

**M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, May 12, 2009 9:30 a.m.  
West Traverse Township Hall**

Members Present

Joey Arbaugh, West Traverse Township  
Bob Sandford, West Traverse Township  
Eric Rasmussen, Friendship Township  
Bill Prall, Friendship Township  
Larry Wallen, Readmond Township  
Rob Deane, Cross Village Township  
Henry Singer, Cross Village Township  
Naomi Singer, Cross Village Township  
Richard Cobb, Emmet County Lakeshore Association  
Dave Shear, Emmet County Lakeshore Association  
Dell Weitzel, Emmet County Lakeshore Association

Partners

Dave Langhorst, Michigan Department of Transportation  
Kieran Fleming, Little Traverse Conservancy

Others

Lisa Morris, Citizen  
Catherine Riendel, Readmond Township  
George Riendel, Readmond Township

Staff Present

Patty O'Donnell, Northwest Michigan Council of Governments

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Naomi Singer called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Introductions were made around the room.

**II. Public Comment**

Lisa Morris stated that she lives nearby the Township Hall on the Heritage Route and was looking into more community involvement and so came to the meeting.

**III. Review Proposed Agenda**

Motion made by Rob Deane, support by Joey Arbaugh to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

**IV. Review and Approve Previous Meeting's Minutes (March 10, 2009)**

Naomi requested a clarification on page 2; VII. c. Wooden Bridge Update. Dave Shear stated to add the word citizens to ...and a citizens' petition is being circulated. Motion made by Joey Arbaugh, support by Rob Deane to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2009 meeting with correction. Motion carried.

**V. New Business**

a. M-119 Committee Open House

Naomi explained that the open house would be like an annual meeting event.. Naomi and Carolyn Sandford will be planning the event.

#### b. National Scenic Byways Conference

Patty stated that the National Scenic Byways Conference is held every other year and this year it is being held August 23-26<sup>th</sup> in Denver, Colorado. The Committee chairs from the Council of Governments' three heritage routes chairs are being invited to attend with their registration and travel expenses paid by the programs. Naomi asked if there was anyone interested in attending and to let her know with the next week. There was a question regarding the Committee's budget. Patty stated that she will bring the total budget amount for the Heritage Route Committee Program to the June meeting. Dave Langhorst added that the total funding for the Heritage Routes is 80% Federal and 20% State.

### **VI. Old Business**

#### **a. Management Plan Update Summary Public Comments**

EMAIL, PHONE

1. Ronna York, Friendship Township: Concerned about fire along the route and fire suppression issues (access from east/west roads); doing a great job and if there is anything she can help with, let her know.
2. Property owner – received the flyer and wanted recommendations on a contractor to contact for development of a steep driveway on the east side of the Route to do the right thing. Suggested they contact the Emmet County Soil Erosion Officer.
3. Sherry Jones lives in the Tunnel of Trees: Applauds our efforts, backs what we are doing, and what could be done to make it law.
4. Linda Jelinek, Lakeshore Drive: requested a hard copy of the Management Plan Update

### **VII. Project Updates**

#### **a. Educational Activities**

##### **1. Guidebook Update**

Patty distributed copies of a draft revision of the Guidebook. Discussion followed: distribution to real estate offices; continue to look at outcomes instead of just process; document that the Committee is making things different; what does the Committee accomplish – what otherwise would happen on the heritage route; address how we are going to distribute the Guidebook into the hands of the users – township halls, historical society, Good Hart store, Good Hart Mini Fair, a notice in the annual tax bills/property owners; Emmet County Building Permits office; Harbor Inc. website, M-119 website, press release, at each resource site on the back of the Guidebook, summer events, yacht club, Good Hart picnic, Emmet County Lakeshore Association (ECLA) annual picnic, door to door to ECLA members. Please get comments/changes to Patty by May 27<sup>th</sup> to have final copy for of 500 copies to start. It was suggested to identify each Heritage Route Committee member in the Guidebook with name and phone number, and the remaining meeting dates for 2009 and locations. Suggested project: Heritage Route accomplishments and the value to changing behavior along the roadway.

