

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES</b> <b><u>Special Informational Meeting with</u></b> <b>Board of Trustees, Planning Commission and</b> <b>MDOT- Tom Doyle regarding Heritage Route/Bike Trail Funding</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thursday, February 7, 2013</b> <b>Yankee Springs Township Hall</b> <b>284 North Briggs Road, Middleville, Michigan 49333</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>MINUTES</b></p>	<p><b>FINAL MINUTES</b> <b>Approved March 14, 2013</b> <b>As presented</b></p>
<p>Meeting called to order at 5:00 PM by Supervisor Mark Englerth.</p> <p><b>Roll Call:</b></p> <p><b>Board of Trustees:</b> Present: J. Lippert, M. Englerth, M. Cook, Campbell. Late with notice: Jerkatis. (Joined meeting at approx. 5:20 p.m.)</p> <p><b>Planning Commission:</b> Strickland, Fiala, Cunningham, Beukema, Purcell, Wells (ZBA Rep.), Campbell (Board Rep.).</p> <p><b>Barry County Commissioners:</b> Craig Stolsonburg and Ben Geiger.</p> <p><b>PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE</b></p>	<p><b>CALL TO ORDER</b></p> <p><b>ROLL CALL</b></p> <p><b>PLEDGE</b></p>
<p><b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS:</b></p> <p>Mark Englerth, Supervisor, introduced Tom Doyle of MDOT. Tom Doyle has been with MDOT for 22 years. He is currently the Program Manager for the Heritage Route Program. He also manages the Regional Planning Agencies. This region is called Region 3, the South Central Michigan Planning Council. This has recently been reconstituted after a number of years of inactivity. There were some issues with their executive director who has since been terminated. County Commissioner Ben Geiger is a part of this newly reconstituted council.</p> <p>Tom Doyle commented that there are several designated Heritage Routes in Region 3: US 12, a portion of I-94 that goes through the city of Marshall, I-69 from the state line to just north of I-94, and M-179 from M-43 to US-131. There are seven other planning regions in the state with Heritage Routes and National Scenic Byways within their boundaries. Doyle commented that they do provide them with funding to manage those committees and implement their corridor management plans.</p> <p>This program has seen big changes (primarily with funding) recently with the Map 21 new highway bill. The grant portion of The National Scenic By-way program was discontinued. This program had previously helped other Heritage Routes and By-ways around the state to do restoration projects and provide interpretive signage. Basically Congress has lumped all these grants programs into one program and gave it to the states, and said, "Here you deal with it, you develop a program guideline,...and by the way, we're not going to give you all the money</p>	<p><b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS</b></p> <p><b>Tom Doyle, Program Manager of Heritage Route Program, MDOT</b></p> <p>Page 1 of 6 YST Joint Meeting 2-7-13</p>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS

### Tom Doyle, MDOT explains current programming for Heritage Routes and Byways.

you anticipate getting. We are going to reduce funding,” remarked T. Doyle. Part of this funding will go to MPO’s (Metropolitan Planning Organizations) such as Kalamazoo, Detroit, and Grand Rapids. The remainder will be eligible for projects outside of these urban areas. The other source of funding has been State Planning Research. The Feds recently placed restrictions on the use of this source. One of the big restrictions was that program administration is no longer eligible for reimbursement under that program. “Bottom line is the funding levels have been reduced. They are still available though to produce a corridor management plan. That is the next step for re-constituting the committee for the M-179 Heritage Route,” added Doyle.

T. Doyle commented that first he would need a formalized letter from the M-179 Committee saying “Here we are. This is who we are.” The members of the committee need to include a local public agency representative from a city, township, or village that abutts the road line. “MDOT’s responsibility basically ends beyond that 66 foot right-of-way.” T. Doyle added that because state land abutts the right-of-way too, there would have to be somebody from the DNR on the committee as well. M. Englerth added that YS has Parks & Rec, and the Wildlife division. T. Doyle said a rep from both of these DNR departments would be needed. Also, local interested business persons and citizens are needed to join the committee. The second part of this piece is the preparation of a corridor management plan which is basically the road map for what the committee wants to do with M-179 as a Heritage Route.

Under the Supervision of George London, the last time the Heritage Committee was active was in 1997. At that time application was made. Heritage Route designation was given.

The state program was established in 1993 (Public Act 69) which followed on the heels of 1991 legislation that established the National Scenic Byway Program. One intrinsic value of the six criteria have to be met in order to establish a Heritage Route. Scenic, historical, recreational, natural, archaeological and cultural and having significance to a region are the criteria. T. Doyle mentioned Woodward Avenue as an example of an All American Road.

Frank Fiala asked T. Doyle what the worst case scenario would be if nothing is done or if a committee isn’t active for a certain period of time. Doyle commented that according to program guidelines, eventually the designation would be lost.

