

## NorCOG Meeting Notes, May 15, 2024

Meeting called to order by: NorCOG chair Rip Colesante at 7:05 pm

### Attendees:

- Katie Malinowski (THC)
- Matt Johnson (THC)
- Paul Baxter (THC NorCOG)
- Heidi Tompkins (NorCOG)
- Austin Wheelock (Oswego County)
- Vern Sundet (Town of West Monroe)
- Jesse Green (Town of West Monroe)
- Mike Hickey (Town of West Monroe)
- Dale Maher (Town of West Monroe)
- Tom Moran (Constantia)
- Rip Colesante (Constantia)
- Randy House (Central Square)
- Mudd Murphy (Central Square)
- Rod Coffey

### Meeting Highlights:

1. **GIS Demonstration**
  - **Katie Malinowski:** Demonstrated the Tug Hill GIS, highlighting parcel data, wetlands, property owner details, and filters. This tool helps NorCOG visualize and plan developments.
2. **GIS Enhancements**
  - **Matt Johnson & Austin Wheelock:** Suggested adding infrastructure and district boundaries to the GIS to better understand existing conditions and aid planning.
3. **Engineer Involvement**
  - **Vern Sundet:** Proposed involving engineers to access previous CAD files for better planning.
4. **Rail Trail Development**
  - **Group Discussion:** Highlighted the need for each municipality to conduct work sessions with THC Watertown's assistance to identify focus areas.
5. **Request for Proposal (RFP)**
  - **Austin Wheelock:** Suggested NorCOG issue an RFP to attract developers, emphasizing the potential for an industrial park in West Monroe and Hastings with the incoming Micron facility.
  - **Site Identification:** Need more sites for anticipated needs over the next 20 years.
6. **Property Portfolio**
  - **Rod Coffey:** Inquired about who would compile available property portfolios.
  - **Austin Wheelock:** Identified THC, Oswego County Planning, DOT, and NorCOG as responsible parties.
  - **Matt Johnson:** Confirmed NorCOG would oversee the project in alignment with the economic plan.
7. **Developer Attraction**
  - **Katie Malinowski:** Noted NorCOG's established COG status is attractive to developers.

## 8. Community Engagement

- **Vern Sundet & Rip Colesante:** Discussed the need for community outreach to identify sellers and plan available sites.

## 9. Priority Sites

- **Austin Wheelock:** Proposed focusing on the top three sites: residential, commercial, and industrial, to build momentum.

## 10. Trail Challenges

- **Katie Malinowski:** Identified issues with parking, signage, and crosswalks on the Rail Trail, especially East and West of Route 81.
- **Randy House & Vern Sundet:** Discussed snowmobile routes and potential sidewalk extensions to the Railroad Museum.
- **Rip Colesante:** Emphasized the need to resolve conflicts between walkers and motorized vehicles.
- **Dale Maher:** Suggested discussing trail maintenance during local events to gauge public interest.
- **Austin Wheelock:** Proposed an agreement with the county for highway department maintenance of trail segments.

## 11. Future Planning

- **Katie Malinowski:** Suggested starting discussions with the county to plan basic trail work in steps.
- **Randy House:** Mentioned some ongoing maintenance but noted the trail is not a county priority.
- **Katie Malinowski:** Discussed potential planning grants and leveraging Micron's influence for trail development.

## 12. Canal Opportunities

- **Rod Coffey:** Highlighted the opportunity to target canal travelers ("Loopers") for local events, especially with the upcoming 200th anniversary of the canal.

## 13. Future Meetings

- **Austin Wheelock:** Available for future meetings and suggested open office hours at Town Hall.

## Action Items

1. Each municipality to identify and inventory sites for development.
2. Utilize websites and social media to gather public input on rail trail usage.
3. Collect information on power lines along the trail

Meeting adjourned at 8:51 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Heidi Tompkins  
Associate Circuit Rider  
for the North Shore Council of Governments