



Kevin Jenison, Communications Manager | Email: kjenison@muscatineiowa.gov
City of Muscatine | 215 Sycamore St. | Muscatine, IA 52761 | Phone: 563-264-1550

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWEST TRAIL OFFICIALLY OPENED IN CEREMONY FRIDAY

Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park trail becomes part of growing network of Muscatine trails

MUSCATINE Iowa – It was 10 years in the making. Over 30 different routes were considered, debated, and discarded for one reason or another. Finally one route was stood out and met with approval of all concerned. After just two months of construction, the newest trail to join the Muscatine network was opened for all to enjoy.

Dignitaries from around the region along with walking and bicycling enthusiast gathered on Friday just off 41st Street east of Stewart Road where the newest trail enters Deep Lakes Park for the official ribbon cutting ceremony.

“What a day this is,” Sarah Lande, a member of the City of Muscatine Trails Committee said in her opening remarks. “Full of Muscatine County pride. How thankful and grateful we are that our community has cooperated to put this together.”

Retiring City Council member Bob Bynum was present to cut the ribbon and officially open the trail. Curt Weiss, director of the Muscatine County Conservation Board, and Randy Hill, leader of the Trails Committee, held the ribbon.

“This is just a wonderful opportunity for the whole community,” Bynum said.

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The trail begins at the entrance to Kent Stein Park on Houser Street and meanders for approximately four miles before coming to an end on the south side of Deep Lakes Park at 57th Street.

The planning for the trail began in 2006 when a memo to the City Council noted that the City of Muscatine was awarded \$510,000 Federal Department of Transportation grant for the extension of the Mississippi Levy trail through Muscatine County to Wiggins Road.

“A second memo stated the engineering part of the project would be complete in 2006 with construction in 2007,” Lande said.

The memos did not anticipate the difficulties the designers and trail committee would face in finding a route as the trail could not just run along the levy due to safety concerns expressed by several of the companies located on the river.

“We just kept looking at different routes until we found one that would work,” Lande said.

Thirty different routes to be exact were considered over a 10 year period.

“So this has been a long time coming,” Lande said.

Lande noted that one of the special things about this trail is that it is at the confluence of the Mississippi River Trail that runs from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico, and the American Discovery Trail that runs from San Francisco to Delaware.

“This is a terrific attraction for this community and for this area,” Lande said. “For our long term bikers, there is a lot of ways to go.”

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Now that the trail is open to the public, planning has begun on the next trail dubbed the “Westside Trail” that is part of the Pearls of Progress project. The Westside Trail will run from Kent Stein Park to Discovery Park and incorporate mini trails around the Muscatine Pollinator Park and the Muscatine Dog Park. The Pollinator Park and one-mile trail is currently being developed off of Houser Street while the dog park is also a part of the Pearls of Progress project and will eventually be a trail head.

Information on the Pearls of Progress project and how you can become a part of making Muscatine a more attractive place to live, work, play, visit, and do business with a tax deductible donation can be found at www.muscatineiowa.gov/PearlsofProgress.

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