

TART

# Trail route through village open for discussion

*Elk Rapids residents offer opinions, suggestions*

BY SHERI McWHIRTER

[smcwhirter@record-eagle.com](mailto:smcwhirter@record-eagle.com)

ELK RAPIDS — Village officials began to take public input this week about how to route a coming recreational trail through Elk Rapids.

A couple dozen village residents attended a public meeting Monday to discuss how best to have the coming Traverse City-to-Charlevoix TART trail pass through village limits. Those gathered

talked about two already designated routes through the village — including U.S. Bike Route 35 from U.S. Highway 31 down Bridge and Dexter streets and then back to the highway — and other possibilities.

The ultimate goal is to decide what village streets should be designated to share shoulder space with the new recreational trail. Should it be one of two already designated routes through the lakeside village, or an altogether new pathway?

“Why can’t we keep it on 31 and keep it right on the bridge,” asked Dennis Valkanoff of Elk Rapids.

Matt Radulski, an operations engineer for the Michigan Department of Transportation said there’s not been an official study to determine whether a trail and highway traffic can safely share the bridge across the Elk River. But the state has no plans to expand the width of that bridge, he added.

Later, Valkanoff suggested a wooden bridge for the non-motorized trail could be built nearby the federal highway bridge. Plenty of wooden bridges exist for the recreational trail between Charlevoix and Petoskey, he said.

**SEE ROUTE PAGE 2A**



Record-Eagle/Mike Krebs

A cyclist pedals down Dexter Street on Monday in Elk Rapids. The Village of Elk Rapids hosted a public input session Monday evening to gather feedback on a new non-motorized trail route. The route would eventually link to the Traverse City-to-Charlevoix trail.



# ROUTE

## Elk Rapids considers trail route

FROM PAGE 1A

Beth Brolick of Elk Rapids attended the public meeting and said she's thrilled the trail is coming to town, but is concerned about cyclist safety should the TART trail be directed down South Bayshore Drive, part of the second already established bike

route in the village.

"It's a very narrow shoulder on both sides of the road," she said.

Chris Kushman of non-profit TART Trails said in such cases officials might use surface markings to indicate the shared roadway, or even signs to indicate it is a designated recreational route through town.

Sherry Steffen-Detwiler, who serves on the Elk Rapids Trail Committee, said she's keen to take advantage of the long-designated federal bike route through the village.

"That's keeping them on

the designated route," she said. "It just makes sense. It's the established (U.S.) Bike Route 35."

Caroline Kennedy, assistant village manager, said the Elk Rapids Village Council will have the final say on where the TART Trail will be routed through village limits. She said officials from the village's public works and police departments are expected to weigh in, along with feasibility analysis by design engineers on the larger trail project.

Elizabeth Calcutt, community planner with nonprofit Networks Northwest, said the project will accept public input through the end of September about where to route the trail through

Elk Rapids' village limits. She said the more village residents share their opinions, the better.

"You are the most familiar with your streets, your traffic, and where best a bike route would go," she said during Mon-

day's session.

The trail extension coming north from Acme has been designed to come into Elk Rapids along the west side of U.S. 31, Calcutt said, which may impact residents' opinions.

Comments may be emailed to [info@traversecitytocharlevoixtrail.org](mailto:info@traversecitytocharlevoixtrail.org), or input can be shared through a survey expected to be posted this week at [www.traversecitytocharlevoixtrail.org](http://www.traversecitytocharlevoixtrail.org) online.



**INTRODUCING**  
**BASTIEN LE GUEN**  
**MASTER HAIR DESIGNER**

After 13 years working for top designer magazines and fashion shows in Paris France, Bastien chose Traverse City as