

Interurban trail to get racks and workstations

Bike trail: Improvements coming

Donation to foster improvements to county bike trail

By Gary Achterberg

News Graphic Staff

MEQUON — In the middle of summer, the Ozaukee Interurban Trail becomes a bit of a superhighway – on two wheels, four paws and two feet.

The popular 30-mile trail spans the county – from County Line Road in Mequon, north through Thiensville, Cedarburg, Grafton, Port Washington and Belgium, using a right-of-way owned by We Energies. It is popular with walkers – with and without dogs – families and cyclists of all levels.

Several projects are in the works that likely will greatly enhance trail users' experiences.

While just in initial discussion stages, the Ozaukee Interurban Trail Advisory Committee is deciding how to best spend an \$11,901 contribution it received in early June from The Lowlands Group, which recently opened Café Hollander in the Mequon Town Center.

“We will use the donation to invest in the development of a new rest area for the Ozaukee Interurban Trail in Mequon, as well as pay for the installation of five donated bike repair stations along the trail,” Andrew Struck, director of Planning & Parks for Ozaukee County and chair of the OIT Advisory Council, said in a news release that announced the donation this spring.

Last week, Struck said the plans remain a work in progress. He added that small bike repair stations now are being installed along the trail. They were donated anonymously and the county is using some of the Lowlands Group donation to install them.

“It will have some tools and a bike pump,” Struck said. “You can put your bike up and change a flat tire.”

The area for the concrete base for the work stand has been prepared near the trail kiosk just north of

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Improvements to the Ozaukee Interurban Trail at Mequon Road include a new bike rack and upcoming installation of a work stand and tools for making basic repairs.

Photo by Gary Achterberg

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Mequon Road. Another new addition there is a bike rack that recently was installed as part of an Eagle Scout project.

The other work stands will be near the Community Center in Cedarburg, near the trail kiosk in Grafton, near the pedestrian bridge over Interstate 43 and one in Belgium just south of Main Street.

Struck said he would like to see something more substantial along the trail near Mequon Road. It likely would combine funds from the Café Hollander donation with other money.

“There is potential to work on a rest area kind of near the existing site of the Logemann Center, but there is nothing definitive,” said Struck. “It’s a little dependent on working things through with the city. We have earmarked funds to help with the project.”

Kim Tollefson, Mequon’s director of community development, said there are some other pieces that need to fall into place first. For instance, she said the Mequon Common Council in July directed city staff to seek proposals to develop the now-vacant Logemann Center building. Former Mequon Alderman John Leszczycki has said he is interested in building a restaurant there. The city likely will receive other proposals for the site as well.

Tollesfson added there likely will be other activity in that general area. For instance, she said access across the railroad tracks from the planned second phase of the Town Center to the west will occur nearby.

One Mequon alderman, who is an avid cyclist, said he is excited about potential trail improvements in the Town Center area.

“Mequon needs to become and remain a destination for bicyclists,” said Rob Strzelczyk. “Facilities large or small on the bike trail will be a benefit to the community.”

He said those improvements could be as small as the bike-fixing station and perhaps a tap to fill up water bottles to something more involved – “a pavilion where they could partner with the neighboring site, perhaps a music venue or a nice green space or tables where people could eat.”

He said something on the more ambitious side of that scale will need others getting involved beyond the money donated from the Café Hollander opening.

“We’ll benefit from finding partnerships to put in a more extensive facility,” he said.

While those plans are a work in progress, Struck said he is very grateful for the support the trail already has received. “It was a wonderful contribution – very, very nice,” he said.

Email:

gachterberg@conleynet.com