

Ira's Bicycling and Walking Newsletter 12-20-09

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MORPC asks for advice in planning for future

Input sought on transportation, development, energy issues

Tuesday, December 15, 2009 3:03 AM

By Mark Ferenchik

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

If you think the area's roads are too congested or the air's too dirty, or you simply want to tell area leaders you plan on sticking around central Ohio, you've got a chance to speak your mind. For the first time, the region's planners are asking residents of 12 counties to participate in planning for transportation, land use, economic-development and environmental and energy issues. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission aims to finish its "Shaping our Future" plan by 2012. Included are the usual Franklin, Delaware, Licking, Fairfield, Pickaway, Madison, Union counties. And this time, it is adding Morrow, Marion, Knox, Ross and Fayette counties. These additional counties have a lot in common with those in central Ohio, including concerns about development and commuting, said Chester Jourdan, MORPC's executive director. "You cannot disconnect transportation from land use," he said. "This is really a recognition of the way we live our lives."

http://www.dispatchpolitics.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2009/12/15/copy/MORPCSURVEY.ART_ART_12-15-09_B1_27G0GIA.html?adsec=politics&sid=101

MORPC seeks award nominations

Wednesday, December 16, 2009 2:16 PM

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission is accepting nominations for the Regional Leadership Award and the William C. Habig Collaborative Achievement Award. Nominations for these annual awards must be received by Dec. 31. The Regional Leadership Award recognizes individuals in a 12-county region (Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Knox, Licking, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Pickaway, Ross and Union counties) who make extraordinary efforts to ensure the future viability of central Ohio. The Collaborative Achievement Award was created in 2006 in honor of Habig, who served as MORPC's executive director for 34 years. The award recognizes individuals who have achieved an effective effort and/or innovative collaborative in central Ohio. The honoree(s) will have demonstrated success in developing a specific initiative or entity that addressed key challenges facing the region. Submissions will be reviewed by MORPC's officers and executive director, with the final determination made by the administrative committee. Nominees and award recipients will be recognized at MORPC's state of the region luncheon May 4. The nomination form is available at www.morpc.org. For more information, contact Laura Koprowski at (614) 233-4126 or Lkoprowski@morpc.org.

http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/canalwinchester/stories/2009/12/16/1217cwmorpc-awards_In.html?sid=104

Healthy Communities Through Active Transportation Conference & Workshop

Overview of Conference

On March 30, federal, state and local safety advocates in Ohio are planning a one-day conference that will promote safety and [Complete Streets](#) as a path to building healthy communities and transportation choices for Ohioans. In addition to highlighting the health benefits, the event intends to further define [Bike and Pedestrian Planning](#), engineering and safety in Ohio.

THE CONFERENCE IS FREE AND WILL BE HELD AT THE RIFFE CENTER IN DOWNTOWN COLUMBUS ACROSS FROM THE STATEHOUSE.

Morning sessions will cover policy issues and target policy leaders and decision makers, as well as other conference participants. The afternoon sessions will focus on issues affecting safety, health and community advocates, engineers, planners, and law enforcement officers. Breakout sessions will include topics on Health, Transportation, Planning, Law, Enforcement, Engineering and Education as it relates to developing healthy, sustainability communities and transportation choice.

On March 31, ODOT and FHWA will also sponsor a second day of planning and design training for engineers and planners interested in more detail regarding Complete Streets. This training will be held at ODOT and include a Roadway Safety Audit conducted by national experts. More detail will be coming soon.

Keynote Speaker

Mark Fenton, former host of the PBS television series "America's Walking," and former member of the U.S. National Racewalking Team has agreed to be the keynote speaker and facilitator for the conference. Fenton is a dynamic national speaker and advocate for walking and biking. He's a consultant to the University of North Carolina's Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, and an instructor in the walkable community workshop series of the Washington, D.C.-based National Center for Bicycling and Walking. He's also a contributing editor to *Health* magazine and has written numerous books, including "The Complete Guide to Walking for Health, Weight Loss, and Fitness" (Lyons Press, 2008) and "Pedometer Walking" (Lyons Press, 2006).

