

**REGIONAL BIKEWAY-WALKWAY PLANNING MEETING AGENDA**  
**New River Valley Planning Commission**  
**November 30 at 12:30 p.m.**

**Participants:** Nichole Hair, Town of Christiansburg; Barry Helms, Town of Christiansburg; Will Orndorff, New River Valley Bike Association; Matt O Toole, New River Valley Bike Association; Shane Sawyer, Roanoke Valley PDC; Dan Brugh, Blacksburg-Christiansburg Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); David Clark, VDOT; Shawn Utt, City of Radford; Paul Dellinger, Roanoke Times; Bruce Mahin, Pathways of Radford; Kelly Duty, Montgomery Co.; Brad Buchanan, Montgomery Co. Parks and Recreation; Patrick Burton, VDOT Salem; Dave Hart, Town of Pulaski; Debby Freed, VT; Laurie Buchwald, Radford City Council; David Rundgren, NRVPDC; Abigail Convery, NRVPDC.

**I. Introduction**

Welcome and logistical business.

**II. BW-WW Planning Updates**

**Radford:**

Shawn Utt, City of Radford, presented the enhancement project that Radford submitted to VDOT on November 1 this year. The plan calls for bike lanes along Grove and Third Street in Downtown Radford. For more information please contact Shawn Utt, City of Radford ([sutt@radford.va.us](mailto:sutt@radford.va.us))

**Limited 460 Access (Blacksburg-Christiansburg):**

David Clarke, VDOT Resident Engineer, talked about how VDOT was investigating the possibility of providing bike access on Rt.460 by-pass between Blacksburg and Christiansburg. A meeting was held back in October with VDOT engineers and the NRV Bike Association to discuss options. Due to the complexity of the interchange, providing bike access has several hurdles. Discussion on the subject is still ongoing.

**New River and Huckleberry Trail Connection:**

Abigail Convery explained that because of the Regional Connector trail's length, planning efforts have been broken up into two main pieces: From the head of the New River Trail in the Town of Pulaski to the City of Radford and the City of Radford to the end of the Huckleberry Trail in the Town of Christiansburg. There have been a series of meetings for both pieces of the trail with staff of the localities and bike groups. For minutes of the meetings please contact Abigail Convery. The meetings are summarized below.

**Montgomery County** Barry Helms, Assistant Town Manager of Christiansburg presented the summary of progress for the Montgomery side of the trail. Four corridors were evaluated for feasibility, Slate Branch, Crab Creek, Plum Creek, and Bike 76. See planning minutes attached for details.

### **Pulaski County**

Pete Huber, Pulaski County Administrator was unable to make it, so Abigail Convery of the NRVPCD briefly outlined the planning efforts to date with the project. From the City of Radford, the trail would utilize the existing Bisset/River front Park trails to cross Radford to the memorial bridge. At the Memorial Bridge the trail would follow Hazel Hollow Road and follow the rail line to old route 11 where the trail could potentially use the Town of Pulaski's sewer easement, which runs within the RR Right of Way (ROW); or use the VDOT ROW on old Rt. 11 where it would travel into downtown Pulaski. The remaining route would follow the RR ROW to connect up with the NRT in the Town of Pulaski. This route serves as a major artery connection for many large businesses (Volvo, Ethan Allen, etc.), residential and downtown's areas, shopping areas, NRV Community College and schools. The placement of this route allows for the connectivity among all of the above mentioned facilities within the towns.

### **Pathways**

Bruce Mahin, President of Pathways for Radford spoke about how the organization was in full support of the regional bikeway planning efforts. He discussed a recent meeting that was held in November, where the organization had recruited new members to represent areas throughout the New River Valley. They look forward to working with the localities and the planning commission on the regional efforts underway. Bruce also asked the localities what they saw their citizen group being able to do for them. Abigail Convery of the New River Valley PDC responded on behalf of the regional trail project underway. The PDC sees the citizen groups (the Pathways group) being involved in public education efforts, support to help keep project moving with governments, involved in helping to gather support with local businesses, letters of support, etc, help overcome citizen resistance, and involved in overall implementation and management as the project progresses.

There was also discussion between Pathways and NRV Bike Association about how they would like to combine efforts with bike clubs in NRV for support behind this regional trail.

## **II. Active Rail and Trails**

Bob Munson with Virginia Department of Recreation was unable to make it at the last minute, but attached to this document is a summary of a Memo about where we are at in the planning process with the Railroad and placing trails next to an active RR line. He will be visiting for 2 days in January to discuss the overall plan and it's submission to Norfolk Southern.

Roanoke Valley and Alleghany Regional Commission's Shane Sawyer also spoke about their efforts to update their BW-WW and Greenway Plans. He talked about making sure that connections into the New River Valley were incorporated into their plans. He had mentioned bike connections to Bradshaw and Blacksburg Roads.

