



THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

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Illinois Prairie Path Annual Meeting

SAVE THE DATE



We are pleased to announce that the IPPc is having our annual meeting after a 2-year COVID hiatus. We will be holding our annual meeting at the iconic Mary Lubko Center in Wheaton, which was originally a coach house built in 1888. This beautiful facility features wood paneled rooms, stone fireplaces, and great views. The facilities are also handicap accessible with easy access to parking for those with mobility concerns.

Our annual meeting will have a featured speaker, and we will have a trails update from DuPage County Trail Coordinator and Senior Planner, Sid Kenyon. We will also have a summary of activities by the IPPc in the last few years. Musical entertainment will be provided by long time IPP member, Roger Kotecki.

So, join us for the fun!



Mary Lubko Center in Wheaton
(image from the Wheaton Park District website)

Village Partners with Park District to Develop Downtown Event Area and Open-Space Park

(Excerpted from: Village of Glen Ellyn E-Newsletter
Wednesday, August 24, 2022 Vol. 15: Issue 29)

The Village of Glen Ellyn is in the process of purchasing the former US Bank property located at 453 Forest Avenue in Downtown Glen Ellyn and partnering with the Glen Ellyn Park District to develop the area into a multi-use event and Downtown park/open space, to be utilized by the entire Glen Ellyn community.

The Park District's plan is to transform this site and expand Prairie Path Park into a dynamic open space within the heart of Glen Ellyn's Downtown. The site will create a "front yard" for commuters, Prairie Path users, Downtown residents, and the entire Glen Ellyn community. The project will also fulfill an initiative driven by the Village's Downtown Plan and Comprehensive Plans, which call for the addition of green space within the Downtown area.

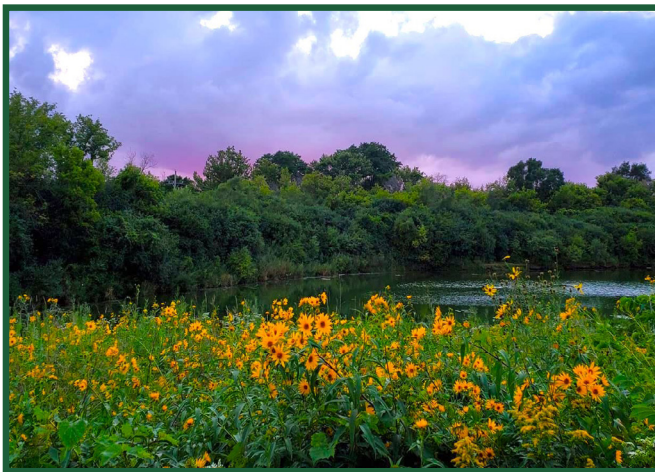
"This investment in the Village's Central Business District by both the Village and Park District will enhance how and where events are carried out in the Downtown area," said Village President Mark Senak "This will also drive additional activity and visitors to support our Downtown businesses." The Park District's early conceptual plans for the space include 9,000 square feet of greenspace, the integration of the existing Prairie Path Park, and a potential permanent stage and support facility, among other enhancements.

E-Bikes on the Illinois Prairie Path

The IPPc has received increasing feedback from a variety of users on the use of E-bikes on the Illinois Prairie Path. In summary, users are looking for the IPPc to provide specific guidance as to how E-bikes can be safely used on the path. However, the 62 miles of the Illinois Prairie Path are located in multiple jurisdictions - 3 counties and several municipalities with varying vehicular regulations. The Illinois law regarding e-bike usage can be found at cruisingone.com/illinois-e-bike-laws/. Based on the multi-use and high density aspect of the IPP, the IPPc's recommendations in regards to E-bike usage on the IPP are as follows:

1. Announce yourself prior to passing individuals on the path.
2. Observe any and all local rules and regulations that may be posted throughout the trail.
3. Be aware that E-bikes have the potential to go much faster than traditional bicycles which can startle people when passing. As such, the IPPc recommends all bike users, E-Bike & pedal, limit their speed to no more than 15 MPH while on the path.
4. And, of course, wear a helmet!

For many, E-bikes provide a new and fun means to interact with the IPP, and yet there are also concerns from others as to the speed of those bikes on the shared path. We hope these recommendations provide an initial perspective on how to best use E-bikes while on the path. Enjoy, and please be safe!



Just off the Prairie Path at Timber Lake

Wheaton Streetscape

The City of Wheaton Downtown Streetscape is a multi-year infrastructure project bringing updates and improvements to underground utilities, roadways, lighting, and signage while creating wider, more pedestrian-friendly sidewalks throughout downtown Wheaton.

The Illinois Prairie Path Corporation is thrilled that the City of Wheaton has undertaken this project. It is an incredible enhancement to downtown Wheaton including a significant stretch of the Prairie Path. Although the project is not fully complete the area already looks fantastic! We encourage you to ride, jog or walk through downtown Wheaton to see it for yourself!

Visit the City of Wheaton's website for more information: <https://www.wheaton.il.us/downtownstreetscape>.



