

Boyer City to US-31 Non-motorized Trail Forum

August 16, 2010

**Small group discussions
Summary from flip charts**

Approach 1: Build a detached trail within the Boyer City/Charlevoix Road right of way

Appeals	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety - farther from road, safer for family activities, separated from road • Property owners must be consulted • Funding availability • Opportunity to use both sides of the road • Opportunity for winter time use • Potential tax credit • Aesthetics – prettier trail to ride, scenic, quiet, peaceful • Good for local economy – promotes business and tourism • Diversity of users – all can use • Promotes good health – exercise, wellness, promotes recreational opportunities, quality of life • Environmentally friendly • Close proximity to use • Means of transportation – alternative to fuel transportation • Aesthetic value - wildflowers, trees, etc., attractive to users, more scenic • Promotes access • Connects to existing paths – Little Traverse Wheelway • Positive effect on property values • Easy to maintain • Greater community asset than no trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which side of road • How much will be detached vs. attached • Too many houses close to road • Will raise taxes • Impact on trees, wetlands, storm water • Main cost not realistic • Cost to landowners for building & maintenance • There are locations where it can't be done • Excavation/shaping of land • Potential lack of maintenance • Plans for parking/rest areas • Crossing the road in Horton Bay • Impact on landowners - fragmentation of properties, loss of landscaping • Legal right of way issues - legal right to take/use property • Privacy, safety for homeowners • Safety of south side of road • Liability issues - "Hold Harmless" for property owners • Is "right of way" wide enough? – distance of trail from shoulder • Cost of detached trail – construction and maintenance, more expensive than other approaches • Snowmobile/ATV usage-enforcement issues • Time & cost of resolving legal issues • Access to right-of-way is more difficult • Not as well lit • Should consider property owners considerations first • Difficult to locate trail around Horton Bay & Susan Lake Shores • Safety of both trail users and automobile – also at crossings • More potential for user conflict • Would require detached trails in the cities • Negative effect on property values • Serious bikers won't use

Approach 2: Build a trail attached to the Boyne City/Charlevoix Road for non-motorized travel

Appeals	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paved • Better than nothing • It works in other countries • Would extend the life of the road • Would allow for rumble strips • Least costly • Less invasive on property owners • Easy maintenance • Solar energy • More appealing to “hard core” cyclists • Reduction of landowner concerns • Would result in fixing the rest of BC/CHX road • Maintenance borne by Road Commission • Fastest to build • Ecofriendly-reduced impact on wetlands, trees, endangered species • Safest for a biker • Reduced impact of property value • Least intrusive on private property • Less legal costs • Better visibility • Benefit of having trail on both sides of road • No legal/right-of-way issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less safe – motorist will use, vehicles tear up edge of road, passing on shoulder • Some fun would go away (2) • Would raise taxes • Not handicap friendly • Lack of funding availability – fewer grant opportunities • 5 ft not wide enough • Not as diverse in use – reduced use to bicyclists only, less appealing to kids/families • No winter use – use only seasonal • Poor trail conditions (road debris collects on) • Health risks from vehicle exhaust • Issue for rural mail delivery • Reduced quality of recreational usage • Increase in motor traffic speeds • Location on high traffic route • Requires proper signage • Missed opportunity to build when road is/was rebuilt • Road of commerce • No barriers • Trash/sanitation problems

Approach 3: Build a combined trail with portions attached and portions detached along the Boyne City/Charlevoix Road

