

Ron's Ramble

Industrial Heartland Trail Coalition (IHTC)

- a. Frank Maguire, from PEC, traveled a half day with me on January 13, 2015 to see sections of the Armstrong and Redbank valley Trails. A rough formula that Frank has said and it makes sense to me is:
 - i. Trail users will travel twice the trail's length to visit it.
- b. EPTA was represented by at least 5 different organizations that are working on a wide variety of tasks. Some mega trail groups at the IHTC Meeting gave updates on meetings that they were having to coordinate and establish trail groups. Those updates revolve around the work of a handful of people. EPTA stands out because we have so many people doing so many diverse tasks along EPT.
- c. Many EPTA tasks take unrelated routes to reach solutions that are then bonded together to work towards a common goal. It is interesting to be aware of just some of the problems, possible solutions, and positive movement that contributes to the growing progress and awareness of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance. EPTA members are having meetings with non-trail groups to discuss economic development, solutions to reducing gaps, best managing practices, co-use of corridor, trail amenities, trail maintenance, and much more.
- d. Funding such as TIGER Grants, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, and others are available. How does EPTA wish to explore these funding opportunities?
- e. Amy Camp did some surveys concerning tourism. EPTA members did a great job at returning the surveys. I will try to obtain more of her information especially on ***Experiential Travel Opportunities*** and send it to EPTA, but two statements are worth sharing now
 - i. *We are not ready for large scale tourism*
 - ii. *We have destinations worth visiting*
- f. A major step to help IHTC to help EPTA is the Gototrails Mapping. EPTA may have a unique situation where we can gather and document information on trails, trail organizations, and trail users. More will be discussed at our meeting.
- g. Everyone involved with EPTA should be proud of what we are accomplishing.

University of Pittsburgh's Institute of Politics

I have started a dialogue with Pittsburgh University's Institute of Politics. I suggested that trails and especially rails to trails needed to be a topic of consideration for the Infrastructure Committee of the Institute of Politics (IOP) to investigate and become more familiar to understand their potential. While I believe trails and trail corridors are greatly under used and underutilized, I need help and suggestions on how IOP may try to frame trails as an infrastructure investment for the region. There are so many option that it is difficult for me to suggest a game plan.

Please take a few minutes to review some information on the IOP at

<http://www.iop.pitt.edu/about.htm>

and email me some thoughts. One of the important aspects of doing this is to perhaps have a “document” from an unattached party that is not the Rails to Trails Conservancy, American Trails, or a tourist bureau.

Engaging non trail organizations

We are gaining attention by others. Organizations outside the trail community is asking for more information. Can we produce an Erie to Pittsburgh PowerPoint Presentation that can be used as a foundation for local presentations by EPTA members? I wish to take a few moments at our meeting to discuss this possibility.

Past –Present-Future

What section of the Erie to Pittsburgh trail existed in 25 years ago in 1991?

5 Years ago did you think EPTA would be where it is today?

In 5 years, 2021, what do you expect to be completed on the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail?

See you Wednesday

Ron