Potential Topics

ODOT, MORPC and its sponsors are currently refining the agenda and breakout sessions. Topics being considered include:

- Community development/land use – Livable Communities
- Ohio laws related to active transportation, land use and community development
- Difference between rural and urban ped/bike planning
- Health/Environment – topics on healthy eating, exercise, locally grown foods
- Bicycle education and encouragement for riders, motorists and law enforcement
- Pedestrian/bike thoroughfare plans - facility/design standards, ADA, etc.
- Pedestrian/bicycle safety prioritization methods
- AASHTO/MUTCD guidelines for implementing bike/ped improvements
- ROW and maintenance issues for sidewalks/bike lanes

<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/ProgramMgt/hcat/Pages/default.aspx>

Healthy Communities through Active Transportation Conference, March 30, 2010

www.dot.state.oh.us/hcat

You are invited to the following APWA webinar, which will be hosted at MORPC on Thursday, January 7, 2010, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm:

Urban Street Trees

Speakers: Dan Burden, Raj Mohabeer, Christopher Smith, Elizabeth Harkey

This webinar will be held in MORPC's **Scioto Conference Room**. We are located at 111 Liberty St., in the Brewery District. Here is a [map with directions](#).

You can attend this webinar for free. **Please RSVP** by replying to this e-mail. Parking passes will be provided after you have RSVP'd.

If you want more details about the webinar, please continue reading below. Thank you!

Ariel Godwin

Assistant Planner, MORPC

(614) 233-4123

agodwin@morpc.org

DESCRIPTION:

Urban Street Trees

Thursday, January 7, 2010, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Why all the fuss about street trees? Increasing your city's tree canopy with properly selected, placed and spaced urban street trees provides many benefits to residents and businesses. Trees are an extremely important component of urban environments providing shading and cooling during warm weather, slowing of winter winds, screening of unsightly views and separation for inconsistent land uses. They function as valuable components of urban ecosystems by absorbing carbon dioxide and other pollutants, while at the same time generating life-giving oxygen. Mature trees improve the aesthetic environment, absorb noise, are traffic calming, reduce stress and crime, and create an inviting place to relax or socialize. After this program, participants will better be able to:

- Identify benefits of urban street trees in their community
- Develop a plan to increase the community's tree canopy
- Determine how street trees can transform city space into livable communities

Continuing Education Credits: This program has been approved for .2 CEUs or 2 PDHs. However, **APWA is charging a \$5 fee** per individual requesting CEUs. For additional CEU information, please visit <http://www.apwa.net/Education/CEU/>. Please note that you can attend this webinar for free at MORPC. The fee is only for CEUs and is not MORPC's fee.

Complete webinar description on the APWA website:

<http://www.apwa.net/Events/eventdetail.asp?ID=5198>

NEWS

Cycling Wheels Up the Policy Agenda

Neal Peirce / Dec 18 2009

For Release Sunday, December 20, 2009

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WASHINGTON — Can you imagine several hundred of this capital city's policy wonks turning out for a two-hour discussion of bicycling? A decade ago, it would have been unthinkable. But last week it happened, sponsored by the esteemed Brookings Institution, at a prime U.S. Capitol-view room of the fancy new Newseum on Pennsylvania Avenue. It may have helped that the program included musician-artist-cultural innovator David Byrne, whose decades of observing cities worldwide—often from the seat of his bicycle—is reflected in his book, "Bicycle Diaries" (Viking). But the new buzz about cycling is clearly a mark of the times. You can credit snarled traffic, ennui with driving, rising oil prices and/or concern about greenhouse gas emissions. Then there's growing popular desire to revoke the monopoly control cars and trucks have on our streets and public spaces. There's a clear tie to the "Complete Streets" movement, advancing the ideas of shared urban turf long espoused by such groups as Partners for Livable Communities and the Project for Public Spaces. <http://citiwire.net/post/1560/> Thanks to John Gideon for the link.

December 17, 2009

Thanks for bike path bridge over Ohio 104

Editor, the Gazette:

Thank you to the people who designed and built the bike path bridge over Ohio 104. It's safe because there are no openings or gaps for small children to slip into, and the bridge has a cage to prevent people from tossing items into the traffic below. It looks beautiful. The wooden fence adds so much and is an attractive finishing touch. It was worth the wait. May I request a set of steps up the bank near Pickens Avenue and a set of steps near Piatt Avenue?

<http://www.chillicothe Gazette.com/article/20091217/OPINION03/912170315/1014/OPINION/Thanks-for-bike-path-bridge-over-Ohio-104>

