

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 22, 2024

There was a meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee of the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission on **Tuesday, October 22, 2024**, at 10:00 a.m. in the Conference Room of the Commission office located at 130 West North Street, Lima, Ohio.

Ms. Kinnear brought the meeting to order at 10:01 and proceeded with the agenda after introductions were made.

1. ROLL CALL

Kim Bruns
Mike Hensley
Charles Schreck

WOCAP
Allen County Council on Aging
Citizen

VIRTUAL

Alice Curth
Jessie Doyle
Caey Heilman
Joe Lewis

Delphos Senior Center
Ohio Means Jobs/JFS
Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District
Marimor Industries

GUEST

Sean Oden

Low Vision Coalition

STAFF

Colleen Barry
Megan Kinnear
Tonya Dye

Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
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1. PRESENTATION BY COLLEEN BARRY, LACRPC STAFF

Ms. Barry spoke to the Committee regarding the history and current status of the West Central Ohio Regional Planning Commission (WORPO). It was established at the end of 2023 and started organizing its membership, committee structures, and future work plans. WORPO encompasses the seven counties surrounding Allen County, and is tasked with developing a multijurisdictional approach to assist with transportation within the region. As rural communities, they did not have the benefits of an MPO to guide projects. It was determined that Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission would work with the WORPO membership as the fiscal agent and local technical experts.

Ms. Barry said she hopes that the official designation comes before the end of the year so that by Spring, WORPO will be on schedule for the new state fiscal year, by being able to complete some of the major documentation and planning phases ODOT requires. They have already begun with a draft Long Range Plan which is available for public comment from October 23rd to November 13, 2024. There is a link to the draft plan on LACRPC's website and those of the various county engineers involved with WORPO.

The primary committee and subcommittee structures have been established. Members to the committees and subcommittees include county engineers, county commissioners, township trustees, village administrators, other elected officials, and members of the community. Ms. Barry is excited to bring this opportunity to the region as LACRPC's WORPO Coordinator.

2. PRESENTATION BY SEAN ODEN OF THE LOW VISION COALITION

Ms. Kinnear introduced Sean Oden of the Low Vision Coalition to discuss some of the advancements the City of Lima has brought to the community regarding traffic signalization and pedestrians. He stated that he has been a long-time resident of Lima and has worked with several Lima City administrations on ADA pedestrian projects. He gave a history of the Low Vision Coalition and works to get the word out about the organization to the community as a whole.

He stated that he had filed a complaint in the past with the Federal Highway Commission to get assistance with automated pedestrian signals so that people with visual impairments may be able to cross streets safely. He is now working closely with Mayor Smith who is showing interest in ADA compliance.

The City has three automated pedestrian signals in operation, with a fourth possibly being installed as soon as January. There may be opportunities for a few more in the future as well. These automated signals give verbal cues as to when to wait and when to cross. They are operated with a tactile signal giving the direction of which travel lanes the signal controls. The signal may say something such as “Walk Sign is On to Cross Elm Street”, with audible beeps to tell a person how long the signal will remain active. Currently, the controls are too high for wheelchair users, but they are looking at ways to remedy that.

The installations cost about \$10-\$12,000 apiece. The cost is coming down from when they were first introduced. As the city makes upgrades to its active transportation plans, ADA compliance will be addressed as well. The signals work best when combined with pavement markings to guide a person when on the street and textured pavement to help differentiate between sidewalk and road. Mr. Oden stated that he has gone on several trips to Seattle, Washington, which is a model community for these signals.

Mayor Smith has continually shown interest in these activities and has invited Mr. Oden to guide her on a pedestrian walk blindfolded so that she can experience some of the difficulties that the low-vision community undertakes.

He reminded the community that overall, no matter who is the pedestrian, slow down when driving and be patient with the pedestrians in the crosswalks.

3. OTHER

There was no other business brought forth.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:36.