

Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee Meeting
Virtual Meeting
January 6, 2022
Minutes

This meeting was convened as an electronic meeting, pursuant to Governor Holcomb's extended Executive Order 21-33. All persons were meeting remotely via Zoom platform that allowed for real time interaction and supported the public's ability to observe and record the proceedings. When the agenda item was provided for public comment, this was supported as well. A roll call was taken to motion and approve the agenda items if needed.

Chairman Andrew Kyres called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

In attendance were Andrew Kyres (Crown Point), Mike Jabo (Valparaiso), Rafi Wilkinson, Shannon Eason (Michigan City), Jake Dammarell (BFS), Kelly Goodpaster, George Topoll (Union Township), Dustin New (MACOG), Don Parker (SST), Don Oliphant (CBBEL), Deb Backhus, Dalia Zygas, Anne Lee, Sue Lynch (Portage), and Dave Peeler.

NIRPC staff present were Meredith Stilwell, Kevin Polette, Candice Eklund, Mitch Barloga, and Flor Baum.

There were no public comments.

The minutes of the October 7, 2021 meeting were approved on motion by Sue Lynch and second by Dave Peeler.

Ped

Mitch presented on the bike map application updates. There are delays due to the expansion of the map now covering parts of Illinois. NIRPC staff continues to work with Northeast Illinois and the south suburbs of Chicago to roll out the bike map mobile app through My City Bikes and Calumet Collaborative. A draft is anticipated to be launched in March.

Mitch presented on the Old Plank Road Trail Study update. A study is slated to be launched between NIRPC and Illinois in February. NIRPC is working on selecting a consultant for the year-long study. Communities in Southern Cook County received \$300K grant from Cook County. NIRPC is partnering with \$50K to bring this study into Dyer and Schererville to extend the Old Plank Road Trail.

Mitch presented on the IJA Passage & Active Transportation Funding update. NIRPC-administered transportation funding will be \$86.3M, of which Transportation Alternative (TA) projects will be included. This will allow more projects to receive funding in the next NOFA round.

Pedal

Don Parker spoke on the South Shore Trail (SST) updates. SST is currently looking into upcoming projects, such as Old Plank Road Trail. SST is reaching out to various municipalities to further discuss what they might fund in terms of trail projects, and how SST can be of service.

Mitch spoke on the Trail Counters (TCs) update. NIRPC is working on distributing new, GPS, electronically based, TCs throughout The Region. NIRPC staff will reach out to stakeholders who have asked for TCs to receive the 20% local match before purchasing. NIRPC will provide 80% of the cost.

Kevin Polette spoke on the Data Bike update. NIRPC is partnering with MACOG for both entities to use the data bike. The overall function of the bike will take data of the condition of all Region trails via video footage and GPS location. The data bike is slated to be ready by the spring.

Mitch Barloga and Rafi Wilkinson (IDNP) presented on the Marquette Greenway (MG) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability & Equity (RAISE) Award: Next Steps. This project will complete the remaining 20 mi. of the MG, a bike/pedestrian trail that spans 60 mi. NIRPC has partnered with Indiana Dunes National Park (IDNP) for the MG project. IDNP will manage project that falls within the national park property; approximately six mi. The IDNP is working on land acquisition for 22 parcels of abandoned railroad land. The IDNP plans to use in-house funding (approx. \$5M). NIRPC will work with entities to complete the balance of the project. \$17,799,282 was awarded in RAISE grants; \$5M short of what is needed to complete the MG. NIRPC will submit another application through Next Level Trails to make up the difference. Additionally, a Regional Economic Acceleration & Development Initiative (READI) state program grant application was submitted, Northwest Indiana was led by NWI Forum and 36 projects were selected for funding, including the MG. The Forum awarded \$50M, with MG slated to receive up to \$3M in funds to aid with local match obligations. For more information, please reach out to Mitch at mbarloga@nirpc.org.

Paddle

Nothing to report.

Grab Bag

Mitch spoke on the toolkit for Year of the Trails (YT). The toolkit includes ideas for community activities to celebrate YT and raise awareness of the benefits of trails.

Announcements

Announcements were made.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 26, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.