N. Broadway-High

Resident input sought on 'Complete Streets' ideas

Wednesday, December 16, 2009 2:17 PM

By KEVIN PARKS

ThisWeek Staff Writer

Clintonville residents are being asked to help establish priorities for some aspects of the "Complete Streets" program adopted last summer to help deal with issues at North Broadway and North High Street. These don't include the so-called "interim solutions," the source of discord as the Clintonville Area Commission's North Broadway and North High Street task force met throughout the spring and summer. While much attention focused on the panel's study of roundabouts at North Broadway's intersection with not only North High Street but also the other three lighted intersections between the Olentangy River and the Conrail tracks, East North Broadway residents were highly upset at a temporary move to widen the street by 200 feet to accommodate a left turn lane. People living on nearby residential streets supported that "interim solution" as a means of eliminating traffic cutting through to avoid long delays at the North Broadway-North High signal. In the end, at a lengthy and heated meeting in early August, CAC members voted twice by margins of 5-4 to endorse the interim plan as well as the roundabouts and other Complete Streets aspects of the task force's recommendations. "Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users," according to the Web site of the National Complete Streets Coalition. "Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street. "Creating complete streets means transportation agencies must change their orientation toward building primarily for cars. Instituting a complete streets policy ensures that transportation agencies routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users. Places with complete streets policies are making sure that their streets and roads work for drivers, transit users, pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as for older people, children and people with disabilities." http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/clintonville/stories/2009/12/16/1217clcomplete-streets_in.html?sid=104

Secure bicycle storage being studied for Downtown

Proposal includes 12 facilities using \$490,000 grant

Monday, December 14, 2009 3:02 AM

By Dave Hendricks

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Bicycle shelters. Bicycle parking. Bicycle lockers. The drive to make Columbus more bicycle-friendly is shifting into gear as enthusiasts and officials decide how to use a \$490,000 federal grant from a program aimed at improving energy efficiency and conservation. A proposal by the Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District calls for four shelters and three "secure parking" areas for bicycles Downtown. Bike lockers and parking areas in five Downtown garages also are under consideration. "I wouldn't say that any of these are set in stone," said Cleve Ricksecker, the district's executive director. The federal stimulus dollars will come from the Department of Energy for use in the Capital Crossroads district, which stretches roughly from I-70 to Nationwide Boulevard. Property owners in the district chip in money to provide extra services Downtown. Construction is not expected to start until 2011. Anything built will belong to the city but be maintained by the district, which will use \$147,000 of the grant for administrative costs and upkeep.

http://www.dispatchpolitics.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2009/12/14/copy/bikeplan.ART_ART_12-14-09_B3_ARG06L8.html?adsec=politics&sid=101

Editorial: Short takes

Saturday, December 19, 2009 2:59 AM

GIVEN ITS geographic sprawl, Columbus is an auto-focused town and will be for a long time to come. But with more people living Downtown, accommodating those who ride bikes can pay dividends in reduced

auto traffic and improved quality of life. To that end, the Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District is proposing to create four bicycle shelters and three secure parking areas for bicycles Downtown. The plan would be paid for with a federal grant intended to promote energy efficiency and conservation. At present, only 0.7 percent of the city's work force commutes to work on a bike, compared with the 4.7 percent who do so in bike-friendly Portland, Ore. Columbus is not bike-friendly. So modest efforts to accommodate bicyclists may indicate whether demand exists to go further. Giving bicyclists a secure place to store bikes is a good step. Another would be to make it safer for bicyclists to commute during the morning and evening rush hours. At present, Columbus traffic makes this a daunting prospect for most. http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/editorials/stories/2009/12/19/shrimpz.ART_ART_12-19-09_A10_ETG15F9.html

Bicycle-storage plan costly, unnecessary

Sunday, December 20, 2009 3:46 AM

Someone in Columbus needs to come back to the real world about bicycle riding ("Bicycle storage being studied," Dispatch article, Monday). Is spending federal grant money for bicycle storage Downtown real? Is changing traffic patterns and elimination of parking on part of W. Broad Street real? How many people ride bikes to work Downtown and take a change of clothes to dress for mostly office work? Who is going to ride anywhere in the city six months of the year when it is either cold, snowing or raining? Can you really ride and park on W. Broad between Hague and Central avenues, a pretty high crime area, safely?

These ideas may be good for some Southern states but not central Ohio. We should use grant money from a program aimed at improving energy efficiency and conservation and use road money in ways that will work. It is not a good idea for the 0.7 percent of 360,000 people who ride bicycles to work.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/editorials/stories/2009/12/20/Corbett_ART_12-20-09_G4_KVG1RLV.html

SUPPORTING BIKEWAY DEVELOPMENT AND THE ALUM CREEK TRAIL

The City of Columbus is committed to providing residents with alternative means of transportation through cycling and walking. Priscilla R. Tyson, Chair of the Recreation and Parks committee, is sponsoring ordinance 1635-2009 which will authorize the acceptance and appropriation of a \$3,000,000.00 grant from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission for the Alum Creek Trail Sunbury Road to Innis Park Project. The ordinance also authorizes the expenditure of \$3,716,531.33, which includes a contingency of \$162,650.00 from the Voted 1999/2004 Park and Recreation Bond Fund and Recreation and Parks grant funds for continued construction of the project. The 2.2 mile trail will link parks, schools and neighborhoods along the stream corridor and has been recognized as a key component of the greenway network by many organizations. Thanks to David Roseman for the story.

