

**Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee of Council  
Held in Council Chambers of the Municipal Building  
On Monday, June 22, 2020**

The Chairman, Councilman-at-Large Craig Witherspoon, called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**Committee Members Present:**

Chairman, Councilman-at-Large Craig Witherspoon  
Ward 3 Councilman Tony Moore; Ward 4 Councilman Scott Radcliffe

**Others in Attendance:**

Council President Brian Fischer; Law Director John Gasior; Service Director Mike Farmer; Safety Director Duane Streater; Ward 1 Councilman Bob Butkowski; Mayor Bryan Jensen; City Engineer Ryan Cummins; Ryan Smalley, Envision Group; Recreation Coordinator Clare Harasimchuk; Clerk of Council Barb Brooks; Councilwoman-at-Large Tammy Holtzmeier; Ward 2 Councilman Dennis McBride

**Discussion of the Proposed Walking and Bike Trail**

Mr. Witherspoon stated that this project has been going on for quite some time and he thought it would be a good idea for everyone to get reacquainted with it so we know what is going on with it. He said that he and his wife had served on a committee to discuss a walking trail 20 years ago and that was probably the start of what was going on, but the project has gotten some legs recently and we are at a point where we need to make some decisions as the Administration and Council as to what we want to do as far as going forward with this. He said that they were fortunate to have somebody there that evening who knows more about it than anybody and he asked Mr. Smalley to please come forward and introduce himself and give them an idea of what is going on here.

Ryan Smalley of Envision Group stated that he was the project manager for the planning study of the walking and bike trail. It has been five or six months since they put a final draft together so it was good to have a refresher here. This plan kicked off last year in April and they finished it around January of this year, so it was about a nine month schedule. There were two plans meshed together. They were tasked with completing a Safe Routes to School plan for Avon East, Heritage and the Avon Middle School and with that plan, the City of Avon and the School District partnered with NOACA. NOACA is the regional funding agency for federal transportation dollars for the five-County region. They awarded the City a grant to conduct this planning study, so as part of that grant money, the City looked into a Safe Routes to School Plan as well as a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and the City paired resources with the Metro Parks and Sheffield Village to complete that plan.

Mr. Smalley said that these two plans kind of ran concurrently over that nine month period. Funding sources for construction and design money are pretty much off the table if you do not have a plan that has had a public process, so having these plans opened up many different funding sources for us.

Mr. Smalley then reviewed what was done with the Safe Routes to School plan. He stated that the plan only goes up to 8<sup>th</sup> grade so this included Avon East, Heritage, and the Middle School, and they looked at physical infrastructure improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists who are going to school within a two-mile radius of each school, and then they also looked at other non-infrastructure improvements such as education, encouragement, and enforcement of whatever the schools and the City are doing to keep kids safe as they go to school or what we are doing to educate them within the schools. They started this

process back in April of last year and they put out surveys to every parent in those three schools to ask them general questions about how often their kids walk or bike to school, why do they let them walk or why do they not let them walk to school, etc. just to get a flavor of who was walking and where they were walking. They got over 550 responses from that survey and the biggest takeaway was the question about why parents do not let their kids walk to school. We can recommend improvements to address some of these elements and some we cannot. Distance is always going to be a challenge when you are talking about a first or second-grader walking to school. We may be able to make more direct routes or make them safer but at the end of the day, if you live far away and you are a first grader, you are probably not going to be walking or biking to school. But there are some things that are red flags for us such as safety at intersections and crossings. We can look in the region of these schools and ask if the crossings are up to ODOT regulations or up to federal regulations, or are we missing things, are things not signed properly, etc. All of that could increase the safety of kids walking and biking to school.