Englerth asked if the committee was put together, would there be funding available. Doyle commented that there would be funding available to prepare a corridor management plan. One of the things that Doyle said that they’d like to see happen is to have them (Region 3) assign or hire a staff person who basically would help the committee prepare the corridor management plan. The funding would come through SPR funding (federal funding) which is still eligible to use for planning activities. The intent for both state and federal programming is to create Heritage Routes and Byways that are destinations unto themselves. Doyle commented that the committee of Yankee Springs will need to decide what they want to do with this.

**OPEN DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF BOARD AND PLANNING COMMISSION:**

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Greg Purcell, PC, asked about a contact in Region Three. Doyle commented that Lee Adams has taken over as administrator for the council of Region Three. Doyle remarked that Adams has been doing a great job. KATS (Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study) has stepped forward (interim) and is willing to serve as that staff person needed to do the things to get the work going and also allow the use of money that is allocated to Region Three. There will be a meeting at 2:00 p.m. in Marshall on Monday, February 11<sup>th</sup> to encourage a committee to be formed to do a search for a permanent staff planning person which would include the Heritage Routes. This individual would be YS Township's "go to" person.

M. Cook brought up grants. T. Doyle commented that these grants were "matching" grants. Doyle commented that there are three sources of funding going to a particular Heritage Route. Congress lumped these sources into one and gave it to the state, after reducing funds. It is called "Transportation Alternatives Program" (TAP). The funds now are primarily used for brick and mortar projects such as building a non-motorized bike path or restoring the old train depot or a historic building. Since the funding has been reduced, it is a lot more competitive and it requires a match. "The more match, the better," commented Doyle. Doyle remarked that if you have a plan in place and the application, the Region Three manager would apply for the grant for Yankee Springs Township. M. Englerth wondered how other townships would be involved or want to participate if the M-179 corridor work did not affect them. T. Doyle recommended a marketing approach of putting M-179 Heritage Route out there as a destination. T. Doyle would like to put the Heritage Route program (in part) under the umbrella of "Pure Michigan". "Those (Pure Michigan) are the folks, they are the marketers. They know how to brand and rebrand", remarked Doyle. He would like to actually see Pure Michigan fund some of these types of Heritage Route projects. "These are the highways and byways that take you to the beautiful places," added Doyle.

Fiala, Chairman of the PC, asked if the extensive corridor plan that the PC already has, be lifted and just do some minor things for the rest of that and include those people in the creative plan, would that meet minimum requirements? Doyle commented that he hesitated because a lot of corridor management plans that were done in the past were not thorough enough in his opinion. Access management is something that seems to be overlooked. He feels it is critical to have all the townships be at the table in this process.

M. Englerth mentioned the attempt in the past few years to do an overlay district on Gun Lake. It is owned by two counties and four townships. A majority of it was done, but a little sliver owned by two of the townships remains undone today. Englerth gave a brief synopsis of what could occur with the Heritage Route grant application and developing a plan. Englerth commented that he could see the process going for three years, \$13,000 to \$15,000 (to assist the committee to prepare the plan), and there would be no guarantee at the end of the trail that we are getting any funding. Doyle mentioned that a plan would carry a lot of weight when

applying for the grant. Doyle commented that there is still no guarantee, the township has to come up with its match and that it was competitive to get a grant for a small pot of funds. Doyle remarked that things have changed looking back at the amount of funds that used to be available ten to fifteen years ago. "There's a big difference," added Doyle.

Englerth asked what projects MDOT could partner with the township to do in the not so distant future (immediately, or in the next year or two) if the township doesn't go with the Heritage Route grant process. Doyle commented that YS Township could apply on it's own for a TAP grant. Doyle also commented that TAP will look to see if YS Township's project is tied to the Heritage Route which would be advantageous.

It was determined that nothing is in place for the Heritage Route at this time. T. Doyle advised that by laws should be set up and all three local jurisdictions be included in the committee. M. Englerth mentioned that he'd like the casino involved as well. G. Purcell also mentioned all the bicycle and running event enthusiasts in the area as well. Doyle commented that he'd like to see access management included in scenic by-laws. Englerth asked if there was any way that one township could go forward even if the other townships aren't interested. Doyle felt that the joint effort would be in keeping with the spirit of the program. Englerth asked, "What if we find private funding?" Ben Geiger, Barry County Commissioner commented that the township would go to the Regional Planning Committee. Barry County Commission could become involved and present the project as something they care about.

Fiala, PC Chair, asked about signage, and making sure it did not violate MDOT regulations. Doyle recommended contacting Daryl Harden of the Kalamazoo MDOT office. Harden was instrumental in the Delton Gateway project sign and the façade improvement along M-43. B. Geiger suggested talking to Barry Township supervisor about the work Daryl Harden did as well. Englerth commented on how "the burg" of Delton really looks "polished up".