City budget

Cutbacks to affect capital projects

Saturday, December 12, 2009 3:02 PM

By CANDACE PRESTON-COY

ThisWeek Staff Writer

Delaware city departments are being asked to operate with less money next year in order to balance the 2010 budget, and capital improvement projects -- paid with income tax revenue -- also are being scaled back. At a Dec. 7 work session, city council members listened as city manager Tom Homan and finance director Dean Stelzer outlined ways to cut capital expenditures by 11.8 percent in 2010. The money would be used to help pay for salaries, benefits and other operational expenses. The city's 2009 budget was about \$22-million. Homan proposes expenditures be kept to \$21.2-million in 2010, with revenues expected to come in at \$21.3-million. Several road projects will be delayed by the budget crunch, including new sidewalks on sections of Harrison Street, improvements to intersections at William and Channing streets, and at U.S. Route 23 and Pennsylvania Avenue.

<http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/delaware/stories/2009/12/12/1213decutbacks-to-proj ln.html?sid=104>

Council intrigued by corridor possibilities

Wednesday, December 16, 2009 2:17 PM

By JENNIFER NOBLIT

ThisWeek Staff Writer

Dublin City Council members are interested in new development possibilities for the city's core, but they believe it's wise to proceed with caution.

The Bridge Street Corridor study, which began over the summer, had been on council's wish list for years. As part of the study, speakers were brought in this fall to discuss possible future development, demographics and market trends. The speakers said mixed-use development could be the way to go in Dublin's core, the area of state Route 161 that stretches from Sawmill Road to the I-270/U.S. 33 interchange... Gerber said the community already shows a tendency toward more walkable development, noting that walkways in Historic Dublin already are frequently used. Walkable, high-density development seems like a natural progression for the city, he said.

http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/dublin/stories/2009/12/16/1217ducorridor-possible_in.html?sid=104

Old bikes get spruced up for Christmas

By PAMELA WILLIS

Published: Tuesday, December 15, 2009 1:29 PM EST

A group of Middle School West students teamed with a Gahanna police officer to make sure 11 Gahanna elementary students in need will find a shiny bicycle under their Christmas trees Dec. 25. Intervention Specialist Wendy Roberts said students in her class are working on a "Bikes for Tikes" service project with Gahanna Police Officer Kim Hare. Hare, the students and teacher volunteers washed, sanded and repainted old bicycles, removing broken parts and replacing them with new ones. "This class works frequently with service projects," she said. "They have such empathy for others because they have dealt with hardships of their own." Roberts said her class is composed of sixth, seventh and eighth graders who are overcoming some kind of adversity in their lives. Officer Hare and Middle School West Assistant Principal Sherri Zynda came up with the idea for the service project. "Officer Hare was interested in having students at Middle School West get to know her in a positive light," Roberts said. "We all thought this was a great way to reach the kids in a different way." The bicycles were donated by the Gahanna Police Department, teachers in the school and parents, Roberts said.

http://www.snponline.com/articles/2009/12/19/gahanna_news/news/ghbikestik_20091215_1231pm_3.txt

Oakland Ave. project wins OPWC funding

Wednesday, December 16, 2009 2:01 PM

By ALAN FROMAN

ThisWeek Staff Writer

The Ohio Public Works Commission last Friday approved the city of Grandview Heights' application for nearly \$975,000 to fund rehabilitation and traffic calming projects for Oakland Avenue. The OPWC's Public Works Integrating Committee voted on distributing \$30-million for infrastructure improvements to applicants in District 3, which encompasses Franklin County. The money is awarded through the State Capital Improvements Program (SCIP) and the Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP). The city's funding is SCIP money. Grandview will receive \$631,868 in grant money and a \$341,751 loan. "The project's focus will be on rehabilitation and not on beautification," said Patrik Bowman, the city's director of administration/economic development. The funds will also allow Grandview to implement traffic calming methods to address the problem of motorists speeding down the one-way street. Oakland Avenue residents have been asking the city to take further action to address the hazard speeding motorists present to students who walk or bike on the street to get to Edison Intermediate/Middle School and the high school. "We're obviously very pleased that our application was successful," Bowman said. "We don't have a lot of streets that would receive a grant like this." The rehabilitation project for Oakland will include a repaving of the street and the installation of new curbs and gutters, he said. A new waterline will be installed, which will likely require new sidewalks since the waterline is below the sidewalk, Bowman said.