Mr. Smalley said that some of the challenges at the Middle School were more related to what is going on around the Middle School such as speed on Detroit Road. That is something that we can look into and ask if we should be lowering the speed limit there so it is safer and more conducive to kids. So that survey feedback has helped to shape some of the recommendations that we had within this plan. We also had "travel tallies." Teachers in all three of the schools for three straight days, asked all their children in the morning how they got to school and then at night, how they were going home from school. We got almost 7,000 individual travel tallies from that. The biggest response was school bus, the next was family vehicle. We found that almost no one walks or bikes but you can see on the chart that there is a little bit of growth when we get to the Middle School. In doing this plan obviously we are not thinking that in 10 years 50% of the kids are going to walk or bike. He said he did not know that that is a realistic expectation but can we get those numbers at the Middle School up to 10-15% of the kids? Maybe, if we are able to put in some infrastructure that supports walking and biking.

Mr. Smalley stated that then they went through each of the schools and identified what the five key issues were at each one of the schools and they all kind of overlapped. Distance from school, lack of pedestrian facilities linking the school buildings to the actual neighborhoods, particularly at Avon East where the school is almost sitting on its own island. You really cannot get from the school to a neighborhood without having to either walk through a parking lot or walk through grass to get to the back entrance. So that was kind of a common theme. Speed of traffic on main roads was another issue, as well as sidewalk gaps. And then in general a non-infrastructure issue that was identified was that there really was not any education or encouragement within the School District about walking and biking. So that was something that they have some recommendations for as well.

Mr. Smalley said that they had a series of recommendations for each one of the schools, probably 30 for each school. They range from something as small as increasing the size of signs to filling in sidewalk gaps, to redesigning an intersection because it is unsafe. A major takeaway that paralleled the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was the gap in the sidewalk connections. From a non-infrastructure sort of encouragement or enforcement recommendation, they looked at the City Ordinances and recommended a sidewalk width of 5 ft., which is a federal standard for residential sidewalk width. The City currently has a 4 ft. wide sidewalk within the Ordinances. They thought that was something that could easily be changed to make it more conducive for people to walk. And, in general, they recommended to the School District to have some educational programs to get kids excited about walking and biking.

Mr. Smalley then moved on to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. He said, again, this was a similar timeline of April to January and they worked with Sheffield Village, Lorain County Metro Parks, NOACA,

and the schools to a lesser extent. They started from scratch, looking at all the existing conditions. They inventoried sidewalks and trails, all the physical things you would think of and really started to ask themselves the question of where people wanted to go. In the public engagement, that was really the focus for the first three to four months. Where do people want to actually go if we were to build a trail? So they looked into all those physical infrastructure elements and then they also looked at the Code and path plans to see what was already done. There was a plan and he thought it was 2010, that was a sort of a “back of the envelope” plan for bike and pedestrian connections. And then they also looked at the subdivision codes in the zoning regulations to see if there were recommendations to be made that would help improve connectivity in the subdivisions.

Mr. Smalley said, so they went into community engagement with the public as well as the stakeholders. They put out two surveys both online and in print. The first one asked a lot of questions that would help to get a cross section of what type of user is going to be using the trails and then what type of facilities they would be comfortable using. There were about 400 responses from that. Once they had recommendations, they did another survey later in the process to ask people what they thought of the recommendations and what their priority would be from the recommendations. What segments did they think made the most sense to be implemented first? That helped shape some of their implementation strategies. They had a steering committee of about 24 people and it was made up of various different stakeholders as well as some citizens and a City Council representative. They met three times throughout the process to review where they were, what they were doing, and to get feedback of what they thought of some of the recommendations and the implementation strategy, and their feedback was very valuable.

Mr. Smalley said that they did something that they called “traveling boards.” They had four boards that went around the community for about a month and a half. They went to four different locations asking people where they would pick a location in Avon that they would most like to walk or bike to. And where outside of Avon they would most like to walk or bike to. They also had a couple boards about people’s biking and walking habits to get a better sense of who would be using these trails once they were built. There were 627 responses from that. The locations in Avon that were chosen were the library, the community pool, Miller Nature Preserve, and then the French Creek Reservation as well. They did question sessions with a broad cross section of 16 stakeholders. They attended the Avon Health and Safety Days last year with their boards to try to get additional feedback from people, and then they had four traditional public meetings where they went and did presentations and asked questions. From that, they found that most people thought that the biking and pedestrian facilities within the City were fair to poor. A lot of people felt isolated within their subdivision; they could get around their subdivision but getting out of their subdivision was a challenge and that is not uncommon for a growing, exurban city.