Englerth thanked Tom Doyle for coming to the meeting. Tom Doyle gave his phone number: 517-335-2936 and email address: [doylet@michigan.gov](mailto:doylet@michigan.gov)

J. Lippert, Clerk, asked what was recommended as the next step in this process. Ben Geiger commented that this was like an Olympic bid proposal and a united front was needed. Geiger suggested that the next step would be to contact a Wayland Township Commissioner. Craig Stolsonburg, Barry County Commissioner thought that some of the main players could be on the Gun Lake Board (GLPA). Englerth mentioned having a large meeting of approximately 40 people and then pulling the main people from that group.

John Jerkatis, Treasurer, pointed out the size of the Heritage Route application of 1997 (approximately 1" thick). Jerkatis commented that a lot of ground has already been covered in the previous application. He was curious as to why the application got so far and did not get any further. Jerkatis would like to know what happened.

**OPEN DISCUSSION WITH  
MEMBERS OF BOARD  
AND PLANNING  
COMMISSION cont'd:**

**OPEN DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF BOARD AND PLANNING COMMISSION: cont'd**

**OPEN DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF BOARD AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

Ben Geiger spoke of abolishing a previous committee. He suggested that maybe a template could be found for YS Township to follow. Tom Doyle commented that he'd be happy to make contacts with others for the township. He mentioned the name of Marty Overheiser, a manager out of Marshall, as a possible contact as well. Geiger mentioned that in previous regional meetings, they had started out with just five people. Geiger felt the proposed group was too large.

G. Purcell did a quick recap of what is to take place in the application process:

The former committee members (of 1997) will be contacted, as J. Jerkatis requested to see if they have any insights or information to offer.

A set of draft by-laws or two will be obtained from the Commissioners.

A resolution would need to be passed.

A letter is to be coordinated to go out to: Wayland, Rutland, and Yankee Springs Townships, the DNR, and Barry and Allegan counties for appointing members for the Heritage Corridor Committee. Purcell suggested going to the Barry County Commission and asking them to appoint someone for this committee. B. Geiger and C. Stolsonburg will be talking to Allegan County to ask them to get the process going and to go talk to Wayland Township. More than one person recommended having the casino involved in some way. As a possible casino contact, T. Doyle suggested Stew Lindsey, who is the Tribal Coordinator for MDOT with all tribes throughout the state.

It was determined that M. Englerth as Supervisor of Yankee Springs Township, would be the signatory of the letter. B. Geiger suggested that Mark will be opening the door for a conversation, and Geiger also volunteered to help M. Englerth draft the letter. Geiger also mentioned that it would be important to discuss what's important to the group and craft a mission statement. Geiger has been through this process with four other counties recently and would like to do what he can to help out.

Englerth asked for a copy of the application (1997). It was also reiterated that for DNR representation on the committee, there should be a representative from the Parks and Rec department and a representative from Game & Land.

During the next meeting Englerth would like to review the efforts of the previous committee and would also like to get as many people from the community to the meeting to keep them apprised of what is going on. A timeline was discussed for getting this done. Englerth would like to get the revisiting step done as soon as possible, then draft a letter and make contacts with the other township supervisors.

Discussion moved to the previous application made in 1997. It was noted that the application was successful because the Heritage Route designation was granted. Jerkatis asked what was obtained with the designation. T. Doyle commented the RPC at that time should have engaged with this group and worked on development,

but that did not occur.

**CLOSING DISCUSSION REGARDING HERITAGE ROUTE:**

**CLOSING DISCUSSION  
REGARDING HERITAGE  
ROUTE**

Fiala mentioned that one of the PC's priorities is the sign ordinance and the sign at the Panyrek corner for the Greater Gun Lake Area. It was discussed that the development involved with the Heritage Route application will not be done in the same time frame for the sign. Englerth mentioned that he didn't see the two projects (Gateway sign at Panyrek Corner) and the Heritage Route development running parallel. Fiala questioned whether the sign project should be moved back. M. Englerth commented that it would not be moved back. T. Doyle commented that outside of the 66 foot right-of-way (of M-179) was local jurisdiction and zoning.

M. Englerth commented that he is going to look for one specific person to own this thing. Purcell mentioned and volunteered that the Planning Commission is interested in any way it can in assisting and the PC would like to be plugged in to the meetings that will take place regarding the possible application process of the Corridor Plan/Heritage Route committee.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**ADJOURNMENT:** At 6:45 p.m., M. Cook motioned to adjourn with support from J. Lippert. Approved by all.

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2-7-13

Respectfully submitted:  
Recording Secretary  
D. Mousseau  
2-8-13

Approved Date: 2-14-13 Draft jcl  
Janice C. Lippert, Clerk

Final Approval of Minutes: March 14, 2013