## **III. Work Groups**

**Those that are interested in participating in these projects, please contact the designated project coordinator. Each of these projects will develop Scope of Work (SOW=project activities and timeline) in the initial meetings which and the groups will report on their progress in the next regional BW-WW meeting in February.**

### **Bike 76 Signage**

**Project Coordinator: Pete Huber ( [pheber@pulaskicounty.org](mailto:pheber@pulaskicounty.org) )**

This initiative was suggested by Pete Huber, Pulaski County. He was interested in working on replacing and supplementing the Bike 76 signs throughout the New River Valley by creating a colorful logo similar to the existing one and adding signs that direct to amenities for cross country cyclists (cookie lady, bike stores, food, etc). For more details see attachment.

### **Multi-media Campaign**

**Project Coordinator: NRVPC ( [aconvery@nrvdc.org](mailto:aconvery@nrvdc.org) )**

This project falls under the education campaign. Abigail Convery suggested that to increase awareness and discussion for recreational trails that we should develop a series of radio talk shows and newspaper articles for the New River Valley area. The first article/show could potentially address the topic of why a community would want a trail (i.e. economic benefits, health, etc. ). Followed by a series of topics such as safety issues, liability, the process of putting a trail in, etc. where if by radio people could call in or write in and actively participate in the discussion. The format could potentially have a couple of guests that range from someone who opposed trails in the past, business owners from Damascus, lawyer familiar with Liability

issues, bike advocates, political figures, NRT and Huckleberry trail people involved with developing those trails, etc.

**Development of Contacts for Regional Trail Project Support**  
**Project Coordinator: NRVPC ( [aconvery@nrvc.org](mailto:aconvery@nrvc.org) )**

Once PR materials are developed (~January) and the final route for the NRT and Huckleberry , we will begin to solicit support (See attached sheet)

**Regional Conference Development**

**Project Coordinator: NRVPC ( [aconvery@nrvc.org](mailto:aconvery@nrvc.org) )**

The NRVPC is organizing a regional conference to be held in the New River Valley sometime in late 2006 or early 2007. The focus of the conference will be on infrastructure development for a successful recreational network (business development tools, green infrastructure planning, health, etc.) to be targeted at decision makers in our area.

**IV. Other Business**

**Adoption of Bike Plan**

The discussion of how many localities had adopted a resolution of support for the 2000 Regional Bikeway Plan was discussed. The answer was few to none. In order for localities to ask for resolutions of support, we discussed the amendment of the NRV Bike Plan over the next few months. It's completion dependent upon how quickly the localities could get the information to the PDC. **Localities should send their most recent proposed Bike/Pedestrian/Greenway plans to the PDC ASAP in order to amend the current Regional Plan.**

There was a discussion about how specific plans were not going to be updated in the next few months due to larger planning projects (Montgomery County Village Project), but those governments that do have them available should send them in. An overall update of the plan rather than an amendment will be planned for in 2007.

Upon further discussion after the meeting, the PDC will focus in the short term to create a draft document of the current regional trail project for governments to support through resolutions. The first draft will be available for comment by the end of January 2006.

**PR Materials/Presentation**

The development of PR materials and presentations to elected members of government was discussed. Questions as to the timing with updating plans and documents were raised as well as who should present. Ideas were tossed out for presentation approaches ranging from locality staff working on project with citizen representation to having a professional do it. As to when this effort should begin, it

should occur after the Regional plan is amended or the Regional Trail Document is completed, whichever comes first. Discussion in the PDC after the meeting placed this PR effort once the routes are finalized and negotiations with the railroad are clear.

## **V. Closing**

There were more questions on how these projects all would fit together. The Bike 76 effort is one led by Pulaski County and not connected to the regional trail effort. There was concern about the media project and its timing with the regional project timeline. Clarification that the media project falls under an overall education effort behind trails and not focusing on the NRT-Huckleberry connection specifically, so although some timing may be appropriate, its overall focus does not necessarily call for considerable planning relative to regional implementation efforts at this time.

The Regional conference is for later in 2006, potentially 2007 and will be worked out over the year. Timing issues with regional BW-WW plan updates, amendments, letters of support, visits to councils, etc. will need to be coordinated. Abigail Convery confirmed that she would work out clean action items and timelines (Scope of Work (SOW)) for the Regional Bikeway Walkway Project and work with the sub-project working groups to present their SOW at the next Committee meeting. As the projects develop efforts will be made to integrate the timing of projects that overlap in purpose.

The next regional BW-WW Committee Meeting was set for February 6 at the PDC at Noon and the meeting adjourned.