Mr. Smalley displayed a listing of all the interviews that they did, about an hour and a half interviews with each one of the organizations. They tried to get a good cross section; obviously they got all of the major stakeholders. They tried to talk to as many neighboring communities as they could to see what was going on in their communities as well. They talked to businesses like RR Brewing Co, Cleveland Clinic, and UH and also to bicycle advocates and then some organizations as well like the French Creek District. They tried to get a broad cross section of what people would be looking for in a bicycle system.

Mr. Smalley showed a map of Avon and Sheffield Village and the strategy with this from what they heard from the public and the stakeholders was to try to keep the bicycle facilities off the major roadways due to the high volumes of traffic. He pointed out the French Creek Greenway trail that would start down along Mills Road, run through the Bob-O-Link property, through a lot of the Lorain County Metro Parks land south of Miller Nature Preserve, and then weave its way over to French Creek Road and ultimately

get to the French Creek Reservation and the Black River Reservation, which is what they heard from the public as two of their three top destinations outside of Avon that they wanted to connect to. And they also thought that connecting to those two assets was important. The trail system within the Black River Reservation at the end of this year will run from Lake Erie, with a little gap in Elyria, all the way out to Toledo, a continuous trail, so that is a pretty awesome asset to have just to the west. Sheffield Village is very committed to connecting their residents to the French Creek Reservation right now. They are building a trail system along Abbe Road and Mayor Hunter is adamant about getting French Creek Road between Abbe and the Reservation built in the near future. So their focus is to try to connect people to the French Creek Reservation as well and we saw that as a great opportunity to connect residents of Avon.

Mr. Smalley stated that they tried as best they could to keep that trail on public/quasi-public property such as the School District land, Lorain County Metro Park land, and common HOA areas, but some of these properties are privately owned right now. Another big purpose of this plan is to say that today these lands are privately owned and we are not going to be looking to build a trail on privately owned land today but let's say these properties change hands in the future and there is a good possibility that development could continue to happen on some of the larger parcels. With the plan, the City now has ammunition to tell the developer that we have an approved plan that went through a public process that says we want to have a trail go through this property to connect these assets so the developer, as part of the development agreement, would have to give us 20 ft. of an easement to build this trail somewhere within the property to connect the ends of the property to the next property. They took great care in trying to find properties that were largely singly owned by one owner so you will see the Bob O Link property is impacted, there is a property north of French Creek Road by the historic district that is all one single owner, so in case that owner decided to sell, this could be much more easily built in the future. By no means are we looking to try to build a trail on private property right now unless there was an owner who wanted to do that. This is really a look into the future so that the City has ammunition to hold the developer to actually doing this.

Mr. Witherspoon asked Mr. Smalley if he knew how much private property or how many landowners were involved in this proposed trail right now and Mr. Smalley responded that he would say it is under five landowners. Everything else should be either on public right of way along French Creek Road, easements, or railroads, or City/Village-owned property.

Mr. Butkowski asked where would our residents be able to park to gain access to that trail and Mr. Smalley said that originally he thought that the property that the City owns at Mills Road was ready-made to be a trailhead for a trail but the problem is it is sort of a chicken and the egg thing. We would probably need to have a trail started down there before we can put in a trailhead but he thought that location makes a lot of sense. Another great trailhead location would be the Lustris property if that were to change hands, especially because it touches Detroit Road. At that point, once you have a couple trailheads, most of the rest of that is pretty much close to some subdivisions where people could ride onto the trail from there.

