

Saugatuck city names trail study reps

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Saugatuck City will join Saugatuck Township and the City of Douglas in a meeting that could lead to an agreement on a non-motorized path through the three communities.

Saugatuck City Council Nov. 25 appointed Mayor Ken Trester and trustee Holly Leo to the new Blue Star Trail Joint Resolution Development Committee that will meet Dec. 9. City Manager Kirk Harrier will also be present.

Friends of the Blue Star Trail will also be represented on the committee. The 501c3 nonprofit group is working to build a 20-mile recreational trail from South Haven to Saugatuck.

Douglas has constructed a portion and Saugatuck Township has built much of its section, but the 0.4-mile Saugatuck City portion has not been built and remains controversial due to safety concerns at Blue Star Highway and Lake Street as well as the number of vehicle lanes on the bridge over the Kalamazoo River.

Saugatuck City organized a stakeholder's meeting on Sept. 19 that included representatives from the city, Douglas, Saugatuck and Ganges townships, Allegan County and road commission. The session was not open to the public.

It resulted in an Oct. 14 resolution approved by Saugatuck City that supports the project but imposed fiscal and safety conditions on the project. The resolution needed the approval of both Saugatuck Township and Douglas.

On Nov. 6, the township board tabled the resolution and created the joint resolution committee meeting in Douglas City Council followed suit

Nov. 18.

The Friends need support of the three municipalities to receive a \$200,000 pledge toward completing the section through the three communities.

Friends secretary Richard Donovan asked the Saugatuck council Nov. 25 to listen to all options before ruling out any trail plans.

“In the end, the choice is yours,” he said, asking all parties to be flexible.

In other business, council:

- Appointed Chris Peterson as its representative to the planning commission.
- Is seeking applicants to serve on the board of review as well as the planning commission.
- Moved to its Dec. 9 meeting agenda possible action on a proposed ordinance that corrects the number of planning commissioners from eight to six, and another proposed ordinance that makes changes to the franchise agreement with Consumers Energy.