A variety of possible traffic calming methods will be considered, including narrowing the road, installing speed bumps and/or improving or adding crosswalks, he said.

http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/grandview/stories/2009/12/16/1217qvave-opwc-funding_In.html?sid=104

December 20, 2009

ELECTRIC POLE TO BE REMOVED AT T.J. EVANS TRAIL

GRANVILLE -- The T.J. Evans Trail in Granville at the West Broad Street entrance will be closed Dec. 28-31 because of an electric pole removal and replacement. The trail should reopen Jan. 1. For more information, call the Licking Park District headquarters at (740) 587-2535 or call the program hot line at (740) 349-4823. From Advocate staff reports.

<http://www.newarkadvocate.com/article/20091220/NEWS01/912200337/1002/news01/ELECTRIC-POLE-TO-BE-REMOVED-AT-T.J.-EVANS-TRAIL>

COMMUNITY NEWS

Johnstown won't take grant for sidewalks near school

Thursday, December 17, 2009 3:04 AM

By Marla K. Kuhlman

THISWEEK NEWS

Johnstown Village Council has opted out of participating in Safe Routes to School because federal guidelines attached to the program would make it too expensive. Village Manager Judy Edwards said a \$250,000 grant administered through the Ohio Department of Transportation would cover only construction costs for sidewalks. If Johnstown accepted the grant, she said, the village would be responsible for engineering costs and related expenses. ODOT announced in January 2008 that Johnstown had been selected to receive Safe Routes to School money to install or replace sidewalks on Williams, Douglas and Coshocton streets and in front of the high school.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2009/12/17/thisweek17_ART_12-17-09_B4_3TG19BU.html

Village drops Safe Routes to School

Saturday, December 12, 2009 3:03 PM

By MARLA K. KUHLMAN

ThisWeek Staff Writer

Johnstown Village Council defeated legislation Tuesday evening that put an end to a proposed sidewalk plan through the Ohio Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to Schools program. Village manager Judy Edwards said Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) involves federal funds, so federal requirements must be followed. That, she said, makes it cost prohibitive for the village to continue. "Before my arrival, Sarah (Phillips) applied for Safe Routes to Schools," she said. "It's federal monies. We've run into issues along the way." The \$250,000 grant would only cover construction, she said. Johnstown would be responsible for engineering costs and other associated expenses. "As we calculate expenditures, the costs keep going up," she said. "If we hired a company to put in sidewalks, it would cost half of what this is costing us." She asked council to defeat a resolution to enter into a real estate agreement with ODOT to acquire right-of-way where the SRTS sidewalks would be located. "Your advice is not to continue?" asked council member David Keck. "Yes," Edwards said. "For our portion of the process, we could put sidewalks in ourselves (at less cost). We'll have discussions on how to proceed with a sidewalk program. In the future, we need a plan that's fair and equitable for all our residents."

http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/johnstown/stories/2009/12/12/1213jisafe-routes-drppd_In.html?sid=104

Pacemakers pit squeezed by Heart of Ohio Trail

By Mark S. Jordan

December 15, 2009

MOUNT VERNON — Pacemakers Dragstrip has been in operation just outside of Mount Vernon since the mid-1950s. Back then, the race track was bordered by a railroad track, now long abandoned. Over the years, the dragstrip's configuration has changed so that part of the railroad track area began to be utilized as space for drag racer trailers, once the metal tracks and wooden cross-ties were removed. When Larry Nelson purchased the property in 1991, he leased from Conrail the strip of railroad land stretching from Kenny Road to Thayer Road. To make use of part of that land as pit area for racing teams, Nelson bulldozed the raised railroad bed to bring the railroad right of way down to the same level as the dragstrip. This allowed racing trailers to back into the pit area, extending into the old railroad bed. Meeting with the board of commissioners Monday morning, Nelson submitted a written proposal asking for permission to move, at his own expense, the bike trail to the southern side of the county's right of way, which varies from 65 feet on the northeast side of Nelson's property, to about 100 feet on the southwest. Nelson would then lease the northern portion of the right of way, consisting of about 75 percent to 80 percent of the strip of land adjacent to the dragstrip, for use as part of his pit area. He would fence off the rerouted path from his pit area with barbed wire and T-bars. The section of the railroad bed between Pacemakers and Kinney Road would also be flattened, Nelson said. The flattening of the bed, combined with parked vehicles, should make it impossible for spectators to watch races for free from the trail.

<http://mountvernonnews.com/local/09/12/15/pacemakers-pit-squeezed-by-heart-of-ohio-trail>

Metro Parks purchases land in Prairie Township

(by Katie Sparks, Staff Writer - December 18, 2009)

Prairie Oaks Metro Park recently purchased approximately 150 acres in Prairie Township. The acreage sets off of Hubbard Road, east and south of the railroad tracks near the West Point neighborhood. Prairie Oaks park manager, Tom Cochran, said the purchase will protect the land and also address illegal activities which he says have been taking place on the property. "I know we had some concerns and I spoke to many residents already and they are very appreciative of what we are doing. A lot of that property was being inappropriately used. We had ATVs (all-terrain vehicles), dirt bikes, other vehicles, a lot of vandalism and hunting without a license or permission to do so," said Cochran. Cochran said signs and fences will be used as a way to stop the misuse of the area. Additionally, the purchase will be to expand the Prairie Oaks park and create a spur trail connecting Prairie Oaks to Battelle-Darby Creek Metro Park. "Our whole plan and intent would be to get a multi-use trail from Prairie Oaks to Battelle Darby at some point in time," Cochran explained. <http://www.columbusmessenger.com/NC/0/7581.html>

Neighbors seek solution for Riverlea cut-through spat

Thursday, December 17, 2009 3:19 AM

By Dean Narciso

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

For nine years, Suzanne and Paul Butler have tolerated those who crossed their Riverlea property to reach an informal cut-through to Worthington at a fence gap in their backyard. They've hauled gravel to help secure footing, especially for the children. They've shoveled snow, pruned shrubs and picked up trash. They've endured the dead-of-night flash from security lights tripped by passers-by. Then there's insurance. The couple bought about \$1 million of supplemental liability coverage to protect themselves in case of an accident. The pathway issue has filled meeting halls with debate and was the subject of a vote 20 years ago about whether to take private land to build a sidewalk. Residents voted it down.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2009/12/17/cuthrew.ART_ART_12-17-09_B1_B9G17VV.html

Cut off at the pass between Riverlea and Worthington

Neighbors at odds over path between communities

Monday, December 14, 2009 3:05 AM

By Dean Narciso

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

A well-worn path through a gap in a fence has linked Worthington with the village of Riverlea for decades. It also has pitted neighbor against neighbor, filled meeting halls with debate and was the subject of a vote

20 years ago about whether to take private land to build a sidewalk. Now, after the sale of one of the homes bordering the path this fall, debate over access to the path has surfaced again. Riverlea's Pioneer Street dead-ends with Worthington's Evening Street at the path's cut-through, which requires walking on a private shared driveway between two homes. The gap was fenced over and "No Trespassing" signs hung last month.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2009/12/14/cut_through.ART_ART_12-14-09_B1_0NG05GE.html

Storm could chill cyclists' protest in the buff

Saturday, December 19, 2009 3:05 AM

By Verena Dobnik

Associated Press

NEW YORK -- Bicyclists planning a protest ride today are calling it their "Freedom Ride" -- free of clothing, that is. And they might be pedaling naked in a fierce snowstorm, if the forecast holds. The removal of clothing is meant as a protest over the removal of a bike lane in Orthodox Jewish neighborhood in Brooklyn. The activists want to go topless in front of Hasidic residents who "can't handle scantily clad women" on wheels, bike messenger Heather Loop told a local newspaper earlier this week. The Brooklyn Paper suggested that the scantily clad protesters might roll into the neighborhood at sundown today -- just as families leave synagogue services on the Sabbath.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/national_world/stories/2009/12/19/buff_bikers_1219.ART_ART_12-19-09_A2_6MG1UBD.html

Prevention research

New OSU center to focus on obese kids

Monday, December 14, 2009 3:05 AM

By Doug Caruso

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are adding Ohio State University to a network of researchers studying ways to prevent disease. A \$300,000 start-up grant in 2010, with about \$1.7 million more likely over the next four years, will help the university start a prevention research center. It will be one of the first centers in Ohio and will join 34 such centers nationwide. The center's first project will study ways to help parents prevent obesity in preschool children, said Mary Ellen Wewers, the director of Ohio State's center. As the center grows, it could attract millions more in funding for prevention research related to tobacco, AIDS, diabetes and other health risks.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2009/12/14/Prevention_Center.ART_ART_12-14-09_B1_0NG05O9.html

Ohio House OKs school junk-food ban

Bill would eliminate high-calorie items in schools' stores or vending machines

Thursday, December 17, 2009 3:25 AM

By Jim Siegel and Alan Johnson

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Candy bars and other high-calorie, low-nutrition treats would be expelled from Ohio schools if a bill that passed the Ohio House yesterday becomes law. The bill was one of many passed on a busy day at the Statehouse as legislators tried to clear the decks before heading home for the holidays. House Bill 60 would eliminate or restrict snack foods, including candy, sold in vending machines and school stores. Generally, the items must have fewer than 200 calories, contain no trans fat and have limited saturated fat, processed sugar and sodium. In addition, beverages cannot have more than 150 calories per serving.

http://www.dispatchpolitics.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2009/12/17/copy/NO_JUNK_FOOD.ART_ART_12-17-09_B1_B9G1805.html?adsec=politics&sid=101

Editorial: Weighty issue

OSU will play big role in fighting a top health problem

Wednesday, December 16, 2009 3:04 AM

Residents in a few pockets of Columbus have a severe problem with obesity, but with some attention from Ohio State University and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, that problem might be eased with the next generation of Columbus residents. The CDC has granted OSU \$300,000 to start a Columbus Prevention Research Center -- one of 35 in the country -- that, for now, will focus on helping parents to prevent obesity in preschool children. Graduate students in public health and perhaps even some undergraduates will help with the research. There is the potential for an additional \$1.7 million in federal money over the next four years. Another center will open at Cleveland's Case Western Reserve University, and its purpose will be to find ways to make healthier food available to Cleveland's inner-city neighborhoods.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/editorials/stories/2009/12/16/osucenter.ART_ART_12-16-09_A10_8UG0F48.html

MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION PILOTS SCHOOL POOL PROGRAM IN REYNOLDSBURG

(Columbus – December 17, 2009) The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) RideSolutions Program, Reynoldsburg Safe Routes to Schools and participating schools' Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) are piloting a new School Pool program to Reynoldsburg schools in central Ohio. The goal of the School Pool program is to provide information to parents and guardians so they can form carpools and help students find a bike or walk companion for a safer trip to school. A confidential list of students that live in proximity to each other is shared with parents interested in participating in the program. While the School Pool pilot program is voluntary, families receiving the list are not obligated to participate in carpools, but may keep the list as a reference. Three schools in Reynoldsburg are currently participating in the program; Waggoner Road Middle School, Waggoner Road Middle Junior High and French Run Elementary School. "Reynoldsburg families have had to make many adjustments this year due to economics. Our city and schools are trying to make the best of very tight budgets and still provide basic services. School transportation was reduced to state minimum standards this year which has left many families struggling to find safe travel options for their children. We are fortunate to partner with MORPC in providing School Pool to our community and to give parents one more option for school travel," stated Monica DeBrock, Reynoldsburg City Schools Safe Routes to School Coordinator. "RideSolutions is excited to provide another way for students to commute to and from our participating schools. Walking and biking in pairs and groups is safe and fun, and more carpooling means less cars dropping off and picking up students. We hope that this service brings awareness to choosing to share the commute," said Janet Berardi, MORPC RideSolutions Outreach Coordinator. MORPC's RideSolutions program provides free services to help parents and commuters form carpools, vanpool or ride transit. Ridesharing eases the burden of busing students, saves money in rising fuel costs and helps lessen air pollution. RideSolutions staff is also working with area employers in assisting their employees in finding alternative ways to work. Contact MORPC's RideSolutions at 1-888-742-RIDE (7433) or visit www.morpc.org. MORPC is a voluntary association of 47 local governments in central Ohio serving the region through planning, direct service, public policy information and innovative programming and intergovernmental coordinating services in the areas of transportation, land use, energy conservation, the environment and housing. MORPC is currently celebrating its 40th Anniversary and its efforts to build a better central Ohio region.

Safe Routes to School National Partnership Seeks Promising Examples and Consultant for New Resource Guides

With generous funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Public Health Association, the Safe Routes to School National Partnership is developing two different Safe Routes to School (SRTS) resource guides. One is for volunteers and professionals working locally with low-income and diverse communities to showcase promising strategies and success stories. The other is for education professionals and policymakers at state and local levels, focused on how SRTS fits into state and local efforts to improve health and fitness.

We are asking our partners to help identify local communities with promising SRTS initiatives that can be featured in either of the resource guides. We are also seeking a [consultant](#) to assist in the development of the resource guide for education professionals. Read on for more details:

- 1. Promising examples of SRTS in low-income and diverse communities:** We are looking for examples of low-income, urban, rural, and/or communities of color that show promise in implementing SRTS and overcoming barriers like crime, limited financial resources, language and cultural barriers, staff turnover, and more. Please send any suggestions to Margo Pedroso at margo@saferoutespartnership.org.
- 2. Promising examples of SRTS as part of student health and wellness:** We are seeking examples of schools, school districts, or states that have included SRTS into broader efforts to get children healthy and active. We aim to help demonstrate why student physical activity impacts a schools' core mission of educating children. Please send any suggestions to Margo Pedroso at margo@saferoutespartnership.org.
- 3. Request for proposals for an education consultant:** We are looking to contract with a consultant with expertise in school systems, education policy, and SRTS to develop the resource guide (#2 above) targeted to education policymakers and professionals. The Request for Proposals can be viewed at www.saferoutespartnership.org/medi/file/RFPphysical_activity_project_FINAL.pdf; responses are due by Friday, January 8, 2010 to margo@saferoutespartnership.org. Work will start in mid-January and last for approximately four months.

Thank you very much for your help in identifying promising local SRTS examples and prospective consultants. With your input, we can develop two outstanding resources guides that will help strengthen the implementation of SRTS initiatives across the country.

Report Shows How Safe Routes to School Initiatives Protect Children Walking and Bicycling

Boulder, CO - The Safe Routes to School National Partnership has released a new national report showing how Safe Routes to School programs can be harnessed to keep children safe from traffic dangers while walking and bicycling to school. Entitled, [Safe Routes to School: Putting Traffic Safety First - How Safe Routes to School Initiatives Protect Children Walking and Bicycling](#), the report explores the approaches five different communities used through Safe Routes to School to create safer environments for children walking and bicycling.

The five communities (Santa Rosa, CA; Miami-Dade County, FL; state of ME; Springfield, MO; and Portland, OR) each demonstrate how Safe Routes to School evaluation, education, encouragement, enforcement, and engineering can address traffic safety concerns. Many of these safety improvements are made at relatively low costs to communities and schools, yet have profound effects on keeping children safe while also improving physical health and the environment.

This report demonstrates there are many different approaches to improving safety for children walking and bicycling:

- In Santa Rosa, CA, after children received pedestrian safety education, there was a 63 percent increase in children using the crosswalks to cross the street rather than crossing at unmarked locations.
- In Miami-Dade County, FL, since the launch of the WalkSafe™ child pedestrian safety program in 2001, there has been a 43 percent decrease in the total number of children ages 0-14 hit by cars.
- An analysis comparing bicycle crash rates in Maine for the eight years before their Bicycle Safety Education Program was implemented (1992 to 1999) with the first eight years the program has been offered (2000-2007) reveals a 51 percent drop in bicycle crashes for children aged 10-14.

- Springfield, MO has already demonstrated the impact special roadway signage can have on vehicle speeds. Data from their pilot showed that 85 percent of motorists reduced their speeds by three to five miles per hour without any increase in enforcement after speed limits were reduced from 30 mph to 25 mph.
- Infrastructure improvements in Portland, OR have been successful in helping decrease crashes, as well as the severity of the crashes. Total crashes decreased by nearly 25 percent and there was a 32 percent decline in pedestrian injuries from crashes.

Deb Hubsmith, Director of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership noted, "The success stories in this report show the power and promise of Safe Routes to School to help communities all across the country to address safety risks and improve conditions for students walking and bicycling to school."

In 2007, an estimated 14,000 children ages 14 and under were injured as pedestrians, while more than 300 children were killed while walking. In 2008, an estimated 52,000 bicyclists were injured in motor vehicle crashes, and 21 percent of those bicyclists-nearly 11,000 children-were age 14 or younger. Children walking and bicycling to school represent 11 percent of injuries and fatalities during the school commute, but just 14 percent of trips and less than two percent of miles traveled. Transportation for America also recently released a report, [Dangerous by Design](#), identifying the dangers that pedestrians face in 360 metropolitan areas and focusing on solving the epidemic of preventable pedestrian deaths through active transportation. Safe Routes to School programs can provide tangible solutions to major traffic safety issues such as these, making it safer for children-and other residents-to walk and bicycle in their neighborhoods and to and from school.

Congress launched the federal Safe Routes to School program in 2005 through the federal transportation bill and provided \$612 million for five years of state-level implementation of programs that build sidewalks, bike lanes, and pathways, while also providing funding for education, promotion, and law enforcement. Federal Safe Routes to School funds are educating children on safe bicycle and pedestrian practices, increasing traffic enforcement to improve adherence to traffic laws and speed limits, and making infrastructure improvements to create safe places for children to walk and bicycle. The report can be viewed at www.saferoutespartnership.org.

The [Safe Routes to School National Partnership](#), hosted by the non-profit Bikes Belong Foundation, is a network of more than 400 nonprofit organizations, government agencies, schools, and professionals working together to advance the Safe Routes to School movement in the United States. The Partnership focuses on building partnerships, changing policies, advancing legislation, and improving the built environment.

LaHood applauds Safe Routes to School

I wanted to share that US Department of Transportation Secretary LaHood talked about Safe Routes to School today on his blog. He covered our new report on how Safe Routes to School funds are addressing traffic dangers and keeping kids safe while they walk and bicycle to and from school. Check out the blog at: <http://fastlane.dot.gov/2009/12/new-report-points-the-way-to-safe-routes-to-school.html>

Margo Pedroso
Deputy Director

Safe Routes to School National Partnership

Ira S Weiss
11735 Eddington
Pickerington OH 43147
iweiss@insight.rr.com