

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION and  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OAKLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
October 18, 2017

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The October 18, 2017, special joint committee meeting of the Paint Creek Trailways Commission (hereinafter “PCTC”) and the Charter Township of Oakland Parks and Recreation Commission (hereinafter “PRC”) was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the main meeting room of the Paint Creek Cider Mill.

PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rock Blanchard, Commissioner, City of Rochester Hills  
Jim Kubicina, Commissioner, City of Rochester Hills  
Kim Russell, Commissioner, City of Rochester (arrived 7:22 p.m.)  
Frank Ferriolo, Commissioner, Charter Township of Oakland  
Hank VanAgen, Commissioner, Charter Township of Oakland  
Donni Steele, Commissioner, Commissioner, Orion Township  
Jeff Stout, Commissioner, Orion Township

Alternates Lynn Loeb, City of Rochester Hills, and Martha Olijnyk, Charter Township of Oakland, were also present, but did not vote this evening.

Kristen Myers, Trail Manager  
Chris Gray, Assistant Trail Manager

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OAKLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
MEMBERS PRESENT:

Colin Choi, Chairperson  
Henry VanAgen, Vice-Chairperson, Chairperson for this evening’s meeting  
Emily Barkham, Secretary  
Craig Blust, Treasurer  
Daniel Bukowski, Commissioner  
Cathy Rooney, Commissioner  
Daniel Simon, Commissioner

Melinda Milos-Dale, Director

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Commissioners, staff and those present stated their Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

**AMENDMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Approval of Agenda by PRC**

MOVED BY CHOI, SECONDED BY BARKHAM, to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Approval of Agenda by Paint Creek Trailways Commission**

MOVED BY BLANCHARD, SECONDED BY STOUT, to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one present who wanted to comment on an item not already on this evening's agenda.

**PROGRESS REPORT FROM MANNIK SMITH GROUP**

Matt Mikolajczyk, a civil engineer and project manager from Mannik Smith Group ("MSG"), was present. He briefly reviewed the status of the project. MSG has researched the existing site, including reviews of as-built plans, right of way information, CAD files, and other materials. MSG has completed a survey of the site. They have also completed the soil borings and are currently analyzing the results. During their historic review of the site, they learned of concerns regarding a recorded Indian village at the northeast corner of the bridge location, and are looking into this further as part of the State Historic Preservation Office ("SHPO") review.

Additionally, MSG is coordinating this project with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality ("MDEQ"), the Michigan Department of Natural Resources ("MDNR"), the TAP grant coordinator, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund ("MNRTF") grant coordinator, the Oakland County Water Resource Commission, MISSDIG and others.

MSG has participated in discussions regarding trail access and potential construction staging from Silver Bell Road. They have developed five alternatives for the PRC's and PCTC's consideration, and will present those this evening.

Mr. Mikolajczyk noted that MSG still needs to perform scour analysis. The projected costs of the various bridge alternatives may change, depending on the results of these tests.

**PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF BRIDGE ALTERNATIVES**

Mr. Mikolajczyk and the Commissioners reviewed the various bridge options.

Alternative 1: Rehabilitation of the bridge, with partial replacements

Project Manager Mikolajczyk said this alternative is for rehabilitation of the bridge. Both the MDEQ and the MDNR are recommending that the piers be removed because of concerns of scour and tree debris, which means that they feel it would be better to replace than to rehabilitate this bridge. This alternative would likely only be selected if the SHPO determines that this bridge is historically significant. If the bridge is rehabilitated, it would need to be widened slightly and shifted south because the creek has meandered over the years. A new bridge surfacing would also be applied.

Commissioner Stout inquired about when we will receive a decision from SHPO regarding whether or not we must rehabilitate the existing bridge, or if we may replace it. Project Manager Mikolajczyk responded that once the Commissions select an option for the replacement bridge, MSG will forward to SHPO the required submittal, including the proposed replacement bridge option. SHPO then will have between 30 and 60 days to review and make a determination. Director Milos-Dale asked if there would be an additional charge if the SHPO requires an archaeological study. Mr. Mikolajczyk said there would be, but that MSG has a team of archaeologists on staff who could do this work.

