



**Summary of 3/10/16 Whiskey Island Connector Public Meeting Question & Answer Session
Plus Other Comments Received through 3/17/16**

3/10/16 Public Meeting Group Q&A:

Note: Questions generally are not verbatim as the meeting was not recorded; however, notes were taken. Answers were provided by Cleveland Metroparks staff except where noted. Bracketed information has been added to clarify comments or add more detail to answers that were given at the meeting.

Q: Is the NEORS D diversion structure immovable?

A: Yes.

Follow-up comment from questioner: I knew Ed Hauser, and it would be amazing to him that this is getting built. The reason that Wendy Park is there is because of him - because of citizen action, Ed's tenacity, and bringing other partners like Cuyahoga County Planning Commission on board. Citizen action does work. This is an important connection to Wendy Park and linking the Towpath Trail. This will be the most transformational thing Cleveland Metroparks ever does.

Q: What is being done to the Willow Avenue Bridge [that will connect to a new bridge to Whiskey Island and link to Wendy Park]? What is the timeline?

A: Engineering is being performed now and what we are looking at is likely a bicycle trail cantilevered off the side of the bridge. This is part of the Cleveland Foundation Centennial Trail Lake Link Phase II. [Since this project is still under design, there are many details to be worked out in terms of the facility type and engineering. We are working with the City of Cleveland, the owner of the bridge.]

Q: What is the timeline for the Whiskey Island Connector to be constructed?

A: We are trying to assemble funding for the project now – like the Clean Ohio Trails Grant program that we are applying for – so construction would likely not occur until 2018/2019. [Timing is contingent upon getting funding.]

Q: Is there any land that needs to be acquired?

A: We are collaborating with the Port of Cleveland, NEORS D, and Norfolk Southern Railway for the trail, especially around the diversion structure.

Q: So NEORS D and the railroad are working with you?

A: Yes.

Follow-on comment from group: The bridge farther down Ed Hauser Way already had extra space for bicycle and pedestrian access due to forethought of the county.

Q: What is the timeline of the Cleveland Metroparks master plan for the lakefront?

A: 10-20 years.

Q: Did you look at other master plans like the Whiskey Island Management Plan in developing the Cleveland Metroparks master plan?

A: Yes, these all informed the master plan. We will be revisiting the master plan in the next few years to update it.

Q: Have you thought about a temporary paved trail at the far end of Wendy Park by the river? This area is tough to ride now.

A: Crews were out in the last six weeks to do maintenance on the road and parking lot to improve it.

Q: Blacktop would be nice for the interim.

A: Great point. We will look into it.

Q: It would be very cool to ride from Zoar to the Coast Guard Station. It would be great to bring a bike trail all the way up to the Coast Guard Station.

A: Thanks for the input. We will take this under consideration.

Q: What is going on with the Coast Guard Station?

A: Answered by Councilman Matt Zone: There will be more information available later this summer.

Q: Is there an architect for the Wendy Park bridge?

A: There is a design team working on the bridge right now. There are not final renderings yet, but they are expected soon.

Follow-up by Councilman Matt Zone: The images here today and for the bridge are aspirations and renderings. The budget will dictate what it looks like.

Q: What will happen to the Willow Avenue bridge?

A: It will likely have a cantilevered trail. [Also addressed earlier.]

Follow-up by Councilman Matt Zone: For the Wendy Park bridge there are clearances that need to be maintained over the railroad. This will be a new bridge. The Willow Avenue bridge is an existing lift bridge that will be modified.

Q: Have the aerial rights been secured from the railroad?

A: The aerial rights were spelled out in an agreement related to another project in the 1980s.

Q: Does Cleveland Metroparks have custody of the Hulett's?

A: Answered by Councilman Matt Zone: No. This is a complicated conversation.

Q: Can there be improvements to lighting and pulling back the brush growing through the fence now?

A: The brush was cut back in the late fall. We will look into the lighting. [Without full site control and with high costs, it may be too difficult to implement any lighting prior to construction of the trail when all such agreements will be secured.]

Q: How do we support the Whiskey Island Connector project? Should we contact anyone?

A: Coming out tonight helps support the project. Fill out the survey and comment forms. Continue to come to public meetings. Also, letters could be written to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the administrator of the Clean Ohio Trails Program.

Additional comments received in one-on-one conversations at 3/10/16 Public Meeting:

- There needs to be a stop sign or light along Ed Hauser Way where the drive to Ivancic Marine comes out.
- Consider “dark sky” lighting for the trail since this is an important birding area and to limit light pollution.
- Consider coordinating the timeline of the WIC with the Wendy Park bridge to help “sell” both to the public.
- Make sure the pedestrian portion of the Whiskey Island Bridge, installed in 2008, meets the width standards for a bikeway.
- Coordinate the advertisement of the new trail, when constructed, with the other active recreation opportunities available at Wendy Park and Edgewater. Examples: standup paddle boarding, kayaking, and beach volleyball.

Additional comments received via Cleveland Metroparks online comment form (through 3/17/16):

- Comment 1: Other Comments: I really hope the people on these trails will enjoy seeing gridlocked traffic on the Shoreway during rush hours due to the ridiculous and unnecessary speed limit reduction.
- Comment 2: Main Area of Interest: Edgewater, Whiskey Island/Wendy Park; I'd like to see more of: Improved access/connection, better maintenance of the multiuse trail along Edgewater (it gets covered with sand and is dangerous to ride a bicycle on), employment of natural shoreline management where feasible rather than artificial structures like groins; I'd like to see less of: less asphalt/concrete; Other Comments: I live within spitting distance of Edgewater and I would like to commend Metroparks on their stellar job of working with the community to keep parking impacts to a minimum during Edgewater live events. The first season it was a little rugged- people were parking everywhere in our neighborhood and there was a distinct lack of respect for the neighborhood by visitors. That has improved considerably to the point where it barely impacted us this past season. Thank you!