



DISCUSSION NOTES

Ogemaw County Iron Belle Trail Stakeholder Meeting #2

May 24, 2017 9:30 – 11:30 am

Michigan Works! Office 2389 M-76, West Branch, MI

Recap of April Meeting: Preferred route is along Rose City Road running E-W, with “dog leg” trail connection along Fairview Road south into West Branch. Approx. 34.8 miles.

Consumer’s Energy 10 mile long corridor from Rose City Road to M-55: Mostly in farmland; very hilly with several water and road crossings. Stephanie with NEMCOG stated that she asked Consumer’s Energy about possibility of negotiating down the price of a lease for using their utility corridor; was told that it cannot be negotiated; standard lease would be \$1,000/mile/year for 5 year agreement and would also need farmer’s permission who farm that corridor.

Evaluation of preferred route along Rose City Road, viewing in Google Maps, from E to W:

Road shoulders have been widened (3’) on Rose City Road from Rose City to eastern County Line. If bike lanes were to be installed, would have to extend road shoulder 2 more feet on each side for bike lanes for IBT route. Reminder that MDOT TAP grant would fund a widened paved shoulder, but DNR Trust Fund grant will not fund this as it would be considered a roadway improvement and not a separate recreational trail facility. Lots of culvert xings/fill/slope stabilization would be needed just for shoulder extension. Perhaps best to construct separate trail? Road Commission/trail construction contractors to work closely with Huron Pines where there are water crossings in the Rifle River Watershed.

Consider consistency of trail surface type between destination points; if changing from paved to crushed limestone, for example, perhaps change the surface type at a trailhead; i.e., paved until get to trailhead; other side of TH is crushed gravel.

Sidewalks in Rose City are 3 to 5 feet wide – may need to improve them and/or add bike lanes.

Existing DNR trailhead for ORVs on north side of Rose City Rd. in Rose City – could also use for trailhead parking area for IBT (even though might require road crossing to get to). May need to

stay on the north side of Rose City Road going west until Stoney Creek Rd. due to topography/sight lines.

Along Rose City Road west of Wangler Rd., the DNR owns several tracts of land where the trail could be placed. However, where private land parcels are located between state-owned land, and on parcels where there might be a land use limitation by the DNR (i.e., Archaeology Site, State Game Fund land, etc.) the trail would have to be in the road R-O-W.

Along Rose City Rd between Wangler Rd and Stoney Ridge Rd. there is a hill with limited sightlines. Recommended by DNR to stay on north side of road along power lines (where fencing is present to prohibit illegal ORV use in this area) and then cross to the south side of the road where the powerlines cross the road further west; sightlines are better here.

Suggested to follow service road for powerline corridor east where possible (DNR owns several parcels of land in this area). Will connect to Ogemaw Snowmobile Club Trailhead at Fairview/Rose City Rd. Can continue west in parts along utility line corridor on DNR-owned land, but will need to move in to Rose City Road R-O-W a number of times where DNR does not own that land.

Unsure at this point if DNR FRD access roads / snowmobile trails will be open to ORVs in future; this may impact where the IBT can be placed on DNR land.

Will cross a pipeline corridor just west of Fairview/Rose City Road; need permission from pipeline co.

Where Rose City Rd. curves south, there are wet areas on either side of the road.

Connects to Ogemaw Nature Park/Deer Park along Rose City Road towards western county boundary.

Potential to use existing two-track/snowmobile trails in NW part of the county (KW habitat) for IBT route instead of along road R-O-W? Still need to hear back from DNR Wildlife Division comments regarding this possibility.

DNR Fisheries Division submitted comments on the proposed route: on DNR property, all river crossings for the trail should be at established crossings. If any new river crossings/bridges are proposed they should be reviewed by DNR Fisheries Division to ensure they do not negatively impact the rivers.

Evaluation of preferred route along Fairview Road, viewing in Google Maps:

Fairview Road from Rose City Road down to State Road. Some topography in areas may require switchback and R-O-W is only 66' wide. Would need easements (Road Commission had to obtain some easements for their work along this road.)

Group considered using the pipeline corridor that runs in a NW/SE direction within 1-2 miles of Fairview Road; however it's not the most direct route to West Branch, goes through residential property, the middle of a gravel pit operation, would need permission/lease with the pipeline co. to utilize, etc.