##### **2. Good Hart Fair**

The Fair is being held on Sunday, July 19<sup>th</sup> and the Heritage Route will have a display table again. Patty stated that any volunteers are welcome to help for an hour shift.

#### **b. Wooden Bridge Update**

Dave Langhorst stated that was no update at this time.

### **c. Signs and Heritage Routes Committee**

Patty reported that the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments received a project authorization of \$21,000 from the Michigan Department of Transportation for the Michigan Heritage Routes and Signage Committee that will end September 30, 2009. There was a question of funding awards during this economy situation. Dave Langhorst stated that this was 80% federal and 20% state funds that had already been assigned to the Michigan Heritage Route Program and is not up for cuts. This project will come to a conclusion through the work of the 16 heritage routes that the heritage routes are special with regards to signs. There will be MDOT staff interaction from across the state, including Lansing management involved in this project. The Committee will be collecting the heritage routes' sign issues; negative and positive examples on their routes; they will be sorted out and a strategy for MDOT will be developed.

### **VIII. Correspondence**

No correspondence at this time.

### **IX. Committee Member Comment**

Carolyn Sandford by email regarding an erosion situation and should be in the Committee's message of "what not to do". Bob Sandford passed around pictures of the erosion that occurred across from the former Lorenzo's restaurant of extreme washout/erosion. It could have been from the plowing of snow from the parking lot across the heritage route which destroyed the narrow berm. How much does this happen in other areas of the heritage route? If anyone sees any problems along the heritage route, please contact the MDOT Transportation Service Center, Theresa Brockway at 989-344-1802 (need 800 number) and the Emmet County Road Commission. Snowplowing across a state or county roadway is illegal. Need to put this information in the Guidebook.

Richard Cobb reported that the Tunnel of Trees sign at Robinson Road has been repaired, but not moved.

Bill Prall stated that the Committee should look into the practice of the dumping of phonebooks at property owners mailboxes/driveways when there is no one occupying the house at that time – is this littering? (Yellowbook; ATT, Phone Guide) Also, undelivered phonebooks were dumped at Wycamp Lake with many still wrapped in plastic. Naomi and Henry will look into this issue.

Bill also expressed concern with the Zoo Bar (Boyne Highlands) to Mackinaw bicycling event May 16-17<sup>th</sup>. The concerns are about 2,000 people who are unruly, a nuisance and give bicyclists a bad name. The state and county law enforcement need to issue tickets. The Heritage Route Committee has contacted law enforcement many times over the years notifying them of upcoming bicycling events and "Share the Road" brochures have been distributed by the 1000 to groups. Dave Langhorst will contact law enforcement, also others with their concerns. Catherine Reindel added there needs to be organized contacts, more people to law enforcement with the issues of safety and trespassing of private property.

### **X. Public Comment**

George Reindel asked what would be the allocation rate for the Wooden Bridge. Dave Langhorst stated that the Wooden Bridge project was not submitted for any America's Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding; this is not a priority and is not listed in MDOT's five

year plan. A grant was submitted to the National Scenic Byways Program and if the grant is awarded it may be implemented no earlier than 2010-11. There are no other projects on M-119 at this time.

Catherine Reindel brought up the concern of drainage issues on M-119 and flooding occurrences on Lower Shore Drive, Timber Lake area, Lamkin Drive area. What are the issues regarding zoning or Emmet County standards. Is the Committee involved in these issues? Should the Committee take this issue and look at it seriously – steep slopes, east side/west side issues, cutting down trees. Suggestions: Utilize the Guidebook; send a letter to the Emmet County Soil Erosion Officer; Committee awareness; only reactive to events. The Committee could identify areas of concern for MDOT before events take place, be proactive; create a map of sites, compile a list and watch them, work with the County. Invite the Soil Erosion Officer and the Drain Commissioner to the June Committee meeting.

Lisa Morris added that she had received the newsletter and asked if there were any plans for additional guardrails above the Forest Beach Association now that the trees had been cut down. Dave Langhorst said no. Also, are there any plans for a bike lane continuing from Harbor Springs? The Committee members responded that there is no room on the Heritage Route for any bike lanes.

#### **XI. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be **Tuesday, June 9, 2009** at Cross Village Township Hall.

**XI.** The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.