

Ypsilanti Non-Motorized Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 7, 2019

1. Call to order - The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm at the Ypsilanti District Library, 229 W. Michigan Avenue. Committee members attending were Sarah Walsh, Dylan Goings Jared Talaga and Bob Krzewinski. Also attending was City Planner Bonnie Wessler.
2. Introductions - Audience participation - Public input - None
3. General business
 - a. Agenda approval - A motion was made by Sarah, seconded by Jared to approve the agenda, passing unanimously.
 - b. Approval of January meeting minutes - A motion was made by Sarah, seconded by Jared to approve the minutes, passing unanimously.
 - c. Additional Committee member recruitment – Bob will post Committee Facebook requests for volunteers and also use the Mayor’s newsletter.
 - d. Non-Motorized Advisory Committee Improved Collaboration & By-Laws Revision – Having the Committee more involved in City non-motorized issues was discussed with a goal of the Committee becoming much more involved in the City’s 2020 budget. Bonnie will also review the discussions leading up to the formation of the Committee.
4. Old & continuing business
 - a. 2019 Committee priorities
 1. City Non-Motorized Plan – Jared gave an update on the draft with a request that all text revisions be sent to him by March 11th with the plan being to have the final draft completed for review by the Planning Commission at their April 17th meeting. Prior to the start of the April Planning Commission meeting there will be a public input session from 6pm to 7pm. Stakeholders will also be emailed a copy of the final draft before April 15th and the Committee will also solicit input at the Ypsilanti Earth Day Festival on April 14th. Jared will also have the City Sustainability Commission review the draft.
 2. Sidewalk curb cut inventory & improvements – The Committee will start working on creating a “top 10” list of curb cut needs and improvements and forwarded to the Planning Department for possible incorporation into a work plan for the City.
 3. Pedestrian Improvements –The newly approved (by City Council 3/5/19) Responsive Traffic Safety Improvement policy was discussed where citizens can petition for traffic calming measures in their neighborhood. A City web page will be created for this policy and the Committee will publicize this on their web and Facebook pages.
 4. Bike Lanes – West Cross Street – Design work is continuing that would incorporate traffic calming measures, including bike lanes and a center turn lane in the Mansfield Street area.
 5. Communication – The Committee is planning to have a May local 3-foot passing law education drive with publicity finalized by the time of the April Committee meeting.
 6. Non-Motorized City budget – Amount of funds for non-motorized projects, Committee involvement in disbursement decisions – No new update.

7. Bike Boulevards – The initial plan would be use Adams Street, from Harriet to Forest, as a pilot project.
8. Border To Border Trail gap completion & improvements – Plans are for improvements on Grove Road and Frog Island Park to begin construction in late 2019 and 2020.
9. Walk Friendly Community application – 2019 deadlines are June 15 and December 15.
10. Sidewalk/Curb Cut snow removal promotion – February and March were a difficult time for sidewalk snow/ice removal due to extended hard freeze periods.
11. Events – The Commission will have a table at the Ypsilanti Earth Day Festival (4/14, Cultivate, 3-7pm). Bob will plan for a Water Street B2B Trail walk on national Trails Opening Day 4/13. Bob will work on obtaining helmet donations for the annual Parkridge Festival.
12. Dockless bicycle/scooter policy by City – City Council unanimously approved a first reading of a new Shared Mobility Device ordinance at its March 4th meeting that contained input from the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee through Dylan's research work.

5. New Business

- a. Planning Department update – Bonnie gave updates on City non-motorized plans including Huron/Hamilton/Cross/Washtenaw MDOT work and planning for a new Cross Street bridge.
- b. Parkridge bike repair station – Bob will work with the Washtenaw Bicycling & Walking Coalition on an AARP Community Challenge grant application and matching fund contribution to fund a Dero bicycle repair stand for the Parkridge Community Center. Bonnie could author a support letter from the City.
- c. Public comment on amendment to the SEMCOG - FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program – Input from the Committee to SEMCOG will be done before a March 14th deadline.

6. Other Items – Announcements – None.

7. Adjournment - A motion was made by Sarah, seconded by Jared, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm. The next meeting will be Thursday, April 4, 7pm at the downtown Library.

Underground Railroad Bicycle Tour Route Passes Through Ypsilanti & Ann Arbor

The Adventure Cycling Association established a spur route of its Underground Railroad bicycle tour route that passes through Ypsilanti, as well as Ann Arbor and Saline.

The Underground Railroad Bicycle Route (UGRR) honors the bravery of those who fled bondage and those who provided shelter. This route passes points of interest and historic sites along a 2,008-mile corridor. Beginning in Mobile, Alabama – a busy port for slavery during the pre-civil war era – the route goes north following rivers through Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Waterways, as well as the North Star, were often used by freedom seekers as a guide in their journeys to escape slavery. The tour route ends at Owen Sound, a town founded by freedom seekers in 1857. Owen Sound is located on the southern side of Lake Huron's Georgian Bay.

In Ypsilanti, the Underground Railroad Bicycle Route travels along Clark Road, Oakwood Street, Michigan Avenue and Grove Road, urging visiting cyclists to visit historical sights along the way. Specifically the route recommends in Ypsilanti a visit to...

- The Elijah McCoy Commemorative Marker at the Ypsilanti Public Library commemorates Elijah McCoy, famous African-American inventor who had more patents than any other black inventor up to that time. His emancipated father and enslaved mother escaped with help from Underground Railroad conductors and then settled in Ypsilanti before the Civil War.
- The Leonard Chase House behind the Thompson Block building -- Leonard Chase housed freedom seekers and Mrs. Eurotas Morton brought bread for them from her house in the 200 block of N. River Street.

The Underground Railroad route also allows bicyclists to travel on sections of Washtenaw County's Border To Border Trail.

The Adventure Cycling Association was established to inspire people of all ages to travel by bicycle. The non-profit group helps cyclists explore the landscapes and history of America for fitness, fun, and self-discovery and has created one of the largest bicycle tour route networks in the world at 41,399 miles (and growing). Established in 1973 as Bikecentennial, Adventure Cycling is the premier bicycle travel organization in North America with 44,500 members nationwide and is headquartered in Missoula, Montana.

Washtenaw County Underground Railroad Bicycle Route Map Section -

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/886cc1_59092531277747babfb7a9c05e9fd4cb.pdf

Complete Underground Railroad Bicycle Route Information -

<http://www.adventurecycling.org/routes-and-maps/adventure-cycling-route-network/underground-railroad-ugrr/>