

## Meeting Minutes

### Huntingdon County Active Transportation Committee

Friday, January 26, 2024 @ 9:30AM

The following members were present at the meeting:

Matt Price, Charles Harper, George Conrad, Zack Lee, Laurie Nearhood, Debra Clark, Laura White

Others in attendance included:

Mark Potter, Tracey Isenberg, Sam Isenberg, Thomas Yoder

#### **I. Call to Order**

Chairman Matt Price called the meeting to order at 9:34 A.M.

#### **II. Review and Action on January 5, 2024, Meeting Minutes.**

Matt asked the committee to review the January 5, 2024, meeting minutes for any additions or corrections to be made. With no further discussion, Matt asked for a motion to accept the minutes as presented. George Conrad made a motion and Zack Lee seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **III. Active Transportation Committee Charter approved by Huntingdon County Commissioners on January 16, 2024.**

Matt and Laurie presented to County Commissioners on January 16, 2024. The Commissioners took two actions: one to approve Committee Charter and second to add the Active Transportation Plan to the County Comprehensive Plan. Both actions were approved by the Commissioners. George asked a question pertaining to when the Committee should decide on member terms. Matt stated that the next meeting with the Commissioners will be to discuss this. George and Matt both agreed that this topic can be discussed further amongst Committee members at the next meeting.

#### **IV. Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan Priorities**

The first item was adding the Active Transportation Plan to the County Comprehensive Plan. The action was approved on January 16, 2024, as discussed previously. Judy was not present to talk about the presentations to township supervisors. Matt asked if any other members had any upcoming opportunities to present the Plan. Matt will be speaking at the Planning Commission's dinner on March 8, 2024. Laurie noted that the President of the

9/11 Trail Alliance will be the keynote speaker at the dinner. Matt asked that if any members are available, to please try and attend.

The next item was the Main Line Canal Greenway Segments 1, 13, and 19. Matt stated that, to his knowledge, there hasn't been any other actions on any of these segments. Sam Isenburg (public attendee) asked what the process is for the selection of the path(s). Sam voiced concern about the path selection for Segment 1 of the trail and wondered why the rail corridor isn't being used as the progressive plan. Matt responded by saying that the rail corridor is the ideal corridor; however, the ideal corridor is not always the most palatable. Matt also noted that there are two main alternatives to getting from the existing trailhead to the joint municipal park, which is the goal of Segment 1. The two main corridors would be the old rail line that runs behind Acco or alternatively, to parallel or be on-road on the main street extension past Acco to get to the park. Matt stated that the old rail corridor is the preferred route and would likely be owned/maintained by the Central PA Rails to Trails. Matt also stated that there are plenty of examples, both in Pennsylvania and elsewhere, of ways that trail management organizations have worked with property owners to make sure users aren't going to places they shouldn't be going to. Sam also wanted to know what the overall goal/intent of the project was. Matt responded by saying that the goal is to connect from county line to county line (Blair County to Mifflin County). This is the group's ultimate goal, but it has to be done in segments. This means looking at logical places to get to (e.g., connecting to the Borough, to parks, etc.) No further updates on Segments 13 or 19 or Lifeway Projects.

The next item was Trail Management Coordination. Matt introduced Mark Potter, Rothrock State Forest District Manager. Mark was a member of the original Huntingdon County Active Transportation Committee. There's an upcoming meeting in Boalsburg, PA, on February 20<sup>th</sup> for the Rothrock Trail Alliance. In 2016, the Bureau of Forestry, through an MOU with Penn State University, asked for a study to be done on the organized events for Rothrock and Michaux Forest Districts. Part of the project was a trails assessment, which focused on the most used recreational areas of the forest. Through the assessment, the contractor went out to the communities to talk with the public and other stakeholders to see how they used the state forest and what their needs were. Recommendations and comments showed that DCNR should be removing around 30-miles of unsustainable trail and proposed 60-miles of new, sustainable trail. The report was completed in 2018 and DCNR began implementation soon after with various partners. The original committee has now regrouped into the Rothrock Trail Alliance and are continuing to move the project forward. George noted that an important thing that was identified through the study was making connections from Huntingdon County into Centre County. George also wants to push for the Active Transportation Committee's involvement with the Rothrock Trail Alliance. Mark mentioned that Jay Zeigler, the chair of the Alliance, will be reaching out to George. Matt asked if the Alliance is incorporated. Mark stated that the Alliance is a committee under Clearwater Conservancy. Sam asked how you go about finding which

groups maintain/own certain trails. Matt responded by saying that through the Active Transportation Plan, it identified around 40 municipalities or groups that maintain trails and parks. These groups are a mix of non-profit organizations, volunteer groups, etc.

The next item (under Trail Management Coordination) was the American Hiking Society Alternative Break Program. Matt stated that this program encourages college students to use their spring break to conduct trail maintenance. The program accepts “host sites” in the fall of each year and promote it throughout the winter. The American Hiking Society provides transportation, stipend for meals, etc. The host site has to house the students (10-12 individuals), provide tools, and have a worksite supervisor. Matt is working with the Friends of Raystown Lake and the Army Corps of Engineers to host a group in 2025. Mark also mentioned that Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps (POC), through DCNR, is available to host crews as well.

The next item is Upcoming Funding Opportunities. Matt stated that there is an AARP Community Challenge grant with a deadline of March 6<sup>th</sup> that provides funding for a wide range of transportation and mobility options to increase walkability and accessibility. There’s also capacity-building micro grants for \$2,500 and demonstration grants. Matt also mentioned the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity or RAISE, has a February 28<sup>th</sup> deadline with a 20% match requirement. Grant awards up to \$25 million. Trails are eligible. The third program is the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program through FHWA. This program is for planning and design grants of no less than \$100,000. \$15 million minimum for construction projects. The PA Department of Health WalkWorks program has a deadline of March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Matt also mentioned the American Trails Trail Capacity Program and DCNR’s C2P2 program. Matt received information on these programs through other Active Transportation agencies and newsletters. Zack stated that he’s working on developing a funding summary that includes many of these programs and other programs that would be good fits for trail and recreation projects.

## **V. Other Business:**

Laurie had a call with Ilona Ballreich from Penn State University and the Sustainable Communities Collaborative. Ilona asked Laurie if there were any projects or ideas that her student groups could help with. Laurie provided her with the Active Transportation Plan and there’s an opportunity for the student groups to help with the Lifeway Projects.

Laurie also wondered if it was possible to move the Active Transportation Committee meeting to March 8<sup>th</sup> to meet with Jeff McCauley. Matt proposed meeting with Jeff separately instead of moving the meeting completely.

**VI. Set next meeting date and time**

Friday, February 23, 2024, at 9:30AM in the Huntingdon Borough Municipal Building – Borough Council Chambers, 530 Washington Street, Huntingdon, PA 16652

**VII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 A.M.