Mr. Butkowski noted that there is also the potential for a trailhead at the baseball stadium and Mr. Smalley said, yes, the baseball stadium would be another great example. He pointed out on the chart that the blue lines that were shown were all also 10 ft. wide trails. He said that the Greenway was sort of their signature recommendation. The pink line would be a 10 ft. wide off-road, asphalt trail, and the same with the blue lines; they would be 10 ft. wide trails and some would follow roadways like Chester Road. All of the dark blue lines also represent multi-trail connections. One of them goes up to the stadium through all City-owned land that could connect to Chester Road and be a great east/west connector north of I-90. One of the things that they had a challenge with was crossing I-90. There are a lot of assets to the north

and to the west that they want to get to and crossing I-90 is a challenge. There are bike lanes on Rt. 611 today and even if you put a trail along Rt. 611, he did not know how many people are going to feel very comfortable next to an 18-wheeler, trying to ride in those bike lanes. So they tried to stay away from the Interchange areas and wanted to find alternate routes. There is a connection over the Jaycox Road bridge over I-90 that was sort of their eastern connection. There is enough space there today to put in bike lanes next to the travel lane. He thought that it was good to have on a plan that you want to put a bike facility or a trail over some of these bridges because in time when ODOT looks to replace a bridge over I-90, you can say to ODOT that we have a plan with a process and ODOT has been more and more accepting of those recommendations when they are building bridge facilities. So having multiple crossing locations over I-90 is a smart thing. To the west, they showed a connection with potentially a bridge over at Moore Road. That is very expensive but they wanted to show multiple options. They showed the Greenway trail actually going under the rail bridge at the border of Sheffield Village and Avon. And there they also showed a potential path/trail going over at French Creek Road. The problem with that is that that bridge is pretty new and ODOT is not going to be replacing that for a long time but they did want to show an alternative route because it is very hard to work with railroads.

Mrs. Holtzmeier asked, aside from bridges where you only have so much room, would the trail be consistent in its width throughout the City? Mr. Smalley said, yes, a 10 ft. width and this kind of goes into the funding discussion as well. The standard for a multi-use path is 10 ft. and a 12 ft. width is even recommended now. A lot of funding agencies will not fund trails under 10 ft. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources is a primary funding source for some of these trails, particularly off-road trails on this plan. They really will not fund anything under 10 ft. unless it is a small segment and there is a big reason why you are making that width smaller, so they chose to go with the industry-standard for the industry standard reason, and also for the funders that want to see 10 ft. wide trails.

Mrs. Holtzmeier asked how many residents' driveways would that 10 ft. wide path be crossing as it is proposed? Mr. Smalley said he assumed that she was talking about the French Creek section now, along the French Creek corridor? Mrs. Holtzmeier answered, that as well as any others. Mr. Smalley said that he did not know that off the top of his head but most of that pink line is completely off road except for where it crosses the road and then along French Creek Road from the City's western boundary to about where it hits the Lustris property. That is all within French Creek Roadway right-of-way. The reason why we chose to show it there was because there are really not a lot of great options to connect to those assets to the west. So going back to those initial community engagements that we talked about, everybody wanted to get to the French Creek Reservation and to the Black River Reservation. That side of Avon is fairly developed and getting through any of those subdivisions is not going to happen with the trail, so we had a couple of options. We looked at Rt. 611 but, again, with all the traffic, he did not know how many people would use Rt. 611 for a bike facility. And as things continue to get developed to the north, there will be even more truck traffic on that route. They looked at going under I-90 at the actual French Creek itself where there is the bridge. French Creek goes under I-90 right to the west of the Rt. 611 Interchange and because of the flooding concerns there and the depth of the water level to the actual bridge bottom, there is just not a lot of play and they did not think that there would be any good way to get that underneath there without it constantly being underwater during a flood. So they looked at different alternatives. They looked at Detroit Road but Detroit Road kind of takes you in the other direction to the south and we were trying to get up to those assets to the north. So the French Creek roadway actually has a 60 ft. or 66 ft. right of way. It is a two-lane road in most spots, but from the analysis that they did he did not see the need to have to apply any right of way. The trail would be all within the existing roadway right of way and that is why they saw that as an opportunity to say that that connection

would be fairly easy to do, not having to take property or ask for easements, etc. and it is already sort of ready made there, so that is why that pink line is where it is.

