



## Committee Meeting ~ NIRPC May 25, 2017

**Members & Guests** –Aaron Borngraber, Mark Schreiber, Robert Boklund, John Novacich, Craig Zandstra, Jan Dick, Will Farrellbegg, Shannon Eason, Bob Huffman, Sedrick Green, Jeff Sheridan, Chris Moore, Steve Buchtel

**Staff** – Mitch Barloga, Meredith Stilwell

Vice-Chair Farrellbegg called the meeting to order at 1:37 with self-introductions.

### **Ped**

#### **A. South Shore Trails (SST) Update –**

Since the Gary Air Show has been cancelled, SST will not be assisting with bike parking. They recently helped out with a trail survey and Mitch indicated their help would be needed again for an upcoming survey.

Due to the late arrival of the feature presenter, the paddle portion and project updates portion of the agenda were moved up.

### **Paddle**

#### **A. NWI Paddling Association –**

Mitch gave an update from an email sent to him by Zully Alvarado. Three intro to kayaking classes will be offered this summer. Save the Dunes and NWIPA will work together to ensure a qualified contractor is hired to meet log jam removal specifications complete removals by January 2019 on the Little Calumet East Branch. Remaining jams will be modified by volunteers. Upcoming events include the Little Cal Paddle, Trail Creek Fun Float and Outdoor Adaptive Escapade.

### **Grab Bag**

#### **A. Project Updates**

- Calumet Trail: West side being completed first, the East side will probably be in 2020.
- Singing Sands I, II and III: On schedule for Phase I letting in March 2018. Phase II is in the preliminary design phase with a walk through scheduled the week of May 22-26. Phase III is being surveyed.
- Oak Savannah Extension west out of Oak Ridge Prairie: Hopefully ready to go in mid-June.
- Marquette Greenway: In right-of-way acquisition. Design stage 3 is ready to submit. Scheduled for letting February 2018.
- Pennsy: Appraisals are complete. Notice of publications and offers are being drafted.
- Chessie: Working through acquisition with construction in spring 2018.
- Valparaiso: Will be working on a pathway up Calumet Avenue from Bullseye Lake Road to Burlington Beach Road.

- A 1.5 to 2 mile turf field perimeter trail is being developed in the northwest corner of Buckley Homestead for equestrian and pedestrian usage.

## **Pedal**

### **A. Trails for Illinois Update – Steve Buchtel, Executive Director**

Some issues facing trails in Illinois include: poor design; no maintenance; no resources for maintenance; and no volunteer stewardship or culture of trail building. Funding reductions and resource problems are a shared issue for the building of trails. Before current funding sources were available trails were built by volunteer groups. The Illinois Trail Corp was formed in 2014 with the idea to go back to the service lead, volunteer powered trail building experience; organizing and training people to become trail builders and trail stewards. A trailer was purchased with the help of sponsors and is used to carry tools that were donated. The Illinois Trail Corp partnered with Americorp and National Civilian Community Corp and recruited volunteers to help build natural surface trails. This type of trail building helps to instill a sense of community. This year a partnership has been formed with a conservation land trust. The goal is to scale this as a model around the state; not just staying with natural surface trails, but to get to multi-use surface trails. Steve offered this concept as an idea for Indiana. The most used and popular trails are connected loops, and there are opportunities in communities for the connected loops to raise the quality of life for those who live adjacent.

Leslie Phemister noted Active Transportation Alliance is calling on northwest Indiana residents to let their legislators know they shouldn't be stopping the Burnham Gap trail project going forward in Illinois. If NICTD chooses to make a bridge mandatory then bridges should be mandatory at every crossing on their new Westlake corridor.

Steve spoke about the Big Marsh Bike Park which is a popular attraction, but not easily accessible by bike. Active Transportation Alliance has been working on an access study to Big Marsh to make sure that northwest Indiana and the south suburbs can all connect by bicycle.

### **B. Emerging Trends Video – No video was shown.**

### **C. General Announcements**

- Valparaiso Biking and Eggs - Saturday, June 3.
- National Trails Day – Saturday, June 3
- 2020 G+B Plan still under staff review. Delayed until at least July.
- Applications for the next funding round next year will need to be prepared sometime this fall. Methodology will still be determined by 3PC.

### **D. Next 3PC Meeting is Thursday, June 22, 2017**

The meeting adjourned at 2:36.