Scott noted they now have five interested individuals with three commitments for the Main Line Canal Greenway Segment 1 Subcommittee. They are Terry Reinhardt, John Daus, and Pam Gurgan. This will be brought before the Council at the May 6th meeting. She will also be going to Porter Townships meeting on May 7th to give them an update. The first scheduled meeting of the subcommittee will be the third week in June at a date and time to be determined.

Judy also informed the committee that there was a discussion about property just across the Alexandria Borough property line in Porter Township where a portion of the railroad and trail picks back up once you go through the Borough. This was discussed with the property owners and PennDOT (because they have a project underway), Commissioner Walls, and Rich Urban so they are aware that our objective is to bring Segment 1 in from Rails to Trails to connect to Canal Street in Alexandria. Matt added that he and Laurie attended PennDOT's Huntingdon County Outreach Meeting and they are redoing the stream crossing for Rt. 305, and they asked if that would have wide enough shoulders for bike lanes. PennDOT told them it will have 5 ft. shoulders on both sides.

Matt asked for volunteers for the Trails Summit. Someone suggested sending out a letter of interest to get the process started. Then a committee could be put together with those who show interest.

V. Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan Priorities

Promoting the Plan

It was recommended that a social media presence be developed. Rather than just having information on the website, a Facebook page could update people on what is happening in real time. Someone would need to maintain the site to respond to comments made there. The former committee had a Facebook page, they will check if it still exists and who maintained it. Matt asked if anyone had any objections to a Facebook page. There were no objections. Matt added that he is willing to be one of the administrators of the Facebook page. Matt will also check to see if the County has a social media policy to be sure it is followed. Jeff McCulley, President of the 9-11 Trail Alliance, added that he would be happy to share any updates on their social media platforms as well.

Matt asked Judy if there were any other townships that the committee needs to make presentations based on the association meeting she attended previously. She said that there are, and she will put together a more specific list for him.

Main Line Canal Greenway/September 11th National Memorial Trail Corridor

Matt noted that we already discussed Segment 1. For the second one, does anyone have a project that would be ready for the Southern Alleghenies Regional Greenways Mini-Grant program? The deadline is coming up in May. Judy asked if we needed the township to approve this. Matt said it could be a municipality or a non-profit. Matt didn't feel they were ready for a development project but plans and studies are eligible. They could consider applying to hire a consultant for a master plan. Match can be cash or eligible in-kind. There is already a route determined with two alternatives. The group seemed to feel it might be too early for this before knowing if the property owners are going to be on board.

Segment 13

Judy asked Jeff if he would like to speak about the current Norfolk Southern Northeast Track Solutions. Matt gave some background information for section 13, which connects

Huntingdon Borough at Standing Stone Creek to Ardenheim Village in Henderson Township. To make that section work, there is an abandoned roadway between the rail line and the Juniata River on the east side of Standing Stone Creek. The group would love to be able to use that old roadbed but need to get across the tracks to do so. The historical route was abandoned and seems to still be in PennDOT's possession but requires sharp turns that will be difficult to navigate. Vince Greenland from PennDOT District 9 is having his engineers draw up some plans to go over the tracks. This will require going very high up as this line uses many double-decker cars. It seems that the underpass would be easier than going over, but the engineers say the opposite is better. Someone also suggested building a lift. Matt also wondered if they could somehow incorporate a crossing into the existing Million Dollar Bridge. Jeff offered to help facilitate discussions with Northeast Track Solutions.

Segment 17A

This is the Jackson Narrow's segment. The alternative route uses the fire trail on the south side of the Juniata River and southside of the Norfolk Southern Mainline as well. There is also a 17B that would go down to the Lucy Furnace area and cross Route 22 near the existing intersection that goes into Mount Union. There was some discussion about four municipalities (Mount Union, Shirley, Union, and Mapleton) forming an authority.

Segment 19

This is the final segment in the county on the east end that connects the existing linear path on Pennsylvania Avenue to the Kessler Bridge and then continues on into Mifflin County. He received an update from Brian Weiser who met with Jim Lettiere from Mifflin County and had a chance to discuss partnering on the 911 memorial Trail segment between Mount Union and Kissler. Jim was very supportive. He is interested in starting a Mifflin County Active Transportation Committee and would like to attend our meetings once in a while. He also met with Blair County Commissioners and ABCD Corporation about an active transportation project in Blair County. He mentioned this committee and its plans and that their project would fit well to connect other projects in Huntingdon County and laid some groundwork for possible future collaborations. He noted that there could be a partnership between Blair, Huntingdon, and Mifflin Counties to benefit the local efforts for each.

Lifeways Projects

Nothing to report.

Trail Management Coordination

June 1, 2024, is national trails day. If anyone has anything going on for this, let Matt know and he will make sure it gets put on the Visitors Bureau website. If you follow the link on the agenda, you can also place your event on the American Hiking site.

Work has started on the Thousand Steps and will continue through the summer. They are going to try their first happy hour on Thursday as well.

Establish Connections to Centre, Bedford, Blair, and Mifflin Counties

Someone suggested adding Fulton County that. There is going to be a trail gap associated with Fulton County. Rothrock Trail Alliance has a proposed trail from State College to Whipple Dam State Park and they secured the funding and are now collecting bids to build the trail.

Centre County is currently doing an active transportation plan. They are currently collecting public comments.

Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission released its “Alleghenies Outdoors” Recreation Plan. A link was provided in the agenda. Matt recommended everyone look it over.

The remainder of the agenda was a list of upcoming funding opportunities.

VI. Set the next meeting date and time

Friday, May 31, 2024, at 9:30 A.M. in the Huntingdon Borough Municipal Building – Borough Council Chambers, 530 Washington Street, Huntingdon, PA 16652.

It was also noted that SAP&DC is looking to update its Greenways and Open Space Network Plan. This is in the very early stages and are currently looking for possibilities to cover the match. The current plan is 17 years old.

Zack added that this will be his last meeting. He has accepted the position as the Director of Business Development at SAP&DC.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:46 A.M.