

**OAKLAND COUNTY
SPECIAL MEETING - OAKLAND TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (OTAC)
Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan
GreenWays Initiative**

April 12, 2006

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Larry Falardeau of Oakland County Planning at 10:20 a.m. in the commission room of the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission's administration building.

PRESENT:

Melinda Hill, Sharon Greene, Therese Leon, Tom Woiwode, Rock Blanchard, John Abraham, Kristen Wiltfang, Jim Wineka, Mike Hartner, Merle Richmond, Tim Phillips, Caryn Robinson Susie Sulla, Butch Finnegan, Joe Figa, Mark Spencer, Dot LaLone, Larry Lockwood, Leah Groya, Robert Golda, Kristen Myers, Larry Falardeau, Jenny Frederick, Todd Scott, Jeff Edwards, Sean O'Neil, Sue Julian, Norm Cox, Dan Stencil

Dan Stencil welcomed all in attendance. After introductions, a summary of the meeting's goals was reviewed. The Oakland Trails Advisory Council's last 3 years of initiatives and accomplishments were noted.

Mr. Tom Woiwode gave a brief overview of the Southeast Michigan GreenWays Initiative. This 5-year initiative has awarded \$25,000,000 in grants to assist in the planning, design, and construction of projects in southeast Michigan. They have also hosted numerous workshops/charettes to facilitate the counties and the City of Detroit develop their projects. The final goal of the initiative is to help develop county greenways plans for the 7-county SEMCOG region, including the City of Detroit, able to be assembled into a regional greenways plan. Detroit was the first of the communities to start to develop a greenways plan. The data Detroit developed for this plan is available on their website www.mapdetroit.com. A greenways website is currently being developed.

The Oakland County countywide trail/path network plan is ahead of the other communities due to their efforts of the last twenty plus years.

Larry Falardeau summarized efforts of Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services (OCPEDS) and OTAC. The greenways plan now being developed is a course of action to try to identify non-motorized ways to move people through and into Oakland County communities and historic downtowns. OCPEDS has visited local communities and cities to facilitate coordination and plan a greenways network. Now OTAC and the individual trail organizations are working toward this goal as well.

Maps created by Kristen Wiltfang of OCPEDS were introduced - Project Tracking Map, Pathways Map, and Active Threats & Opportunities Map. Regular feedback from trail groups and communities in Oakland County result in these maps evolving as they incorporate current information provided. The goal is to create a primary network to link together all Oakland County communities.

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At this time, a concerted effort is taking place to focus on the 20 Southeast Oakland County communities, exploring specific options to create paths/trails linking them to the primary network.

Equestrian representatives, Caryn Robinson and Merle Richmond expressed their concern that some trails maintain an equestrian friendly status and be kept in mind during the greenways planning process.

Sue Julian noted that all northern main connectors depicted on the OTAC trail map should be given the status of "under review" due to the fact that the bordering northern counties (Genesee & Lapeer) are just now planning their main connector trails.

John Abraham of the City of Troy stated the need to connect the existing and future trails to Troy via the proposed east-west connections and the development of new north-south connections. Larry Falardeau offered to send a sample letter for their use requesting the assistance of Oakland County Planning in the updating of the City of Troy master plan. A sample letter was also requested by Todd Scott.

Some states have regional governmental authorities to coordinate greenway type projects. In the absence of such an authority in Michigan, the Southeast Michigan Greenways Initiative is trying to unite the region by facilitating the development of a regional trails network. Norm Cox, retained by the GreenWays Initiative to coordinate this effort, presented a map, based on the Oakland County framework provided, being used to help create the Oakland County Trail Advisory Council Master Plan. A uniform framework is being used to facilitate the Oakland County map inclusion in a future regional map. Trail priorities may change as the population shifts and new needs develop.

The maps will be posted on the website www.greenwaycollab.com as they evolve.

Norm Cox, as president of The Greenway Collaborative, Inc., assisted in the production of the St Clair County Non-motorized Guidelines which comply with ASHTO and Michigan trail guidelines. These are good baseline standards and are available at <http://www.greenwaycollab.com/StClairNoMo.htm>. Also available is the City of Ann Arbor Comprehensive Non-Motorized Transportation Plan at <http://www.greenwaycollab.com/AANoMo.htm>. The Ann Arbor plan includes an extensive set of guidelines for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Mr. Wiowode and Mr. Cox announced that they would be staying after the meeting is adjourned to listen to input that can be noted and incorporated into the new plan.

The general session was adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next special meeting will be **7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 22, 2006** at the City of Southfield Public Library.

SJB, Oakland County Parks & Recreation