Mrs. Holtzmeier said that she has some reservations about putting a 10 ft. wide trail in front of someone's residential house and maybe Mr. Smalley could help alleviate the safety concerns about residents being able to safely go in and out of their driveways or to see what is coming; generally it seems to be bicyclists who would be using this trail. Mr. Smalley said that is always the concern. When you have any bike facility that is adjacent to a roadway or is slightly off a roadway, the concern is, are people going to be looking for bicyclists when they pull out of their driveway? It obviously would be an adjustment but there are many case studies where cities have put in trails in the front yards through driveways. In Dolby, Ohio, they went through their downtown with a 10 ft. wide trail in the front yards along U.S. 20 and they pretty much cleared out the right of ways. If you are worried about trees or shrubs within the right of way of the roadway, those things can be cut back so that people coming in or out of their driveway can see what is going on within that tree lawn area. Mrs. Holtzmeier noted that Dolby's downtown is a little more commercial than what we have in the French Creek roadway with those residential houses and she asked Mr. Smalley if he had any other example of 10 ft. trails in residential driveways? Mr. Smalley said that Middleburgh Hts. has some on the Lakeland Trail and in Bellevue the downtown is very commercial but to the west of there is where this 10 ft. wide trail is and there is a series of individual single-family homes that have the trail in their front yards. He does not see it as being a huge issue safety-wise as long as things are cut back and people are looking to see what is coming. It is the same thing as somebody walking or a kid riding their bike on the sidewalk that is there today.

Mr. McBride asked how important the trailheads were. He said that, in looking at the drawing, it appeared to him that most people in Avon, if they were biking, could find a street or an interconnecting trail to get to the major trail. Mr. Smalley said, yes, that would be the idea. And again, this is a long-range idea. The major trail is eight miles long and would take a decade or more to actually be built. This is not something that is super fast and done overnight; this is a 10-20 year vision. This is where prioritization comes into play. Mr. McBride stated that he grew up riding the trails in the Metroparks, riding from Lakewood to NASA and back two or three times a day. Mr. Smalley said, and that is a great trail system that was designed to be a park and a trail system from the beginning. We are kind of retro-fitting a bike and pedestrian system to a half-built city and trying to find ways to connect the residents to some of these assets and a different mode of transportation. If this trail could be built, maybe you would take some of the people off from the roadways so they are not using Detroit or Center all the time so that there is not as much congestion. Over time he thought the goal of this plan would be to also help some of the traffic concern.

Mayor Jensen noted that a lot of French Creek road is not connected with sidewalks and we are going to have to go back within the next year or so to make the residents put sidewalks in. If we get the grant funding, that would offset their cost. It is not going to be on their property anyway as it is in the right of way so there would not be acquisitions and it would be a simple approach to putting it in. It would alleviate a lot of areas that do not have sidewalks now and bring all those developments into connection. Mr. Smalley said, and that is the big point with that French Creek Road corridor is that all of that is within the right of way so we are not having to go to 50 individual property owners and saying that we need a 10 ft. wide swath of their front yards to build this. The idea is that it is already within the roadway right of way that the City owns and as the Mayor said, there are a lot of gaps in that sidewalk there and so with the improvements that are going to be going on over the next couple years on that corridor, if you would put in a sidewalk and then a couple years later, put in a trail, you have wasted some money. So this may

be the time to construct a trail when we have the opportunity instead of going back and doing it twice. And again, all that is within the right of way and that is why that corridor was chosen.

