



Committee Meeting ~ NIRPC October 26, 2017

Members & Guests –Aaron Borngraber, George Topoll, Jan Dick, Will Farrellbegg, Nichole DeMario, Mark Schreiber, Robert Boklund, Steve Antonetti, Mark O'Dell, Dean Button, Denny Cobb, Eric Ehn, AJ Monroe, Shannon Eason, Jake Ballah, Tonya Garland

Staff – Mitch Barloga, Rachel Veronesi, Mary Thorne

Vice Chair Will Farrellbegg called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. with self-introductions.

Ped

A. South Shore Trails (SST) Update – No report was given.

Pedal

A. Feature Presentation I: Marquette Greenway TIGER Grant Application – *Mitch Barloga, NIRPC*
Mitch Barloga gave an overview of the history of the Marquette Plan, Phases I and II, Marquette Action Plan and the newly branded Marquette Greenway. Of the 58 miles in length, only 28 miles have been constructed and funded. NIRPC just submitted an application for the TIGER grant to fund 20 projects in the 30 remaining tri-state miles in Illinois, Indiana and Michigan. The total cost is about \$35.5 million and the application is for \$24.2 million. Our local match is about 32%. We have received 72 letters of support at all levels of government, communities, business, non-profits, IDNL and IDSP. The benefit cost analysis proves it is an excellent investment. Since the TIGER grant's creation in 2009, \$5.1 billion has been awarded to 421 projects in all 50 states. \$500 million is available in this round and only about 5% of projects submitted are selected. We now need a full funding commitment from the communities involved. The grants will be announced either in late 2017 or early 2018. One of Rails to Trails big initiatives is to extend a national network from DC to Seattle and they are looking at the Marquette Greenway as being a part of this network.

Paddle

A. NWI Paddling Association –

Mitch read a written report submitted by Zully Alvarado. NWIPA completed their 8th season. There were 13 regular paddling events serving over 1200 paddlers and three Marquette Park Thursday night paddles. Four new events were added. They held their 1st Annual Creekness Stakes Wilderness Canoe fundraiser and provided volunteers and boats at four paddling events targeting people with disabilities, frequently partnering with *Causes for Change* and *The Blind Social Center*. As a result of eight years and 4,000 man hours of work, eight miles of water trails are now open on the East Branch of the Little Calumet River Water Trail.

Grab Bag

A. Project Updates

- Mark O'Dell said the Westchester trail final walkthrough will be November 1, but there is still a year to go for the litigation on the wetland.

- Robert Boklund said the September 24 8th Annual Celebration and Boat Trek of LaPorte's Chain of Lakes event was very successful. The event is the collaboration of the LaPorte County Conservation Trust and the Northwest Indiana Paddling Association to showcase the historic LaPorte Chain-of-Lakes Blueway.
- Shannon Eason said for Phase 3 of Singing Sands, we need to determine if the trail will go north of Trail Creek and may go along the front entrance to Friendship Gardens. Regarding Phase 2 they met with Waste Inc. and the EPA attorneys and we are very close to coming to an agreement with all parties involved.
- Mark Schreiber said the Chessie 1 right of way looks good and the project will let in March with a \$232,000 grant from the Healthcare Foundation, created by the sale of the LaPorte Hospital, for construction.

B. Emerging Trends Videos – *The Need for Bike Lanes and Three Dimensional Crossings in Iceland.* Mitch added that the first regional raised crosswalk will be in Highland and Griffith on the Erie Lackawanna Trail.

C. General Announcements

- INDOT is doing a call for projects in rural areas like Kouts, LaCrosse, North Judson, Schneider and Wanatah which are not in an urbanized area.
- America Walks is putting out community change grants in the amount of \$1500 each, due by November 10. Mitch will email the link with all the information.
- NIRPC is looking to have the 2020 Greenways + Blueways Plan adopted in January.

D. Next 3PC Meeting is Thursday, December 7, 2017 at 1:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.