

**GARRETT COUNTY YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Garrett Community College**  
**Tuesday, March 8, 2005 – 7:00 pm. – 8:45 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Board Members Present**

Don Sebold  
Roger Zbel  
Asa McCain  
Rusty Thomas  
Jeremy Thayer  
Shaun Sanders

**Staff**

John Nelson

**Guests**

Spencer Schlosnagle  
Thomas Fike  
Doug Arbogast  
Mike Palencar  
Ed Kelley  
David Baker  
Chris Anderson  
Neal Welch  
Sam Thomas  
Jim Hinebaugh

**Call to Order** – The 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Garrett County Youghiogheny River Advisory Board was called to order by John Nelson at 7:10 p.m. Mr. Nelson explained that the Advisory Board had not conducted a meeting for at least 5 years and that the terms of all members had expired. Previous members had been contacted to determine their willingness to continue to serve on the Advisory Board and the six members present for the March 8, meeting along with Jim Simms, were reappointed by the Board of Garrett County Commissioners.

Mr. Nelson explained that the purpose of the meeting was to review a proposal by the Friendsville Revitalization and Task Force to make improvements to the existing tram road leading from Friendsville to Kendall. The Department of Natural Resources had requested that the Advisory Board and the Board of County Commissioners consider this project and make recommendations before the Department would pursue arrangements for trail improvements. Mr. Nelson further explained that the Yough Board is advisory to the Board of County Commissioners and that ultimately the County Commissioners would determine support for the trail enhancement project.

Spencer Schlosnagle, Mayor of Friendsville, introduced the project and explained that the town has been pursuing a revitalization plan and that one of the goals of the plan was to initiate improvements to the Friendsville to Kendall trail system. The Town has been making efforts to better plan and revitalize the business community in the town of Friendsville and the revitalization plan has recommended that the trail would provide an economic stimulus to the town. Thomas Fike, Friendsville Council President, explained that the development of a trail head on Morris Avenue, along with a parking lot and improvements to Kendall Trail, have been designated as a priority II goal of the revitalization plan. Mr. Fike explained that the Town of Friendsville has recently been making efforts to improve the business community and provide a more stable downtown working area with the assistance of young energetic business owners in the town. Mr.

Fike introduced Mike Palencar, who has spearheaded the effort to improve the Kendall Trail.

Mr. Palencar explained that the revitalization committee is proposing to make minor improvements to the trail system that would include providing some drainage to remove standing water from the trail, to provide sufficient base and gravel surface on existing wet areas and improve the entrance to the trail by replacing the existing gate with user-friendly barricades. A number of sources have been contacted for funding and a total of approximately \$100,000.00 has been compiled for this project. Those sources include ARC funding, Maryland Transportation Department funding and private foundation. Mr. Palencar believes that this funding would be sufficient for the necessary trail improvements.

Mr. Doug Arbogast next presented a Power Point presentation illustrating segments of the Kendall Trail and a map depicting areas requiring improvements. A brief video shown on the Power Point presentation was also provided giving testimony to the value of trail systems in small local communities.

Board member Rusty Thomas, pointed out that the Kendall Trail bisects a private property owned by the Frazee Trust and questioned how the trail could be developed on the private land. Chris Anderson, with the Department of Natural Resources, indicated that the State owned the trail in fee simple across the Frazee property and that all trail improvements would be on State owned land. Rusty also pointed out the potential for trash to be discarded and the unlawful use of ATV's on the trail and wondered how these nuisances would be controlled. Mr. Anderson indicated that the trail committee would be responsible for maintenance of the trail and the DNR police are scheduled to expand their manpower and control more rigorously these types of facilities. Mr. Arbogast also indicated that studies show that more use of trails by hikers and bikers result in less ATV violations.

Don Sebold questioned that if the trails were upgraded, where would the trail end and how trail users would be prevented from continuing upstream and potentially trespassing onto private property. Don also questioned how will the town or DNR control use of the trail and he would like to know the extent of improvements that will be made to the trail. Mr. Ed Kelly also questioned where parking would be placed for users of the trail. Mr. Kelly owns a residence at the beginning of the existing trail and users unlawfully park on his property or adjoining properties creating nuisances. He believes the town should be required to designate a parking area and make improvements for parking that will alleviate these nuisances.

Board member Shaun Sanders indicated that the Youghiogheny River Management Plan recognizes the potential for primitive trails within the Yough River Corridor. Shaun expressed his belief that efforts should be made to preserve the wild and scenic quality of the corridor and that improvements to the trail should be very minimal. Board member Don Sebold expressed his belief that no bikes should be allowed on the trail and that trail improvements should be limited to accommodate only primitive hiking

facilities. Board member Jerry Thayer pointed out that the difference between the plan's recommendation for development of primitive trails and the existing Kendall Trail is that the Kendall Trail is an existing improved roadbed previously used as a tram road. Jerry suggested that the DNR might be subject to some liability issues should injuries occur resulting from the current trail condition. Jerry suggested that perhaps an agreement or lease arrangement, with a limited term for renewal, could be considered by DNR and the Friendsville Revitalization Task Force. Such a lease or agreement could be terminated if any provisions of the lease are violated or renewal of the lease could be denied if trash, trespassing or other violations would continue to occur.

Considerable discussion among the Board and the guests attending the meeting centered around these basic operation maintenance and enforcement issues. Neal Welch, a DNR representative, indicated that the Department would prefer to enter into a lease arrangement with the Town of Friendsville whereby the issues could be addressed in a formal written agreement.

On a motion by Jerry Thayer and seconded by Don Sebold, the Advisory Board unanimously endorsed a motion for recommendation to the Friendsville Revitalization Committee that the following information and plans be prepared for the Advisory Board's consideration:

1. A draft 5-year lease arrangement with the Department of Natural Resources should be provided for the Board's review.
2. The lease arrangement should limit use of the trail to hiking and should prohibit bicycle or any motorized vehicle use of the trail.
3. A definitive plan for accommodating parking for trail users near the trailhead should be submitted for the Board's review.
4. A definitive plan for maintenance of the trail should be submitted for the Board's review.
5. A definitive plan for the enforcement and control of use should be submitted for the Board's review.
6. Provisions for default of the lease or any violations of the lease should be specified and provided for the Board's review.
7. An explicit plan detailing the extent of improvements to the trail should be provided for the Board's review.

It was further requested that the Friendsville Revitalization Committee report back to the Advisory Board in writing with the information requested in order that the board may develop final recommendations on this trail project.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John E. Nelson  
Planning & Land Development Director