Appeals	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic – would actually work • Possible solution to environmental concerns • Enhanced support from some property owners – more appealing • Attractive to cyclists & homeowners (good compromise) • Funding available • Most practical approach - good compromise/flexible, less controversial • Respects rights of property owners as to trail location • Better than no trail • Faster than #1 • Addresses many concerns of #1 & #2 • Tailors approach to individual properties & property owners • Provides compromise/flexible • No legal problems • Path meanders, scenic value • Cost savings (near road) • Long stretches or detached trail (family friendly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will long sections be detached? - If more than 20%-25% attached – not worth • Need good sewage • May be unworkable • More difficult for users & drivers • Money not there • Safety concerns - just as unsafe as # 2, responsibility for safety patrol, safety and visibility of driveway crossings • Tax issue • Security (safety) for property owners • Landowner’s liability • Maintenance - litter removal • Would not solve problem created by #1 & #2 • Property owners must be on board • Concern as to configuration of trail and potential to impact recreational use • Concern over trail crossing road • Cost higher than #2 both to build & maintain • Who makes decisions – private property owners or government • Confusion for bikers as to when they have to stop at driveways and side streets • How to get input of all property owners-users-public (Options #1 ,2 ,3,) • Inconsistency might confuse drivers & users • Harder to maintain and define responsibility for maintenance • Staying within 99 ft. right-of-way • Harder to define and stay within budget • Harder to define which grants are available • Sections not family friendly

Approach 4: Build a trail to connect Boyne City to US 31, but not along the Boyne City/Charlevoix Road

Appeals	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be more scenic route • Closer to Little Traverse Wheelway • Shorter distance for northerly property owners • Less traffic (safety, quiet, peaceful) • Easier to get lane • Someone else’s property (not in my front yard) • Potential use of Abandoned railroad right of way • Greater recreation appeal • More challenge for bikers • Other roads are safer • Other approaches are safer • Could be less expensive along a different route • Clearer air from less cars • More central end point • More “destinations” and shorter trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very costly, could be more expensive than other approaches • Will not happen in lifetime • Should parallel current transportation route • Same problems with route, property owner concerns • Topography concern • Doesn’t directly connect BC to Charlevoix • Access to the trail • Security to the trail • Takes too much time - back to square one, form new group • Wouldn’t go around Lake Charlevoix • Why was #4 not considered along with #1, #1, or #3 as a combination • Terrain a concern • Less traveled • Increased distance • Not easily monitored • Not as appealing • Lack of knowledge of potential routes • Lack of right-of-way • It will never get built • Stalling tactic • Check our r-o-w for potential routes • Discourages non-serious bicyclists • Lack of discussion of other routes and/or approaches • Passing potential opposition to other property owners • Boyne City/Chx road is the most direct • No access to State Park or water • Narrower road ROW’s • Bikers will still use BC/CHX road

Approach 5: Do not continue any discussion to build a non-motorized trail

Appeals	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail only services a portion of the population • Not increase the number of riders in front of landowners homes • Money could be used for other needs • Don't have to spend \$\$ • Ends controversy, eliminate conflicts with opponents to trail • No impact on property • Tax cost to build & maintain during periods of unemployment in light of available alternatives • Fewer visitors • No snowmobiles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to connect to Little Traverse Wheelway • Something should be done. There is a compromise • Boyne City needs • Brings a lot to economy • Failure to address the safety of people that want to ride • Less riders to other trails • Solves nothing if we end discussion • Loss of grant money goes to other communities • Missing a great opportunity for the county (tourism, economic, jobs for local contractors, health, lifestyle) • Poor health/lack of recreation for residents • Bike groups and lack of good use of rules of road • Loss of opportunity for green infrastructure & community • Need inexpensive recreational opportunities • Could create conflict with supporters of the trail • Contrary to national trends • Delay brings higher future cost • Safety

Common ground

(each group was asked to identify aspects of the issue that they could all agree on)

- Compromise may be possible
- Encourage Adopt-a-trail
- Property owners should be involved with specifics
- #3 is a compromise
- Safety for bikers and walkers
- Approach #2 is not a viable option
- Approach #1 is not a viable option in some locations
- Property owners have to be involved in decision process
- Most agreeable “combo” trail
- Good health benefit for users
- Affects a lot of people/(pro/con)
- Any options 1-2-3-4- would be safer than what we have now
- Improve local economy/increase tourism
- Vast majority of this group is supportive of a trail in one form or another
- Concerned about safety of users
- Trails encourage healthy lifestyles
- Detached trails offer highest opportunity for grants
- Detached trail should not be forced on property owners who don't want it

Summary developed by Dean Solomon, MSU Extension