Consider crushed limestone along Fairview Road if trail is to be used for snowmobile use in winter; this was mentioned in the previous meeting as a preference so that snowmobilers can access trails in the north and services/lodging/gas to the south in West Branch.

DNR owns land for two miles on east side of Fairview south of Rose City Rd., and in spots here and there further south to W. Peters. Rd./Ogemaw Hills Pathway. Powerline runs along west side of rd. from Ogemaw Center Rd. to about ¼ mile south of Peters Rd. Will need to certainly get easements from private land owners, such as the gravel pit company located north of Engel Rd.

Sidewalks are present on the west side of Fairview, south of State Road, and into the City along M-55. However sidewalks may need repair. M-55/Fairview Road xing is not very safe as is.

Considered using a side street – Fremont St. (no sidewalks) to Valley St. (sidewalks) but would have to cross M-55 mid-block without a traffic light?

Other thoughts:

Ogemaw Township will be making improvements to their Mineral Springs Park. Maes Rd. has widened shoulders and could be a future E-W trail connector to the Iron Belle Trail along Fairview Rd.

Could an Iron Belle Trail grant be used for “temporary” signage along the route, indicating to people where the proposed future route is? Stephanie will ask the DNR.

Next Steps:

First goal: apply for one or more Iron Belle Trail grants (next round of applications likely avail. Nov 2017) to conduct a preliminary engineering/feasibility study of the route to get cost estimates and details needed on suggested phases for developing the trail. It was agreed upon that the Ogemaw EDC would be the best applicant for the grant. Stephanie to get in touch with the EDC later in the year to assist with the grant application.

After the work from the IBT grant is completed, a community with a current 5-year Recreation Plan could apply for a MNRTF grant for a select phase of the trail. In the same timeframe, pending if appropriate engineering studies have been completed, the Road Commission could apply for a TAP Grant application for the same phase of the trail.

Group indicated most likely the Townships (or City of Rose City) that would be the Trust Fund Grant applicants. Group indicated that the County (although no County elected officials were present at this meeting) would likely support the project but would likely not want to be the lead on the project or own/maintain the trail.

Stephanie described the new Crowdrise project initiated by the DNR for the Iron Belle Trail. Communities can “crowdfund” online, with no fees, for their specific IBT projects – a great way to plan for match that would be needed for TF/TAP grants.

<https://www.crowdrise.com/IronBelle>

Group agreed that it was important to spread the word about efforts for planning the IBT in Ogemaw County – keep the Twps, EDC, County and residents informed! Stephanie will update the website for Ogemaw County IBT

<http://www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/ogemawironbelle.asp> and talk with Mandi Chasey with the EDC on posting things about the IBT on their Facebook page. Also keep in contact with local newspapers for press coverage. Tricia Weisend from Rifle River Rec Area suggested having a simple handout for folks at the RRA campgrounds that describes trail planning efforts, suggested route, and where to find more info (or donate to in the future!)

May 24 Ogemaw County IBT Stakeholders Meeting Attendees

	Name	Community, Park or Org.	Email
1	Abigail Ertel	Huron Pines	abby@huronpines.org
2	Amy Swainston	MDNR	swainstona@michigan.gov
3	Bob Griffin, Jr.	Bicycle Advocate	bob@griffinbev.com
4	Janice Fritz	Cumming Township	janiceafritz@gmail.com
5	Kelli Collins	City of West Branch and Rose Twp.	zoning@westbranch.com
6	Pat Reinke	Ogemaw County Road Commission	patreinke@ogemawcrc.org
7	Scott Bell	Cty PC, WB Twp PC, Lapham Assoc.	scott.bell@laphamassoc.com
8	Steve Anderson	MDNR	andersons1@michigan.gov
9	Steve Loomis	Ogemaw EDC	sloomis@First-Federal.com
10	Tricia Weisend	MDNR - Rifle River Rec Area	weisendt@michigan.gov
11	Virginia Linsenman	Ogemaw Township	virginialinsenman@gmail.com
12	Stephanie Loria	NEMCOG	sloria@nemcog.org