



October 10, 2017

Re: Report to Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance
Debra Frawley – At-Large Board Member

Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition

At the quarterly IHTC meeting held in August, the discussion started by listing many of the recent successes achieved by the groups present. The list was long and was added to by listing the next projects or opportunities. They also listed challenges they are facing. Some examples follow. In the afternoon, breakout sessions were used to discuss possible solutions to the challenges.

Successes

- Wheeling city ordinance against bikes – changed
- Easement from an energy company to make town connection
- \$250,000 from county Marcellus Impact Fee funding for trail construction
- 5.9 miles of new trail
- \$50,000 city funding for trail enhancements
- Economic Impact Study underway – over 300 surveys received.

New projects

- Sheepskin – two new miles being designed
- Towpath – groundbreaking for Phases 3 and 4 of project scheduled
- New restrooms to be built
- Funding for feasibility study for completion of entire Cleveland to Pittsburgh

Challenges

- No active group/leadership
- Need for dedicated funding
- Need for legal expertise and example documents

All of these impressed the representatives from CSX Railroad that were there to discuss the subject of working with railroads. They didn't realize the extent of activity or groups in the IHTC. There were also municipal officials in the room.

The IHTC quarterly meeting will now be called the Coalition Coordinating Committee. The Corridor Working Groups have selected three representatives to come to each meeting. These people will be the main conduit between the corridors and the IHTC. A kick-off conference call for this structure will be held between the quarterly meetings.

The new IHTC membership letter is available to sign by any group or stakeholder along the corridors. This is an updated (re-)commitment to the vision of the IHTC. So far, none have been received along the EPT.

PA Greenways & Trails Summit

I attended the 2017 GWT Summit in Reading. Again, we made a presentation about the GoTo Trails tool emphasizing the Manager app in it. Ron Steffey demonstrated how he has been using it. PEC also presented sessions about the creation of long distance corridor coalitions such as IHTC and the Circuit and connecting trails to town.

Community Chats

PEC has contracted with Amy Camp of Cycle Forward to again do four Community Chats along the IHTC corridors. On September 11, one was presented in Corry. It was very well attended by over 30 people including people from at least four surrounding communities, the Chamber of Commerce, local

businesses, residents and trail riders. I spoke about the East Branch Trail extension project and County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper spoke in support of trails and town connections. Amy led those in attendance through a town assessment, including a walk around town. They tried to see the community through a trail user's eyes. Those assessment forms will be tallied and a follow-up scheduled.

Erie County Ride – Kathy Dahlkemper

I met Kathy and those joining her annual ride around the county to discuss the East Branch Trail project and to point out the Black Bridge. I discussed the many partners needed for such projects and the challenges with obtaining and owning infrastructure such as that former railroad bridge.

East Branch Trail extension

This project is now moving forward again with a contract between PEC and Alta Planning & Design. They are coordinating with the railroad on the project's behalf to obtain design guidelines and permitting processes and will produce a unique section drawing for the trail. They will also create a concept drawing for the trailhead in Corry.

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