

Next Generation “Strengthening Our Niche” Work-Group Meeting Notes of December 7, 2009

Present

Will Andresen, Tom Bergman, Annette Burchell, John Garske, Melanie Fulman, Brad Kusz, Char Jordan, Gemma Lamb, Lily Palmer, Jim Rouse, Sue Rouse, Charlie Supercynski, Dick Swanson

Trail Mapping Sub-Committee Report

John Garske gave an update on the trail mapping sub-committee and presented a draft “range trails” map for review and consideration. The proposed route is to use the Soo Line (the northern of the two railroad grades, with the southern right-of-way being designated for motorized use) from Ironwood to Ramsey, with a possible loop from Anvil Location to the transfer station. Alternatives will need to be reviewed to connect Ramsey to Wakefield, and could include the old BR-2 roadway.

The DNR is currently pursuing acquisition of the Soo Line – although the intended purpose of this line has not been determined. It was suggested that the DNR be invited to the next meeting so we can explain the proposed trail route to their representatives.

Will Andresen explained the Iron County side, including a possible trail down Highway 77, then north along the new County Road D project, then to the Hurley K-12 school, to the river and along the river back to the downtown. This basic concept is being included in various city and county plans, including the Safe Routes to School project.

Charlie Supercynski suggested that we also pursue an auto-route connecting people to the existing historic and cultural sites in the area. There was support for this idea, but some discussion on whether or not the Strengthening Our Niche work-group was the right “home” for this project. It was agreed that the work-group could pursue this idea and perhaps promote it until a long-term “home” could be found. Jim Rouse, Gemma Lamb and Char Jordan agreed to sit on a sub-committee along with Charlie to spearhead this effort.

It was agreed that this would be a good time to bring in more local and state representation to help move the plan forward. Dick Swanson will contact Ron Yesney and invite him to our next meeting. John Garske will contact Gogebic County Forester Dick Bolen for his thoughts and Lily Palmer will contact Gogebic County EDC Director Donna Scorse regarding her thoughts.

Publicity Sub-Committee

Will Andresen presented a draft script and handouts to be presented to local government boards regarding the proposed trail route. Once the map is finalized, committee members will begin to make presentations before local governments. A sample resolution of support was also presented to the committee for review. When visiting the local governments, they will be asked to pass a resolution in support of the mapped trail vision. Ultimately, local governments will need to include the trail project in their parks and recreation plans and apply for trail development funds.

Course of Action

The mapping committee will revise the map to show a proposed route from and Anvil Location to Wakefield and present the revised map to the committee for review. Once the plan is finalized, then committee members will contact local governments to seek their support for the concept.

Next Meeting Date

Monday, January 11, 12:00 Noon, Board Room of the Iron County Courthouse