Resident Carol Puckman asked what scour is. Mr. Mikolajczyk explained that scour is the degradation that occurs when there are moving particles of dirt in the water. He is trying to minimize the damage that occurs to the bridge structure, etc. through the use of geogrids, larger stone, etc.

Resident Larry Levanway inquired about review of the engineering design documents. Project Manager Mikolajczyk explained that he is a civil engineer and would sign and seal the drawings. If we incorporate an aspect that is prefabricated, that aspect would be signed and sealed by another engineer. The design documents will then be reviewed by the Road Commission for Oakland County and the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Alternative 2: Truss Option (proposed base alternative)

Mr. Mikolajczyk stated that this is the option that MSG is recommending because of the bridge's longevity, potential cost savings (we may be able to reduce the span, which would lower the cost), and the variety of options for aesthetic treatments (including options for trusses, decking materials, and railings).

Commissioner Steele asked about the potential to reduce the span of the bridge. Project Manager Mikolajczyk explained that the existing span is approximately 60 feet. It is proposed that the span be extended to 75 feet to help minimize scour concerns. However, with this style of bridge, it may be possible to reduce the span to somewhere between these two lengths.

Commissioner Blust inquired about how MSG proposes to access the site to install a prefabricated bridge. Mr. Mikolajczyk responded that he is looking into this matter. It may be necessary to make some site modifications and later restore the access areas. Alternately, the structure could be taken to the site in two pieces and welded together there.

Resident John Crowder asked if the bridge will need to be able to carry the weight of a vehicle. Project Manager Mikolajczyk stated that it will need to be able to support a 20 ton vehicle (such as a fire truck or ambulance). Mr. Crowder wondered if there are other bridges that will need to be replaced in the near future. Trail Manager Myers responded that there is one bridge within the boundaries of the City of Rochester that will need to be addressed. Mr. Crowder then asked how we are paying for this project; Ms. Myers explained that Oakland Township and the Trailways Commission have obtained funding through grants from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, TAP, and the Parks and Recreation Commission will be contributing some funding.

Commissioner Blanchard expressed concerns about graffiti on the bridge structure. Mr. Mikolajczyk responded that there is minimal exposed concrete on this bridge option, and there are ways to adjust the bridge surfacing to further minimize exposed concrete.

#### Alternative 3: Precast Arch Option

Project Manager Mikolajczyk presented this bridge option, and explained that there are various aesthetic options available. It would have good longevity, and would require very little maintenance. However, the design is limited with respect to the length of the span and the rise, and it would likely require a fair amount of work to prepare the approaches. This option would also require a hydraulic study, which would add to the cost. He shared photos of other similar bridges to demonstrate options.

Alternate Commissioner Olijnyk noted that this option is listed as “alternative 4” and the prestressed beam option is listed as “alternative 3” in the packet presented this evening, although we are considering them in the reverse order tonight. The Commissioners agreed that they need to discuss each option by name as opposed to number in order to avoid confusion.

#### Alternative 4: Prestressed/Concrete Beam Option

Mr. Mikolajczyk explained that there are many aesthetic options for this style bridge as well. He noted that MDOT has done a study and found that adjacent side by side box beams have lower longevity because of their inability to track water well. However, he proposed that there are ways to address this. He shared numerous photos of different looks for this style bridge, including ways to make it look like an old bridge.

Resident John Crowder pointed out that different styles of bridge give the area a different feel. He proposed that the bridge design be kept simple, which he hopes will make people less likely to gather around the bridge.

#### Alternative 5: Railroad Flat Car Option

Project Manager Mikolajczyk said he is very excited about this option, which uses a refurbished railroad flat car. However, bridges created by repurposing of a railroad car is primarily a method currently found mainly in the west; the closest company that he has found that handles this is in Indiana.

Commissioner Ferriolo commented that he is surprised at the cost of this option, as he would have thought it would be less since it is in essence recycling the railroad flat car. Mr. Mikolajczyk explained that he put a higher anticipated cost on this type of bridge as there are so many unknowns with this type of bridge and Michigan-based construction firms will likely not be familiar with this option.

#### General Discussion

Resident Larry Levanway asked when the bridge was originally built. Trail Manager Myers responded that it was built in 1924 or 1926.

Commissioner Rooney wondered what type of maintenance or repairs to expect with the various bridge designs. Mr. Mikolajczyk explained that there are different issues with different bridges. However, he indicated that an open section truss bridge (Alternative 2) can be readily repaired if necessary.

Alternate Commissioner Olijnyk inquired about the width of the railroad flat car bridge. Mr. Mikolajczyk discussed the various widths of all bridges. He added that the bridge is required to be at least 14' wide (clear).

Residents Martin McClure and Ann Porter were present. Mr. McClure said this bridge is immediately to the west of their property. His primary concern is the course of the river. He noted that he is not aware of any study or even discussion regarding what the creek does under the bridge. He explained that there are two bends in the creek's path in this area. Mr. McClure is especially concerned about the south footing, and that the creek may erode beyond the right of way. He would like to see more attention paid to addressing this matter. In the past, the course of the creek has been controlled with features such as wing walls. Mr. Mikolajczyk thanked Mr. McClure for these observations.

Mr. Mikolajczyk stated that there are a number of measures we can take to manage the meandering of the creek, with the goal of keeping its course where it currently flows. However, at this time the priority needs to be to decide on an alternative design. This will enable MSG to make their required submittal to SHPO and start the permitting process. Trail

Manager Myers noted that the SHPO may still, however, require that we rehabilitate the existing bridge.

Commissioner Blust asked about how MSG figured costs for the various alternatives. Mr. Mikolajczyk explained the factors he kept in mind when deciding how to prepare cost estimates.

Chairman VanAgen pointed out that we must be sensitive to the costs associated with the various bridge options and the budget for this project. They briefly discussed the cost of this project, and the need to include in the total cost the fees for engineering services.

Trail Manager Myers read an email correspondence she received from Township resident Barbara Barber, who indicates that she would like to see the original bridge rehabilitated or, as an alternate, option 5, the repurposing of a railroad flatbed car.

Another resident, Jim Komendera said he lives just west of the bridge. His preference would also be for the railroad flatbed car.

Commissioner Choi asked about the stairs and bench. Trail Manager Myers said they will be removed. It will be a separate project if the Trailways Commission decides to replace these features.

Commissioner Rooney observed that this bridge has been in place over 100 years. She wondered why we are not trying harder to rehabilitate the existing bridge. Project Manager Mikolajczyk explained that scour has been a big problem and has damaged the structure, and this needs to be addressed. The Commissioners and Mr. Mikolajczyk also discussed higher quality materials that can be incorporated into a replacement bridge.

Alternate Commissioner Loeb said she feels it is most important to select a design that will address the scour issue. However, once this is accomplished, she said it is also very important to consider what neighboring property owners want, aesthetically. Trail users will primarily be concerned with the surfacing and railings.

The various Commissioners expressed their preferences. Alternate Commissioner Olijnyk liked the truss bridge (Alternative 2), although she is unable to vote this evening.

Commissioner Kim Russell said she did not realize that the stairs would not be replaced. She would like to make sure the bridge will last at least 75 years. She, also, was in favor of the railroad flat car bridge.

The Commissioners and Mr. McClure discussed the stairs and the bench. Mr. McClure said people gather at the bench and sometimes drop litter in the area.

**APPROVAL BY OAKLAND TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION  
COMMISSION: BRIDGE DESIGN FOR PAINT CREEK TRAIL BRIDGE 33.7  
RENOVATION**

MOVED BY BLUST, SECONDED BY BARKHAM, to select the prefabricated truss option, Alternative 2, with future concepts to be reviewed.

Discussion on Motion:

Commissioner Rooney said she feels this alternative will be best for the environment, and we will be able to select aesthetic options to help it to harmonize with the setting.

Commissioner Choi said that, while he appreciates that neighbors favor the railroad flat car alternative, he feels that there is little experience with this option in this part of the country, and further he is concerned that it may go over budget. Commissioner VanAgen concurred, adding that there are too many unknowns with this option at this time.

Project Manager Mikolajczyk pointed out that with Alternative 2, there are many modifications that can be made to make the bridge look very much like an old railroad bridge.

Resident Carol Puckman inquired about the trusses that will be removed. The Commissioners said they have no plans for them at this time. Commissioner Blust suggested that they could somehow be repurposed in Paint Creek Junction Park, which is along the Trailways in Oakland Township.

Vote on Motion:

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**APPROVAL BY PAINT CREEK TRAILWAYS COMMISSION: BRIDGE DESIGN  
FOR PAINT CREEK TRAIL BRIDGE 33.7 RENOVATION**

MOVED BY KUBICINA, SECONDED BY STOUT, to select the prefabricated truss option, Alternative 2, with the future concept to be reviewed.

Discussion on Motion:

Commissioner Steele said that she was recently involved with cleaning up a big graffiti mess, and said she sees Alternative 5, the railroad flat car option, as inviting this sort of problem.

Commissioner Ferriolo said he wants a bridge that blends in with the surroundings.

Commissioner Russell reiterated that she wants to make sure that whichever design we select, it will be acceptable to the neighbors. She again stated that she would like to see the railroad

flat car option. Trail Manager Myers suggested that the City of Rochester could consider this when they have to replace a bridge there.

Commissioner Blanchard said he likes that the truss option can be made to look like an old railroad bridge.

Vote on Motion:

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**PHASE I: ACTION ITEMS PLAN AND SCHEDULE FROM MANNIK SMITH GROUP**

Project Manager Mr. Mikolajczyk stated that MSG plans to submit the application to the SHPO this week. He reviewed items that MSG will be doing to move the project along while waiting for a decision from the SHPO. MSG will also put together information about various options to discuss at the next meeting, including information regarding costs. Currently, the project is ahead of schedule. However, the schedule will largely be impacted by the time it takes for the various reviews.

Commissioner Stout inquired about access to the bridge site, and whether or not we will need to obtain easements. Mr. Mikolajczyk responded that at this time he is planning to be able to access via Silver Bell and Dutton Roads.

The Commissioners next discussed options for the truss bridge. PRC Commissioner Choi suggested that it might be good to have a joint subcommittee look into this matter. Commissioner Steele wondered if it would be best to wait for a response from SHPO before we spend the time and effort to look into these matters.

The Commissioners and Mr. Mikolajczyk discussed the various truss designs. The group indicated that they liked both the pedestrian and vehicular truss options – there are pros and cons of each – and they were leaning towards the styles called “Capstone” and “Keystone.” Project Manager Mikolajczyk and the Commissioners briefly discussed costs.

The Commissioners shared ideas of what they would like to see. Commissioner Choi said he prefers an open section bridge as long as it will be safe for Trailways users. Commissioner Rooney said she likes a bridge with railings, as she likes to lean over the railing to get a better view of the creek. Project Manager Mikolajczyk reiterated that he would suggest the open truss design.

Commissioner VanAgen said he likes both the pedestrian and industrial styles. Commissioner Russell was concerned that the Commissions had indicated that they would involve the residents in discussing the bridge, and now we are considering discussing it at a later time.



Neighbor Marty McClure commented that, while he believes the neighbors favor Alternative 5, the railroad flat car, he believes they would be agreeable to the truss bridge option. He again stated that his biggest concern is to minimize any further shifting of the course of the creek. Commissioner Choi added that he believes the Commissions can achieve the railroad theme look of Alternative 5 with Alternative 2, the truss bridge option.

**DETERMINATION OF NEXT MEETING DATE**

The Commissioners discussed the next meeting date. They agreed to tentatively schedule the next joint meeting of the Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Commission and the Paint Creek Trailways Commission for Wednesday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This will take place prior to the PRC's regular meeting, which will be rescheduled to begin at 8:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED BY STOUT, SECONDED BY STEELE, there being no further business before the Commission, to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED BY CHOI, SECONDED BY ROONEY, there being no further business before the Commission, to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

Ingrid R. Kliffel  
Recording Secretary