*Downtown Wheaton Streetscape Renderings (above and below)
(Compliments of the City of Wheaton)*



Choose Your Own Trail Adventure

The BeLOCAL Western Chicago 2022 publication featured the Illinois Prairie Path Main Stem in a recent article written by Brian Kalbfleisch and Allison Kile. This particular article focuses on the DuPage County portion of the Main Stem. We believe you'll learn more about the Prairie Path and many attractions easily accessible from the Path. Enjoy!

https://issuu.com/n2co/docs/2022-09_western-chicago-belocal-5afb/1?ff&hideShareButton=true&backgroundColorFullscreen=%23495887

The IPP Aurora Branch is now open!

The IPP Aurora Branch that had been closed between Molitor and Indian Trail has reopened. It has been widened and re-surfaced, drainage has been improved, and new safety railings will be placed at various locations in the fourth quarter. Proper temporary safety measures have been put in place in the meantime. This Prairie Path project is being constructed through a contract between Martam Construction Company and IDOT.



Thank goodness this branch is now open



More views of this reopened branch



Aurora Branch vistas - continued

DuPage Monarch Project



If some of you are like us at the Illinois Prairie Path (IPP) board, observing and caring for Monarch butterflies is more than a hobby, it is a lifelong passion! Many members are not aware that the IPP manages five prairie areas in DuPage County as well as others in Cook and Kane counties. It is because of this that we are excited and proud to share that we are now fully approved as a DuPage County Monarch Project Associate member. You can view more details of exactly what that means at their website: <https://dupagemonarchs.com/>

For now, please know that every time you pass one of our prairie plantings along the path, it is a reminder that we here at the IPP are attempting to do all we can to keep this special species along for many years to come! Our plantings help provide the food, shelter, and the milkweed host plant that allows for the Monarch to lay her eggs to continue the cycle. Thank you for being a member and supporting our efforts such as this!



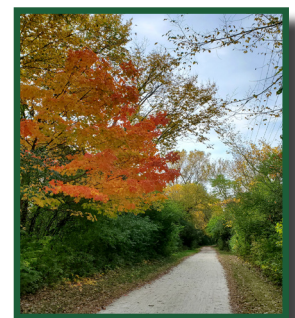
IPP Geneva Spur Winfield at the West Branch DuPage River



IPP Elgin branch in West Chicago just west of Prince Crossing Road



IPP Elgin branch at Klein Creek in Winfield



IPP Aurora branch in Aurora

New Path Connection - Elgin Branch and Schaumburg

Great news! There is a new trail connection to our Prairie Path. It is at the intersection of the Elgin Branch and Smith Road. The new trail connects the Elgin Branch on the west to the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and Schaumburg Bikeway System on the east. It is also the western end of the 35-mile long North Central DuPage Regional Trail.

The Cook County Forest Preserve District has been working cooperatively with DuPage County, local municipalities and park districts to implement this trail for decades. The construction was financed with a Federal Grant of \$1,500,000 in Surface Transportation Program funds and \$152,000 from other sources. The new trail allows for several new loop routes using parts of the Elgin Branch. One way is to start at County Farm and Geneva, bike on the Elgin branch up to the new trail, then ride east to Hawk Hollow and then south back to the Elgin branch. This is a 16.4 mile route.

TALKING TRAILS

WITH DUPAGE COUNTY



This fall, we are continuing to push ahead with the DuPage Trails Plan, which is expected to conclude in the spring of 2023. You may have seen some yard signs for the Plan out on the Prairie Path this past summer asking for your input. That is because we followed up with a second Trails Engagement Survey to get your thoughts and opinions about the County's trails network. This round, we received over 820 responses and heard about trail etiquette, wayfinding, and potential allowable uses of the trail right of way.

We have heard time and again that trail users are primarily on the Prairie Path for the purposes of enjoying nature, grabbing a bite to eat, or taking the paths as far as they can; we will seek to support those preferences going forward, among others. We heard from IPPc early on in the planning process—both supporters and leadership participated—and we will convene with IPPc and other advocacy partners again as we continue on with the Plan.

Maywood Trailhead Sign - Prairie Plantings

Some of you who start your IPP ride at the Maywood trailhead may have noticed a new educational sign posted that illustrates the importance and value of prairie plantings. For those that do visit this area, you will be greeted with a wide variety of insects that visit these plantings including many Monarch butterflies who use the many flower plantings as their fuel for their journey back south for the winter. We encourage all members to visit this area and enjoy first-hand what a prairie planting has to offer us all!



Maywood Trailhead Sign-Prairie Plantings

June | July | August

Thank you

Your membership and donations are used to provide services and fund improvements benefiting Illinois Prairie Path members and users.

Lifetime Members

Mike C.
Donald M.

Donations

Andrew and Carrie B.
Ken & Annabel B. - in memory of Jack C.
Nathaniel B. - in honor of Larry Larry Sheaffer's work with the IPP
Lester C.
Carl D. - in memory of a friend
Mary F. - in memory of a cousin
Jacqueline F.
Hamill Family Foundation
Patrick H. (company match)
Joan H. - in memory of Margaret C.
S. E. Bramsen Foundation

New Members

Liang C.C.
Mike C.
Susan D.
Jenny D.
Michelle F.
Laura F.
Thomas G.
William J.
Steve J.
Robert J.
John J.
Kevin K.
Steve L.

Donald M.
Monica M.
Jairo M.
Gina M.
Collin M.
John S.
John S.
Andrew S.
Steve S.
Leonard T.
Karen W.
Amanda W.
Carl Z.