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FUTURE PLANS DISCUSSED AT THE PA ROUTE 6 ALLIANCE ANNUAL MEETING

The PA Route 6 Alliance presented its goals, strategies and objectives for the next ten years at their Annual Meeting in Conneaut Lake on Thursday, May 12 which included an announcement from Pennsylvania Department of Transportation that a Master Bicycle Plan for the first portion of the Heritage Corridor will be conducted within the year.

David Brooks, President of the PA Route 6 Alliance, thanked the over 70 attendees in helping the Alliance complete the update on its Management Action Plan over the last 18 months, explaining that the document addresses the concerns and needs from various organizations, businesses and communities along the 427 mile long corridor.

“This planning process looked at our present programs as well as the overall requirements of being a Pennsylvania Heritage Area and a potential Scenic Byway,” Terri Dennison, Executive Director of the PA Route 6 Alliance said. “We now have a very comprehensive plan that addresses heritage, tourism, conservation, preservation, transportation, and community development issues.”

Rick Truscello from the EADS Group, the lead consultant on the plan, outlined the framework of the plan, emphasizing recommendations for scenic conservation, way-finding and signage, tourism development and marketing, business development, and multi-modal transportations and traffic safety.

One of the key short-term issues cited in the Management Action Plan is the safety of Heritage Corridor for pedestrians and bikers, especially Bike Route Y, which follows PA Route 6 from west to east. Angela Watson from PennDOT’s Multi-Modal Planning Division, announced plans that the department will begin later in May to review necessary steps to improve bicycle safety, accessibility and connectivity on Route 6. PennDOT will review Route 6’s current condition, bicycle facilities and safety, environmental conditions as well as collect and examine other data. PennDOT will work to identify infrastructure, trail or other connections necessary for a safe and integrated corridor.

Carrie Fisher Lepore, Deputy Secretary of Tourism, Marketing and Film Promotion for the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, presented the new branding efforts for Pennsylvania including the new slogan, "Pursue Your Happiness". She discussed how PA Route 6 is part of the tourism product for the Commonwealth.

Dennison and Brooks said that a series of meeting across Route 6 will be held in the Fall to present the recommendations of the revised Management Action Plan. The Management Action Plan can be found at http://www.paroute6.com/planning_efforts.

The Annual Meeting and "Do 6" Awards were held on Thursday, May 12th, 2016 at the Iroquois Boating and Fishing Club in Conneaut Lake. The afternoon before, attendees were treated to a tour of the newly renovated Town Hall, a tour of the Conneaut Lake Historical Society, and a cruise on the Barbara J. Sternwheeler on Conneaut Lake. Conneaut Lake was chosen as the site for the 2016 Annual Meeting after being designated the PA Route 6 Heritage Community of the Year in 2015.

The PA Route 6 Alliance is the managing entity of the PA Route 6 Heritage Corridor, one of Pennsylvania's 12 Heritage Areas, covering the 11 counties: Crawford, Erie, Warren, McKean, Potter, Tioga, Bradford, Wyoming, Lackawanna, Wayne and Pike Counties. Funding for the PA Route 6 Alliance is provided through the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC).