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## **Biking & Walking News**

**Ira S. Weiss, Editor**

**February 28, 2010**

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

CENTRAL OHIO GREENWAYS and TRAILS FORUM

Friday, March 5, 2010
10:00 am -3:30 pm

Agenda

- 10:00 Welcome, Overview, and Introductions
- 10:15 Making a County Active Transportation & Open Space Plan Come to Life – Greg Bachman, City of Pickerington Engineer, Holly Mattei, Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission, & Peggy Portier, Pickerington Safe Routes to School
- 11:30 Lunch & Networking - Brown Bag/Catered ~~Pay at the door~~ Update! Lunches have been covered.
- 12:30 Roundtable Discussion
- 1:30 Central Ohio Greenways 2010
- 2:00 Tour of Fairfield County Trails
- 3:30 Adjourn

Location:

Fairfield Soil & Water Conservation District
831 College Ave.
Lancaster, OH 43130

RSVP to Amanda McEldowney by Friday, February 26, 2010 amceldowney@morpc.org or 614.233.4112

Earth Day and Bikes

Hello,

I am the social networking intern for Green Columbus (greencbus.org). We are a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable living in Central Ohio and globally. We are also the organizers of Earth Day 2010 (www.update2010.org).

I am writing to see if you would know of anyone that has bicycles, in any condition, that they would be willing to donate to Green Columbus. We plan on using the bikes in a creative way to help spread the word about Earth Day 2010.

You can contact me at isoldeteba@gmail.com with any info you may have.

I appreciate your help!

Best, Isolde

Safe Routes to School \$1,000 Mini-grant Call for Applications

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (February 26, 2010) -- The National Center for Safe Routes to School is now accepting applications for up to 35 \$1,000 mini-grants for creative, youth-focused ideas that support safe walking and/or bicycling to school. Eligible activities must occur at an elementary or middle school in Fall 2010 and support the overall goal of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs -- to enable and encourage children nationwide to safely walk and bicycle to school.

"Communities across the country are finding new ways to make it safer for children to walk and bicycle to school," says Lauren Marchetti, director of the National Center for Safe Routes to School. "These mini-grants encourage communities to get students involved in the effort to foster a culture of walking and bicycling in their own neighborhoods and schools."

The National Center's SRTS mini-grant program, now in its second award cycle, supports creative ideas that support safe walking and/or bicycling to school and are youth-focused. Successful applications will focus on either increasing safe walking and/or bicycling to school or improving the safety of students already walking and/or bicycling to school. Activities may also explore a variety of issues related to SRTS, including physical activity and environmental benefits, distracted driving, personal safety, integrating children with disabilities and community building. Mini-grant activities with high levels of age-appropriate student engagement are encouraged.

Mini-grant applications are available now at www.saferoutesinfo.org/minigrants. Applications are due Wed., April 7, 2010, and recipients will be announced by Wed., May 26, 2010.

For more information, visit www.saferoutesinfo.org/minigrants.

About the National Center for Safe Routes to School

Since its creation in 2006, the National Center for Safe Routes to School has assisted communities in enabling and encouraging children to safely walk and bicycle to school. The National Center offers training and resources to assist communities in successful SRTS program development, and funding the mini-grants extends that mission.

The National Center is maintained by the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center with funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. For additional information about the National Center for Safe Routes to School, go to www.saferoutesinfo.org.

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SAFETY

Newark waits to rule on texting, driving

BY JESSIE BALMERT • Advocate Reporter • February 25, 2010

NEWARK -- Newark officials are waiting for a state solution to the dangers of texting while driving. An Ohio House of Representatives committee met Tuesday to review a bill that would ban sending text messages while driving, making the offense a minor misdemeanor punishable by up to a \$150 fine. State Rep. Jay Hottinger, R-Newark, said reputable data shows texting while driving leaves motorists more impaired than drinking and driving. "I think there are a lot of things that can serve as a distraction, and texting is at the top of that list," Hottinger said. Newark is waiting to see what will come of the state's efforts before proposing a local ban, Newark Law Director Doug Sassen said. A state initiative would keep the ban uniform so drivers texting in Newark couldn't drive elsewhere in Licking County to evade prosecution, Sassen said.

<http://www.newarkadvocate.com/article/20100225/NEWS01/2250380/1002/Newark-waits-to-rule-on-texting-driving>

Chief: Cell phone legislation opens door for safety talk

By KEVIN CORVO

Published: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 4:06 PM EST

Teenagers and technology-addicted adults in Hilliard need not worry, for now, about a local law prohibiting using a cell phone while driving. In September, Bexley became the first Central Ohio community to tackle the issue, enacting a texting-while-driving ban within the city limit. House Bill 415 proposes to establish a texting-while-driving ban statewide, but the bill appears to be stalled in the Ohio House. Several others bills, some stricter, others less strict, have also been proposed. Hilliard City Councilman Jim Ashenhurst, at the conclusion of the Feb. 22 meeting of the Public Safety and Legal Affairs Committee, queried whether Hilliard should address the issue. "I'm not advocating legislation, but do you think it is a problem," Ashenhurst asked Hilliard Law Director Pam Fox and Hilliard Police Chief Doug Francis. Francis said he was not aware of any recent accident in which the cause was attributed to use of a cell phone. Fox said the issue had been broached before and that the law department is "willing to do what council wants" if members desire legislation limiting or prohibiting particular kinds of wireless communication.

http://www.snponline.com/articles/2010/02/27/hilliard_northwest_news/news/hlphones%202_20100223_0328pm_2.txt

HEALTH – Nothing this Issue

LOCAL NEWS

Central Ohio needs shoveling etiquette

Wednesday, February 24, 2010 2:51 AM

People helping their neighbors shovel snow should not be news. My next-door neighbors do it. But, as I drove through various suburban neighborhoods recently, I noticed that driveways were clear but sidewalks remained snow-covered, and people had to walk in the streets. Don't the homeowners have kids? Don't the kids want to earn a few dollars? What's up? I am from Baltimore, Md., where people shovel their sidewalks and those of their elderly neighbors. On side streets, which seldom get plowed, the entire neighborhood goes out to shovel the streets themselves. Few complain about their streets not getting plowed. They do it themselves.
<http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/editorials/stories/2010/02/24/central-ohio-needs-shoveling-etiquette.html>

State of the City

Full text of Mayor Michael B. Coleman's speech

Wednesday, February 24, 2010 6:15 PM

AS PROVIDED BY COLUMBUS MAYOR'S OFFICE

This is my 11th State of the City. We've been through much together. We've had tough times together. And, most importantly, we've changed our city together. Take a look at some of these pictures behind me...

Reform isn't just about government. It's also about reforming the way we live, our health, our lifestyles and our environment. A prosperous city is a healthy city and an active city, and it is time to step up our fight against childhood obesity and diabetes. If we do not change our habits, our youngest generation is on pace to have a shorter lifespan than their parents. During the most recent school year, almost half of our fifth-graders were overweight, and more than 74,000 Columbus adults have diabetes. The problem is much worse among African Americans. This is unacceptable. Councilwoman Charleta Tavares has long been a passionate advocate for healthier kids, and I want to recognize her for her efforts in this area. Many kids have very little access to fresh foods, but easy access to fast food. Just look on the map behind me. Families with diabetes are more likely to live in areas without grocery stores, but have plenty of burgers, fried chicken, tacos and pizza. We cannot expect our kids to get healthy while stacking the deck against them with unhealthy choices. I commend First Lady Michelle Obama for advocating for this cause on the national level. In Columbus, the Institute for Active Living started two years ago. It is bringing more farmers markets and encouraging fun physical activities in our neighborhoods. We have also taken the lead on community gardening. Thanks to hundreds of volunteers and organizations like the Franklin Park Conservatory, there are already 130 community gardens in Columbus, teaching our youth about nutrition and food.... With one click of the mouse, parents can find a comprehensive list of sports, games and other activities all over Columbus for kids to get out and be fit. It will also give tips on workout routines and healthy recipes, farmers markets and community gardens.

While we're getting fit, 2010 will be a big year for bikes. We are determined to make Columbus Bike City USA. We have a lot of work to do here. But we must make this a community priority because it helps address obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other health issues. Plus, it's just fun. Anybody can ride a bike, no matter the age. This summer will be the third year for our Bike Columbus family ride, and I invite all of you to bring your families to participate this year. We will continue to invest in our 170-mile network of regional bikeways and trails. Tonight I am proud to announce we will set aside \$6 million in our capital budget to connect up the Alum Creek Trail and build signage, striping and an additional 24 miles of bike paths and bike lanes on our city streets. This will advance our Bicentennial Bikeways Plan. But it's not enough just to build trails and bikeways. We also must change our culture. We are far too dependent on the automobile. And both motorists and cyclists must know the rules of the road. Because sometimes, we must ride and drive on the same pavement. Both riders and drivers have a right to be there. I want to recognize Jeff Stephens and everybody at Consider Biking for their enthusiasm and support for these efforts...

To protect those green spaces as well as thousands of Rosas and Mannys in this city, we need a greener way of life. We have made tremendous strides in Columbus, thanks in part to the hard work of our Green Team, led by David Brehm. We have built green buildings, protected our waterways and reduced our use of energy. We owe it ourselves and future generations to make Columbus a sustainable community. Getting green is good for business. It creates jobs and improves our overall quality of life. Our city vehicle fleet has been repeatedly recognized as one of the greenest in the nation. We have made a commitment to only construct green buildings. We have led the preservation of the Big Darby, our only national scenic river. Our popular GreenSpot program has signed up almost 1,600 residents, businesses and community groups committed to a greener way of life. But, we have a glaring piece of unfinished business. A city cannot be truly green unless it has a comprehensive curbside recycling program. Today, families can pay extra to have recyclables picked up on their curbs, or SWACO offers drop boxes around the city. The good thing is that drop-box recycling has doubled in the past two years. The bad thing is we have not done enough. According to a new report, Columbus has one of the worst recycling rates in the nation. We recycle less material than every big city in the country except Indianapolis. Sixty percent of what we put into the landfill can be reused and recycled. Unfortunately, only 5 percent of Columbus households recycle.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/02/24/coleman-full-text-state-of-city.html

Creek bridge still needs access trail

Published: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 4:36 PM EST

Galena's Big Walnut Creek trail bridge is finished, but it's not yet accessible, village officials reported in a Feb. 23 press release. Village leaders recently bid out the approach and trail work, with the \$69,000 contract going to W.B. Republic, Village Council approved. The work, to begin this spring, includes 815 feet of trail leading up to the bridge completed by the Righter Co. The entire project has been made possible with a grant of up to \$148,000 from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources grant, \$8,000 from Delaware County Friends of the Trail and \$23,631 from Galena.

http://www.snponline.com/articles/2010/02/27/big_walnut_news/news/bw%20galena%20_20100223_0412pm_3.txt

Snow, traffic around local school worrying parents

Diebold calls for meeting to address concerns

BY SETH ROY • Advocate Reporter • February 27, 2010

NEWARK -- Some parents, and district and city officials, are concerned the recent snowfall has caused problems for walking students, especially surrounding the temporary site of John Clem Elementary School on Mount Vernon Road. "There's just nowhere for them to walk," parent Shannon Swan said of students walking north along Ohio 13 to reach the former Roosevelt Middle School. "It is just so narrow and so busy right there." Traffic backup has been an ongoing problem at the school and was made worse with the snowfall this month. Swan said sidewalks aren't cleared around the school and many walking routes don't even have sidewalks. Her family contacted Newark Mayor Bob Diebold this week, and Diebold said city and Newark school officials will meet soon to discuss the issues. "We're trying to put together a meeting next week to look at snow removal in general, as well as sidewalks around schools," he said.

<http://www.newarkadvocate.com/article/20100227/NEWS01/2270356/1002/Snow-traffic-around-local-school-worrying-parents>

Bike-path dispute might not be finished

Residents appeal to Ohio Supreme Court

BY KENT MALLETT • Advocate Reporter • February 24, 2010

COLUMBUS -- Licking Township residents fighting against construction of a bike path on land they claim to own have asked the Ohio Supreme Court to consider the case. The residents,

represented by Powell attorney John G. Neal, filed a notice of appeal Feb. 17 with the state Supreme Court. The court is not required to hear the appeal, however. A three-judge panel from Ohio's Fifth District Court of Appeals ruled Jan. 5 to uphold Licking County Common Pleas Judge Thomas Marcelain's April 29 ruling that the Thomas J. Evans Foundation is sole owner of property proposed for a 6-mile bike path from Heath to Hebron. The residents did not say at the time of the Court of Appeals' decision if they would appeal further. The residents contend in the recent filing that the case qualifies as one of public or great general interest.

<http://www.newarkadvocate.com/article/20100224/NEWS01/2240338/1002/Bike-path-dispute-might-not-be-finished>

City, ODOT looking to increase safety at 256 and I-70

By RACHEL SCOFIELD

Published: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 5:55 PM EST

The Ohio Department of Transportation lists the two-mile stretch of state Route 256 from Interstate 70 to Refugee Road as one of the top 100 corridors for crashes, Pickerington City Engineer Greg Bachman said recently. "A lot of the reason is the congestion along there," Bachman said. To alleviate traffic backup during the evening rush hour, city staff proposed adding a new southbound lane. "The p.m. peak is worse than the a.m. because southbound traffic backs up onto I-70, which obviously creates very unsafe conditions," Bachman said. By narrowing each of the current 12-foot lanes by one foot and paving over the existing 4-foot-wide concrete shoulders, the city could create a new lane for minimal cost. The staff has yet to determine whether to end the lane at Refugee Road or continue it to form a second turn lane onto Diley Road. Bachman also recommended adding grass median strips in areas of state Route 256 where drivers ignore "No Left Turn" signs, such as in front of Pizzeria Uno. Other safety improvements would include reducing the speed limit from 50 to 45 mph and moving the traffic signals to mast arms labeled with the names of cross streets. To improve the flow of traffic toward the interstate, Bachman said he would like to add a northbound lane where state Route 256 meets state Route 204.

Ira: Currently some bicyclists use the concrete shoulders as makeshift bike lanes. Eliminating the shoulders and having bicyclists share the road would no longer be safe due to speeds involved. Other bicyclists use the sidewalk on the west side of 256. I hope that whatever is finally constructed safely accommodates bicycles and enhances pedestrian safety and provides connectivity to shopping north of SR 204.

Plain Township looks to sell land to Metro Parks

Wednesday, February 24, 2010 2:06 PM

By GAIL MARTINEAU

ThisWeek Staff Writer

Plain Township officials once again are trying to sell their 32.4-acre lot on Walnut Street to Columbus Metro Parks. Township administrator J.B. Bowe said he has been talking with Metro Parks director John O'Meara about selling the property for \$15,000 per acre -- \$500 more per acre than Metro Parks officials originally proposed last June. At the \$15,000 price, the township would make about \$486,000 on the sale. According to Bowe's administrator's report presented to the trustees at their Feb. 17 meeting, the Walnut Street property would make a good entrance to the proposed 12,000-acre Rocky Fork Headwaters Metro Park in northern Plain Township. Bowe said he hopes to sell the land for \$15,000 per acre because there are two structures on the property: a barn and a garage with an attached storage shed. Steve Studenmund, strategic planning and land acquisition manager for Metro Parks, said \$14,500 per acre is about what the park district has been paying for land for the past couple of years.

http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/newalbany/stories/2010/02/24/0225napark-land_In.html?sid=104

OTHER NEWS

Cleveland wants to take back its parks

Many in region calling for Metroparks to get control of lands along Lake Erie

By James Ewinger

THE PLAIN DEALER

Citing a lack of maintenance, money and security, a lengthening list of community leaders is calling for the Cleveland Metroparks to take over the patchwork of state-run lakefront parks within the city. Most of the 650 acres of parkland, ranging from Edgewater Park to Euclid Beach, should be in the hands of the Metroparks, said City Councilman Michael Polensek. probate Judge Anthony Russo, who appoints the three commissioners overseeing the Metroparks, is pushing for more involvement by the Metroparks in lakefront development. Russo said the park system has experience in running parks in an urban setting, a steady revenue stream from an operating levy and a history of sound fiscal management.

http://blog.cleveland.com/metro/2010/02/post_219.html

'restoring prosperity'

Study has 39 steps to renew Ohio

Monday, February 22, 2010 5:40 AM

By Alan Johnson

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Ohio can claw its way out of recession and back to prosperity by refocusing on the strength of its cities, reshaping government and education, and making better use of federal funds and programs, a study by the Brookings Institution concludes. Among the ideas: Eliminate one-third of the state's 611 school districts, change state law to permit local-government tax sharing, create a "Walkable Waterfronts" program and establish a "fix it first" priority instead of building new highways. "Restoring Prosperity: Transforming Ohio's Communities for the Next Economy" is the result of nearly three years of work by the Brookings Institution, a nonprofit public-policy organization in Washington, and the Greater Ohio Policy Center, a Columbus-based planning and policy group. http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/02/22/copy/study-proposes-39-steps-to-renew-ohio.html

Driveway sealants may be hazard

Monday, February 22, 2010 3:46 AM

By Spencer Hunt

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

It's been tough to even find an asphalt driveway these days under all the snow, let alone think about sealing one. But before long, thousands of central Ohio homeowners will spend hot, sunny days spreading fresh layers of thick, black sealant on their driveways. These sealants, used for more than 50 years to help keep asphalt from cracking and crumbling, now face increasing scrutiny from federal environmental officials. Recent studies of sealants made with coal tar show that the substances can contain high concentrations of toxic compounds called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAH. The compounds are washed into streams and carried into our houses in tiny particles of sealant that break off under the weight of car tires and snow shovels and in rainwater. A 2009 U.S. Geological Survey study of apartments in Austin, Texas, found that PAH in household dust was 25 times higher if the parking lots outside were covered in coal-tar sealants. "It's eye-opening," said Barbara Mahler, a hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey and author of the study that appeared in January in the journal Environmental Science and Technology. Mahler said the study raises concerns that infants and toddlers might ingest dust laden with PAH. http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/02/22/driveway-sealants-may-be-hazard.html

Ira: Trails are sometimes sealed with this product. Is it time to rethink this practice?

Contact Information

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Web site - [www.considerbiking.org](http://www.considerbiking.org)

Facebook - [Facebook Page](#)

Twitter - [Considerbikeoh](#)

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