

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
Remote Meeting

Sustaining Scioto Board
Meeting Notes

June 23, 2021, 2:30 pm

Members Present

Chair Kristen Atha, AECOM

Larry Antosch, Ohio Farm Bureau
Federation

Brian Brandt, American Farmland Trust

Jessica D'Ambrosio, The Nature
Conservancy

Laura Fay, Friends of the Lower Olentangy
Watershed

Jennifer Fish, Franklin Soil & Water
Conservation District

Jeremy Hoyt, City of Marysville

Maura Maher, RAMA Consulting

Vice-Chair Glenn Marzluf, Del-Co Water
Company

Danella Pettinski, City of Columbus

Rob Priestas, City of Columbus

Scott Stephens, Delaware Soil & Water
Conservation District

David Straub, U.S. Geological Survey

Rick Van Gundy, Village of Tarlton

Aaron Wilson, OSU, Byrd Polar & Climate
Research Center

Chloe Welch, Ohio EPA

Public Present

Mark McCabe, JEO Consulting

MORPC Staff Present

Lynn Kaufman

Stephen Patchan

Edwina Teye

Melinda Vonstein

Brandi Whetstone

Brooke White

Meeting Called to Order at 2:31 pm.

Chair Atha welcomed new Member Chloe Welch, Ohio EPA

Trails and Waterways – *Melinda Vonstein, MORPC*

Melinda Vonstein presented the Regional Trail Vision Plan, which will add 500 trails to the existing 233 regional trail system. In 2019 the Central Ohio Greenways Board produced the Clarity Report of Feasibility & Readiness. The political, business, and philanthropic leaders who were surveyed suggested MORPC do more work to set the stage for implementation. To that end, Staff has recently completed a Trail Prioritization Report to identify which new segments of the proposed trail network would benefit the region as a whole.

Staff is also finalizing an Impacts of Trails Study, which will further support the trail effort with regard to grant opportunities and other funding.

Trail Town

Rural trail partners have expressed interest in ways that trails can benefit their local economies. Staff is seeking funding for the Trail Towns Project, which will provide materials to invite users into the rural communities by providing amenities. Those materials will consist of:

Trail Town Guide Book

- Wayfinding and art installations;
- Infrastructure, such as lighting, bike parking, or water fountains;
- Local business collaborations; and
- Tourism activities.

Localized Trail Town Plans

- Plans for communities along the Ohio to Erie Trail

RAPID 5

The RAPID 5 project, a public/private partnership aimed at reimagining what the five River Corridors in Franklin County could look like if they were developed as linear parks and open spaces is another part of this planning effort.

Design Guidelines / Subcommittee

Due to the extensive planned changes to the regional trail system, Melinda suggested amending MORPC's design standards to include design guidelines to address environmental and watershed concerns for trails.

Member Fay noted that FLOW is in the process of drafting guidelines; she will forward those guidelines to Melinda. Mark McCabe, JEO Consulting, added that ODOT and ODNR have guidelines that may be of help to MORPC.

Brooke White suggested that the Board create a temporary subcommittee to provide assistance on best practices address trails design guidelines. Members Fay and Stephens volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

Vice-Chair Marzluf moved to create a limited subcommittee to specifically act as a resource for the Central Ohio Greenways Board to generate the set of guidelines for water proximity trails, Member Fay seconded the motion, motion carried.

Agricultural & Rural Communities Outreach Team – *Jessica d'Ambrosio, Team Chair*

The Team has been tasked with creating opportunities to improve the relationship between the downstream and upstream communities in the Upper Scioto watershed.

Team Members and Staff are working to create a key informant survey focusing on agricultural leaders and decision makers, specifically soil and water district board supervisors, who are elected officials. The survey will be shared with Sustaining Scioto Board Members, and distributed to board supervisors in July.

A key informant survey to County Commissioners is also in process.

Update on Precipitation Data for Water Infrastructure Planning Forum – *Brooke White*

The Forum is deemed a success, with 90 participants, and presenters from the State Climate Office of Ohio, the City of Columbus, the Northeast Regional Climate Center, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and an Illinois State Climatologist.

Water Quality Program – *Edwina Teye*

Riverfest

Virtual Riverfest is running June 21 thru June 25 this year. The 2021 objectives are to:

- Promote stewardship of natural resources by fostering a direct connection to local water resources and effecting behavior change through knowledge gained.
- Emphasize diversity in water recreation by providing resources, and connecting the dots on access, conservation and health.

Water Resources Planning – Logan County

MORPC staff has completed the draft Water Resources Planning document for Logan County, to be presented at a stakeholder meeting on Friday, June 25. There will be individual follow up meetings with Logan County stakeholders in July and August.

Planning for Champaign County will begin in August and should be completed in December 2021.

Adjourned at 3:40 pm.