

Meeting Minutes
Huntingdon County Active Transportation Committee
Friday, July 29, 2022

The Huntingdon County Active Transportation Committee was called to order by Chairman Matt Price at 9:00AM. The meeting was held in the Annex I Building's Conference Room, at 205 Penn Street, Huntingdon PA, 16652.

Attending:

Charles Harper, Zack Lee, Matt Price, Vine Greenland, Judy Scott, George Conrad, Alisha Grove (for Wendy Melius), Debra Clark-Loner, James Lettiere and Jen Bellis.

Not in attendance:

Jane Sheffield, Laura White and Brian Wisser.

Minutes from June 24, 2022

Matt Price noted the minutes from the previous meeting had an error in the spelling of the Eisenburg name, which should be spelled Isenburg. Zack made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and George seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Jim discussed correspondence from Sam Pearson, with the PA Downtown Center regarding the Committee's grant request, who noted we submitted a good proposal. He added she requested formal approval from the County Commissioners for the \$5,000 committed from the Planning Department's budget. This item will be acted upon at the August 2, 2022 Commissioners meeting.

Jim mentioned Mifflin County Planning Department received PennDOT-Multi Modal funds of approximately \$90,000, to complete their active transportation plan and was unsure as to how they secured those funds. He added depending on what the costs will be based on the RFP, we may need to look further into this. The range for the plan's preparation may be between \$20,000-\$90,000.

A discussion was held regarding developing a segment of the 9/11 trail, i.e., segment 13 beginning under Penn Street and Norfolk Southern's bridge along (old SR 33) which then became (SR 22) to Nummers Hollow Road in Henderson Township. Jim mentioned one of the adjacent land owners in Henderson Township claims a portion of the PennDOT right-of-way reverted to his farm and this would need to be investigated further.

Matt spoke about his discussion with Brian Wisser and mentioned the three segments of the 9/11 trail we wish to develop presents challenges we will face in order to develop these areas as multi-use trails. He added the benefits of the initial segment along the (SR 33) from the 1940's, is that it is wide enough for a multi-use trail, since it is at least ten feet wide, however, the challenge is its location between the Juniata River and the Norfolk Southern rail line, which presents an access issue. The second option Matt discussed with Brian would be access from the Smithfield Township side from the VFW ballfields across the million dollar bridge. Perhaps its design can consist of adding a catwalk cantilevered from the pilings underneath (SR 22) to cross using the existing bridge. Vince Greenland reported the right-of-way for (SR 22) is complicated since it was

originally acquired via a statute from the PA General Assembly, in the early 1800's. PennDOT has no record that it was ever abandoned or vacated. He added he believes PennDOT still owns it and the issue would be legally transferring the right-of-way from PennDOT to a chosen entity, would most likely would be through a joint use lease.

Matt mentioned the discussion we had with the County Commissioners included possibly using American Recovery Act funding earmarked partly for tourism, parks and recreational recovery purposes, for preliminary engineering. He added ideally we should aim to have the first of three segments of the 9/11 trail complete by the 25th anniversary of the 9/11 events and the 250th anniversary of the Nation.

George stated he advocates for not having an asphalt surface for segment 13 and maybe crushed stone would be better. Matt noted since portions of the trail most likely will be within the floodway, the surface must be durable to withstand the flood waters. The nomenclature we use in our correspondence, should be used based on the Campbell Thomas study.

Deb Clark-Loner questioned whether the group looked into PA-DCNR funding and Matt noted the mini-grants through the Southern Alleghenies PA-DCNR program is a source and multi-modal funding via PennDOT and PA-DCNR are other sources. Matt noted the effort now is to secure funding for preliminary engineering design, so we can have a greater probability of securing grant funds.

Vince stated the effort to develop segment 13 which is a logical start and focusing in small areas versus large areas is a good approach. Matt briefly discussed the connection from Mount Union to Kistler Borough and since there is a well-worn path, this can be viewed as low hanging fruit based on his discussions with Brian Wisner, with Keller Engineers. This area is considered Segment 19 of the Campbell Thomas Study. The third target area of the 9/11 Memorial Trail is Segment 1, from the Alpharetta Trail Head to Barree Road. Jim questioned where in the study are the segments we are discussing. Matt forwarded the study via e-mail to all ATC members.

Jim mentioned the approximate length across Standing Stone Creek is 123-160 feet and presented a product from BGR Bridge regarding rolled girders/modular bridges. However, Vince mentioned the bigger obstacle would be the permitting, the elevation needed to adequately cross the creek and the permitting requirements, versus the type of pedestrian walkway.

Vince mentioned attempting to secure grant funds for this project would necessitate some preliminary engineering and a project sponsor and questioned who would own and maintain the trail. Matt noted the meeting we had with the County Commissioners included a discussion that the Huntingdon County General Authority or creating a Recreation and Parks Authority may serve as the owners. Alternatively, if these options are not viable, we can discuss ownership with Central PA Rails to Trails. Jim asked Zack Lee what would need to be done to get the three segments on the candidate project listing with Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Zack noted he would e-mail Jim the link and said they will not be considering other projects until December 2022. Vince stated he wasn't sure we need preliminary engineering estimates as much as we needed a feasibility study to determine what the sequence of steps and options would be for us to complete the 3 segments which can include probable costs.

Deb Clark-Loner noted if the Commissioners open the American Rescue Plan Act funds up for the public use, this is a one-time infusion into the economy and we should ask for the maximum amount, since we most likely won't see this type of funding again.

Vince stated the terminus points for all 3 segments, are important and mentioned the Federal Highway Administration values what is considered a logical termini with a trail head and parking features for projects such as this.

A discussion was held regarding the entities involved with segment 13 which would include Norfolk Southern, the PA Public Utility Commission, Huntingdon Borough and Henderson Township. It was agreed that our next steps will have to include outreach to Norfolk Southern to determine their position regarding our desire to create this trail for segment 13. Jim mentioned Rudy Husband is no longer with Norfolk Southern and received information of a contact from Harrisburg. He said he would forward her name, number and e-mail to Matt. It was agreed that Matt may have more success with contacting her to determine whether they are willing to work with us to develop this segment.

Matt noted we should consider what scope of work we need to include for the Request for Proposals and asked if we are in agreement with segments 1, 13, and 19 of the Campbell Thomas Main Line Canal Greenway Trail. All appeared to be in agreement. Jim suggested we try to secure preliminary engineering and design costs from Brian and go back to the Commissioners and mention these are the figures we estimate the costs to be. If they agree to provide funding, we can complete a RFP for engineering and design for all 3 segments. Deb Clark-Loner noted she thinks we should complete the RFP for all 3 segments.

A motion was made by Deb Clark-Loner to combine Segments 1, 13, and 19, however, noting all three are separate and distinct segments in one RFP. The motion was seconded by Judy Scott. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

Matt asked about the County's 2022 Act 13 awards and Jim mentioned the process is over for 2022 and 3 projects were funded by the County Commissioners. The official name of the study for these trail projects are contained in a report entitled "A feasibility study for the Main Line Canal Greenway Trail" (A segment of the September 11th National Memorial Trail) Huntingdon and Mifflin Counties, PA prepared for: Allegheny Ridge Corporation, Altoona Ridge Corporation.

A brief discussion was held regarding sidewalks and bike lanes in Porter Township and Vince agreed to look into the road from rails to trails in front of Barree Road. George mentioned we need to consider other potential projects such as in the Three Springs area.

Our next meeting will be Friday, August 26, 2022 at 9:00AM.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:11AM

Respectfully submitted,
James P. Lettiere, AICP
Planning Director