

## **Medina County Bicycle Transportation Task Force**

**Dec. 7, 2017**

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **Call to Order**

The meeting was held in Balcony Room A of the Medina County Administration Building, 144 N. Broadway, Medina. Co-Chair Tim Smith called the meeting to order at approximately 11:35 a.m. Co-Chair Beth Schnabel asked John Gladden to record the minutes.

#### **Attendance**

Present were: John Gladden (Medina County Park District), Lynne Nawalaniec (Century Cycles), John Piepsny (Brunswick Parks and Recreation), Tony Ratejczak (NOACA Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Medina County representative), Tom Ries (Wadsworth community representative), Co-Chair Beth Schnabel, Pete Smakula (owner of Electric Pete's E-Bikes in Akron and a Medina County resident), Co-Chair Tim Smith, Suzanne Swain (Friends of Medina Parks) and Jansen Wehrley (Medina Parks and Recreation).

#### **Old Business**

Lynne gave a recap of the Nov. 16 Medina County Bicycle Map Public Workshop hosted by NOACA at the Medina Library, which several committee members attended. The consensus was the turnout was disappointing. To gain additional public input, NOACA's Katie Sieb gave Lynne a "Where do you like to ride?" map of Medina County to post in the bike shop to invite more cyclists to mark favorite bicycle routes.

Beth suggested inviting Katie to meet with a core group of committee members between official committee meetings to continue progress on the map. A potential date of Jan. 2 was suggested with the time TBD, based on Katie's availability. Lynne offered Century Cycles as a meeting place. This would be considered the committee's January meeting.

Beth presented an annual report summarizing the committee's activities. She said the report helps in documenting the committee's accomplishments and identifying goals.

Tony suggested the committee conduct an inventory of bicycle parking racks in Medina County. Beth noted that would be a good goal for 2018. Jansen and John P. reported on bike rack locations in their respective cities. Committee members noted they would like to see bike racks in front of businesses and at the new restroom facilities on Medina's Public Square. Jansen said those locations do not fit with the city's master plan or within Historic Preservation District guidelines. And it may be difficult to find a place for them near the restrooms due to the high volume of pedestrian traffic. The racks likely would have to be located behind businesses or in

parking lots, but not on sidewalks. While the city would not approach businesses with requests to place bike racks, the committee could approach businesses with the idea.

Tony noted the more visible the bike racks are, the more likely people would be to use them. Beth suggested perhaps there could be signage to direct people to bicycle parking. Beth asked Tom to look into the availability of bike racks in Wadsworth.

### New Business

Beth read a letter she plans to present to Medina County Commissioners on Dec. 12 advocating bicycling infrastructure improvements, like widened roads to accommodate bike lanes. Such improvements potentially could be funded by a tax issue placed before county voters.

Tim observed it's important to consistently bring bicycling transportation issues before county officials if there are going to be changes down the road.

Lynne noted information on the Lake to Lake Harvest Ride must be provided to the Ohio Bicycle Federation by Jan. 15 in order to get it into the 2018 Ohio Bicycle Events Calendar. Lynne said she would like to see the event continue as a partnership with the Medina County Park District. Suzanne and John G. agreed.

Beth presented information on a proposed state Route 18 widening project that calls for a 10-foot-wide multi-use path to be constructed on the Montville Township side of the highway between Nettleton Road and Cleveland Clinic Medina Hospital. The township maintenance supervisor expressed concern in a newspaper article over maintenance costs for the path. Beth invited committee members to attend upcoming Montville Township trustees meetings Dec. 12 and Dec. 20 to advocate for the path.

Tony noted an additional concern for the project would be creating safe crossings for cyclists and pedestrians to get from one side of the highway to the other.

Beth noted there is an upcoming meeting between University Hospitals physician Dr. John Surso and Medina County Park District Director Tom James to look at the possibility of constructing a trail along the Rocky River corridor that runs through the UH campus.

Beth invited Pete to give the committee an overview of e-bikes, which are bicycles with small, assistive motors. He operates a shop called Electric Pete's E-bikes in Akron. Pete said the e-bikes travel up to 20 mph and have a range of 20-60 miles. Their quality is very good, noting that he easily rode an e-bike up Cadillac Hill in Akron, which has a 28 percent grade. Contrary to misconceptions, Pete said the bikes are safe and permissible on most park trails.

John P. reported Brunswick and the Medina County Park District are working toward an agreement for the park district to take over operation of Brunswick Lake, with the long-term goal of connecting it to Plum Creek Park via a trail.

Tom shared information about the new Wadsworth trail, which is very near completion. It is a combination of pavement and crushed limestone surfaces. Grants were obtained to construct the trail and to renovate a trail house at the trailhead, where there will be parking and available meeting space. A Friends of Wadsworth Trails organization has been formed to provide support. The hope is the trail will eventually extend to Norton and Barberton and connect to the Towpath Trail.

Beth suggested the committee hold one of its future meetings at the trail, followed by a bike ride.

Jansen gave an update on cycling infrastructure projects in Medina, including the 10-foot-wide multi-use path on the west side of North Court Street and an upcoming bike lane project on South Court Street. The city has reached an agreement with the Cleveland Area Mountain Bike Association to provide certified individuals to patrol city mountain bike trails and monitor trail safety. Jansen noted Medina is becoming a destination for mountain bikers, between the city's park trails and the trails at Montville Township's Austin Badger Park. The city is also working on bike route signage with the park district.

Beth said crossing signals need improvement along the North Court Street path. Jansen said that is in the works for this winter.

Tony noted North Carpenter Road in Brunswick is scheduled to be rebuilt, so now is the time to advocate for bicycling infrastructure to be included in the project. John P. will look into it.

John G. reported the park district has successfully obtained a grant that will allow for the construction of a connector between the Lake Medina trail and the Yours Truly plaza. This will help connect that retail area with the neighborhoods along Reagan Parkway and other areas.

Lynne said she was contacted by a real estate agent named Sherry Stone who saw the newspaper story on the NOACA bike map workshop and wants to offer information on grants that help fund items like signage. Lynne has not heard back from Sherry and has been unable to contact her. Lynne has left a message with the Medina County Board of Realtors to try to reach her. If other committee members would happen to hear from her or obtain her contact information, please let Lynne know.

There being no additional business before the committee, Lynne made a motion to adjourn. Tim adjourned the meeting at 12:54 p.m.