Mr. Butkowski stated that Mr. Smalley mentioned that this trail would be a 10 ft. wide asphalt trail as opposed to concrete. Understanding that it does not get as much wear and tear as a roadway does, it also does not have the same base that a roadway has, so what type of annual maintenance would the City be looking at to maintain just that French Creek Road proposed pathway? Mr. Smalley answered that the material discussion is something that happens in the detail design, but in general 99% of multi-use trails are either asphalt or crushed limestone. There are very few that are full width concrete. Concrete is a little more expensive and once it starts to bump and spall, it is not super conducive to people riding bikes on there at fast speed. Also, it goes back to the funding sources as well. ODNR will not fund concrete; they want a 10 ft. wide asphalt trail. So some of it is playing to the funders and trying to get money because these improvements are expensive and you are going to be looking for grant funding. As for the asphalt, he does not know a per foot cost but generally when we do an asphalt trail, it is lower maintenance. The Lorain County Metro Parks is heavily involved in this plan. They have purchased some property on Riegelsberger Road to extend the Miller Nature Preserve and they are pursuing more property down along Jaycox Road so they could be the avenue for the maintenance portion of something like this.

Mr. Smalley noted that he only really talked about the Greenway but there are a lot of other connections to connect the schools to this system. A lot of those overlap the Safe Routes to School Plan. He mentioned extending the multi-use path along Chester Road and some trails along Jaycox Road going into Avon Lake. Avon Lake has a plan to put bicycle facilities along Jaycox all the way up to the lake and we thought that would be a good extension to the south to get to Schwartz Road Park and all the walking trails that are through there.

Mr. Witherspoon said, so what is next? What do we have to do next as Council? Where are we in the process? He knows we have applied for some grant money but what is Mr. Smalley's suggestion for the next step? Mr. Cummins answered and said he thought that there are a couple things. The plan still needs to go through Planning Commission and hopefully be recommended there and then there should be a formal adoption by City Council so that we have the weight of this being adopted should a developer come in on any of those properties and we can tell them that this is what we want them to pursue. So there are a couple things there on the legislative side to do. Because the plan was nearing completion last year, we applied for an implementation grant through NOACA for the French Creek Road portion from Detroit Road to Sheffield. We were awarded a \$250,000. to construct that path. That award was accepted. The next thing is for the path to be designed and as it gets through the design process and we get closer to construction, we will absolutely seek other grant opportunities. Until we actually have some plans in place, he would say that it is too early to seek more funding. About a month ago, ODOT asked for some information and we supplied that to them. Last week he received emails from ODOT about starting to set a schedule, looking at a 2023 construction. So he would assume that in next year's budget, there would be money set aside to do the engineering work and start that design process. So he thought the key steps are the legislative end and then starting to proceed with the design for the grant that we have already applied for and were successful in getting.

Mr. Butkowski asked if there was supposed to be some matching funding from that grant. Mr. Cummins said that it was about a \$1.4 million dollar project and NOACA pledged to give \$250,000. towards that so there is obviously a big funding gap there to be made up. That is what we need to talk about as we get closer and have a designed project ready to go. It is much easier then to seek other funds to help cut down that funding gap. Mr. Butkowski asked if we would get that \$250,000. to start the design process

or is that for the construction and Mr. Cummins said that is strictly for construction. Mr. Butkowski stated, so the design would come from the City's General Fund and Mr. Cummins said, yes.

Mr. Smalley stated that they also had recommendations for pedestrian sidewalk improvements and intersection improvements. These focused on the main corridors where there was a lot of traffic and where they avoided putting bicycle facilities. These recommendations go hand in hand with a lot of the recommendations from the Safe Routes plan and they prioritized sections for sidewalks to be built. They looked at neighborhood connections and improving inter-connectivity between subdivisions and also looked at the subdivision codes and recommended some changes there for sidewalk widths. Currently subdivision codes call for an 8 ft. wide trail in subdivisions and they recommended that it be 10 ft. That improves the ease and walkability of people walking and biking on those trails. Also, subdivision codes now require 10 ft. wide easements and they recommended that be changed to 15 ft. so you could put a 10 ft. wide trail on there.

