

**M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 8, 2008 9:30 a.m.
Cross Village Township Hall**

Members Present

Dick Cobb, Emmet County Lakeshore Association
Rob Deane, Cross Village Township
Ron Krause, Readmond Township
Dave Shear, Emmet County Lakeshore Association
Carolyn Sandford, West Traverse Township
Henry Singer, Cross Village Township
Naomi Singer, Cross Village Township
Larry Wallen, Readmond Township
Dell Weitzel, Emmet County Lakeshore Association

Guests

Dick Selvala, Emmet County Lakeshore Association/Cross Village

Staff Present

Patty O'Donnell, Northwest Michigan Council of Governments

I. Welcome and Introductions

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

II. Review Proposed Agenda

Motion made by Rob Deane, support by Dell Weitzel to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

III. Review and Approve June 10, 2008 Minutes

Joey Arbaugh sent an email with a correction to the minutes. IV. New Business; A. Route Scouts. The first sentence should read: A note was received from Joey Arbaugh regarding a letter that was sent by the Route Scouts to the Little Traverse Conservancy. Motion made by Dell Weitzel, support by Rob Deane to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2008 meeting with correction. Motion carried.

IV. New Business

Rob Deane asked if there was any word on the MDOT Heritage Route budget for 2009 such as the dollar allocation. Patty reported that there has been no communication this year with Pete Hanses or Dave Langhorst regarding the dollar amounts for fiscal year 2009.

V. Old Business

A. Management Plan Update Section Review

The Committee proceeded to review and discuss each project listed in the draft project priority list.

Discussion items:

- Why inventory wildlife?
- Tree trimming and slope protection: continuing education.
- Enforcement of the Scenic Resources – 2 Zoning District: take out “enforcement” and have it read: Review the Emmet County draft Comprehensive Plan regarding the Scenic Heritage Route corridor and work with Emmet County and the Townships to improve the protection of Scenic Resources-2 zoning district.
- Land purchases – out of the Committee’s scope? No, the Committee partners with other entities to protect and preserve the Tunnel of Trees
- Historical significance – out of the Committee’s scope? There was consensus that this was important to the Heritage Route.

Motion made by Ron Krause to table the discussion of the draft project priority list to the August meeting, support by Rob Deane. Motion carried: 8 in favor; 1 opposed. A revised, clean copy of the project priority list will be sent to the Committee members.

B. Township Resolution Action Request

Patty asked the Committee about the development of a response to the three Townships that approved resolutions regarding the protection of the Tunnel of Trees. One suggestion was that the Committee do nothing because the Townships are asking for possible ordinances and the community survey showed that the majority of people do not want more government. But, the Committee will work on educating, informing, and advising property owners and the public about tools of protection. It was then suggested that the Committee keep up to date on any variances in the corridor that come up. Patty will draw up a sample letter to the townships for review.

C. Tunnel of Trees Sign to West Traverse Township Update

Matt Radulski sent a report that stated the Tunnel of Trees sign has been relocated to West Traverse Township and that a new Thorne Swift directional sign was placed for people coming from the north on M-119.

D. Wooden Bridge Project Update

No report at this time.

E. Michigan Heritage Route Conference

Patty reported that the speaker slots have been filled and now the conference brochure is being updated with more details. Copies will be sent to the Committee members the end of July.

F. Educational Activities

The M-119 Tunnel of Trees display will be at the Good Hart Mini Fair on Sunday, July 20th.

Patty reminded the Committee that from the survey there are opportunities for educating the property owners and the public on the protection and preservation of the Tunnel of Trees and to start to think about how and when to do educational activities.

VI. Correspondence

No correspondence at this time.

VII. Committee Member Comment

Henry Singer stated that there is an issue building on M-119 north of Island View Road regarding clearcutting.

VIII. Public Comment

Dick Selvala asked if MDOT controls the cutting or trimming of trees along the M-119 corridor. MDOT has jurisdiction of the road and contracts the maintenance work to Emmet County. There could be fines of \$500 for cutting trees in the right of way but is unregulated. Discussion followed regarding enforcement, the county and greenbelt buffers, education without interfering with property rights, working with the landowners.

Dick Selvala also stated that the five year plan is a challenge for the what and how in it.

IX. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be **Tuesday, August 12, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at the Friendship Township Hall.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.