

**M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, June 10, 2008  
West Traverse Township Hall**

Members Present

Joey Arbaugh, West Traverse Township  
Richard Cobb, Emmet County Lakeshore Association  
Rob Deane, Cross Village Township  
Joe Engelhard, Readmond Township  
Ron Krause, Readmond Township  
Eric Rasmussen, Friendship Township  
Carolyn Sandford, West Traverse Township  
Henry Singer, Cross Village Township  
Naomi Singer, Cross Village Township  
Dell Weitzel, Emmet County Lakeshore Association

Guests Present

Dale Scott, Supervisor Friendship Township

Staff Present

Patty O'Donnell, Northwest Michigan Council of Governments

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Richard Cobb called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. Introductions were made around the room.

**II. Review Proposed Agenda**

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

**III. Approval of the May 13, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

Please remove the name Joey before Rob Deane under III. Motion made by Dell Weitzel, support by Carolyn Sandford to approve the May 13, 2008 meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried.

**IV. New Business**

**A. Route Scouts**

A note was received from Joey Arbaugh regarding a visit by the Route Scouts to the Little Traverse Conservancy. The Route Scouts are proposing to create an audio tour compact disc which tells of the many cultural and other features of the M-119 corridor, along with t-shirts with the M-119 logo. The Route Scouts also proposed to donate a percentage of their receipts to the Conservancy and would like to feature the LTC logo on the clothing hang tags and CDs. Discussion followed regarding this type of business promoting the M-22 Highway with t-shirts, mugs, and stickers with percentage of revenue going to the Leelanau Conservancy. Dave Langhorst stated that the route markers such as M-119 and M-22 are public domain. The Little Traverse Conservancy would decide the usage of their logo. Henry Singer added that the Tunnel of Trees logo is copyrighted and other entities cannot use it. There was continuing discussion on the Committee's wishes to not market the route. Motion made by Henry Singer, support by Rob Deane that the Committee has a policy of no commercialization or marketing of the Tunnel of Trees corridor and/or the use of the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route logo, which has been copyrighted by the Committee. Motion carried. The Committee thanks Henry for copyrighting the logo in 2003 and copies of the document were distributed.

**B. Heritage Route Committee Meeting Schedule**

The Committee discussed the schedule of winter meetings for 2009, due to members being out of town during the winter. It was decided by consensus to keep the same schedule as 2008.

Meetings for 2009:

January 13

March 10

May 12

June 9

July 14

August 11

September 8

October 13

November 10

Patty O'Donnell requested that the September 9<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting be cancelled due to the Michigan Heritage Route Statewide Conference September 23-25<sup>th</sup> in Traverse City and the Committee agreed.

## **V. Old Business**

### **A. Management Plan Update Section Review**

Danna Widmar from HARBOR Inc. sent in comments on the objectives and actions which were read aloud. There was discussion on one of the Proposed Projects - "*Work with the townships to coordinate efforts for common projects such as the identification and protection of priority sites or scenic turnouts*" and the presence of scenic turnouts in the description. By hand vote of 6 in favor and 2 against, the Committee decided to leave the "scenic turnouts" in that proposed project.

### **B. Signs – Tunnel of Trees Sign to West Traverse Township Update**

Matt Radulski from MDOT sent an email that the work order was sent in to have the Tunnel of Trees sign relocated and the Thorne Swift Nature Preserve sign added. He has a deadline of mid-June to have them installed.

### **C. Guardrail Maintenance Update**

Matt Radulski, MDOT stated in an email that because of this past winter expenses, their maintenance budget is just about empty and they can barely pay for emergency fixes at this time. Therefore, the guardrail painting will not be completed this year.

### **D. Wooden Bridge Project Update**

Dave Langhorst reported that the MDOT Design Division, after their review has asked Northwest Design Group to look at the seven design exception issues again and re-engineer them. The final deliverable date has been changed to April 2009. The structural plan and preliminary design phase are completed. They are now working on the design standards to match them with M-119 standards; balancing the speed reality with safety design. With the extension and work requests, there has been a funding increase to the consultants but it is still within the project budget. From this phase, MDOT will get a bottomline cost to use for grant applications to continue the project.

Rob Deane gave a tip of the hat to MDOT for their upgrading road work on US 131.

### **E. Michigan Heritage Route Conference**

Patty reported that the Conference is taking shape and a brochure will be distributed at the end of the month. There will be two tours on Tuesday afternoon, plenary and workshops on Wednesday; and a closing plenary session on Thursday morning. Rob stated the following regarding the conference: 1. There is too much promotion of the routes; 2. How much is this costing the State of Michigan? Dave stated that the cost will be about \$6,000 which is mostly federal dollars from the National Scenic Byways Program. 3. Please send a personal invitation to the conference to Terry Franklin so Pete Hansas can give him his tree. Naomi Singer stated that the purpose of this statewide conference is more than just marketing, it is an opportunity to learn and share what the other designated routes are doing. It is what the state heritage route program is looking at the big picture. Rob added that the need for the Tunnel of Trees is to retain the character, not promote it as a tourist destination, and to preserve

the natural sense of the corridor. Discussion followed on the heritage route program, what the issues are, and dealing with them like signage.

#### **F. Educational Activities**

Patty will be staffing the heritage route display at the Good Hart Mini Fair on Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Dick Cobb will sign the heritage route up for a display and bring a table.

#### **VI. Correspondence**

##### **A. Pineyrie Property**

Dick reported that the Committee received a letter from the Glass family regarding the purchase of their property for a nature preserve. There is a conservation easement on part of the property. Dick stated that the Committee is not able to be involved or promote the purchase of property and will relay this information to the Glass family.

#### **VII. Public Comment**

Dale Scott:

1. Does an issue like the purchase of Pineyrie fit under the first listed Proposed Project if a township is interested?

2. How is the Committee coming along on the Friendship Township request Resolution:

*Study the possible ordinances, overlays, and other methods of preserving and enhancing the scenic, cultural, natural, and historic characteristics of the Tunnel of Trees and present the Friendship Township Board with possible action proposals, and with what methods other municipalities employ to enforce same and how effective are they.*

Cross Village and Readmond also approved similar resolutions. There was a comment that the Committee lost track of the resolution requests due to the Wooden Bridge issue. Eric Rasmussen asked that the Committee review these resolutions under Old Business at each meeting.

3. Does the Committee receive requested ordinance variances (County SR-2) that are located in the corridor to be aware of them. Joey gave an example on tree cutting. Discussion followed.

There was a suggestion that Committee Member Comment be added as an agenda item.

#### **V. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be **Tuesday, July 8, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at Cross Village Township Hall.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.