Mr. Smalley stated that they sat down with a lot of the stakeholders in the City and Sheffield Village and came up with an implementation plan for right now as to what we should be focusing on. Obviously if a developer comes in and wants to develop a piece of property that is not numbered on this map, that would change how this looks but for the moment there was a big focus on the western side of the City and the east side of Sheffield Village. The Village is very interested in connecting to the French Creek Reservation and as he said earlier, they are building a trail along Abbe Road now up to French Creek and they are looking to do the same along French Creek Road into the Reservation. So we focused on the western portion of Avon as well just because of the development pressure and the opportunity along French Creek to pair with the upcoming project along French Creek Road. We thought that getting under I-90 was a priority, trying to piggyback onto the ODOT project of replacing the rail bridge. And we also looked at trying to connect some of the stadium into this system. He mentioned the priorities for sidewalk improvements on Center, Detroit, and the gaps along Nagel.

Mr. Radcliffe asked if Mr. Smalley would recommend focusing on working with the railroad or ODOT to get underneath that bridge as that seems like a key connecting point there. Mr. Cummins said that we had some discussions with ODOT but they were too far along in their process and their negotiations with the railroad for us to piggyback on to their project. But nothing that they are doing with their project would prohibit us from coming through that route in the future, so we would need to come up with a plan to do that and then start having the discussions with the railroad because it takes forever to deal with the railroad. In the short term, we do have the French Creek Road bridge over I-90. What you can do in that situation is to post a sign for people to stop and walk their bikes across the bridge over into Sheffield and then there is Sheffield's new trail to connect to from there. Long term, Mr. Cummins said that working with the railroad is very important to Avon because that gets you directly to the baseball stadium and the other property that the City owns there that could have many uses in the future. So we should probably start taking some steps on that within the next couple years. It will take awhile to work with the railroad and make that happen. Mr. Smalley added, and Sheffield would have to be involved with that as well.

Mr. McBride said that, just as a follow-up to the Rt. 611 conversation, ODOT puts paint on the road, not up on the sidewalk and Mr. Cummins said that ODOT is doing that because it is becoming a federal highway administration priority to have pedestrian accommodations. Mr. McBride asked, but why wouldn't you raise that up on a curb? Why would you put that down on the level of the road? He said that he has seen some bridges where the sidewalk is elevated and there is a partial..... Mr. Cummins said, but that does not come without its own danger unless you have the width and a barrier; otherwise you could fall off the ledge and go into traffic. He said he was just guessing that there was a judgement made

that if you are comfortable enough to be biking on Rt. 611, having a bike lane is probably a sufficient way to get across but again, he believes we are trying to create something that the majority of the people would feel comfortable on.

Mr. Radcliffe asked if Mr. Cummins would recommend that we need to make that roadwork a priority? We have a lot of things to tie in here and a lot of things to interconnect but if that is a key lynchpin going forward, then we should probably focus on that. Mr. Cummins said, yes, he thought for the first step we should be very clear about French Creek Road itself. We have a grant and if there is hesitation about doing that, we need to probably get that sorted out sooner rather than later. Mr. Radcliffe said, so that is really the first thing that you see in the process and Mr. Cummins answered, yes, and he would defer to the Mayor and Mr. Logan about budget as to whether that gets started this year or is something we budget for next year.

Mayor Jensen said, and that is where grant money comes into play. You cannot ask for grant money if you do not have the project moving forward. We asked for \$400,000. from NOACA and they gave us \$250,000. so we are going to go back to them again. And we even pushed this out to 2023 because we thought that was probably the earliest that we could even look at getting started but again, the first step is for everybody to agree that is the route and then because NOACA has already given us a grant, that helps us in going to other sources for money.

Mr. Witherspoon called for a vote on recommending to Council to go forward with the French Creek section of the trail and the vote was unanimous in favor.

### **Adjourn**

Mr. Witherspoon adjourned the meeting at 7:04 P.M.