

Lake Links White Paper:

The Right Solutions for Birchwood Road/Hall Avenue



Lake Links
ASSOCIATION



BUILD ON WHAT WE HAVE!

How to accommodate pedestrians, casual bikers and cars, all in one space?

1. Provide enough space for all users, but not extravagance.
2. Consider what others have done.
3. Look at experience in our own cities and neighborhood
4. Don't reinvent the wheel
5. Listen to and respect local wishes

What Lake Links Proposes for Birchwood Road

- **Narrow traffic lane in each direction to 10' or less. Hall Avenue is already striped at less than 10'**
- **Shift roadway slightly to the west**
- **Install low angle sloped curb and asphalt trail on the east side**
- **Where possible trail to be 10' wide, as narrow as 8' (tapered transition) where less room is available**
- **Sloped curb is consistent with DNR requirements and recommendations for wildlife**
- **No extensive re-shaping or rebuilding of the causeway – build on what we have**
- **No dirt space between curb and trail. Just like Long Lake Road; Woodland Drive; Birch Lake Boulevard and . . . Lake Avenue – see pictures below**
- **Reduce speed limit to 20 or 25 mph. Addition of blinking “your speed” monitoring sign**
- **No trucks zone, per state statute – School buses, residential deliveries, and, oh yes, Amazon, still okay**
- **Stop Sign at Lost Lake Court**
- **Work to keep as many trees as possible.**

Will narrower lanes be unsafe?

- No – numerous studies have shown narrower lanes reduce speeds and reduced speeds save pedestrian lives.

- Best local, and very dramatic example:

MNDOT has narrowed the striping on MN 96 (11,000 cars per day, 40mph speeds) from 12' to 10.5'

In fact, there is authority for streets even narrower than 10' and they exist in our communities – something we might even consider.

Current Situation – Birchwood Road



100' Right of Way; (2) 12' lanes – 24'; about 2' of shoulder each

Total paved width – about 28'

Adjacent Wetlands have been delineated

Total width of non-wetland causeway – 38'- 40 feet

Wetland Delineators from white fogline in pond area

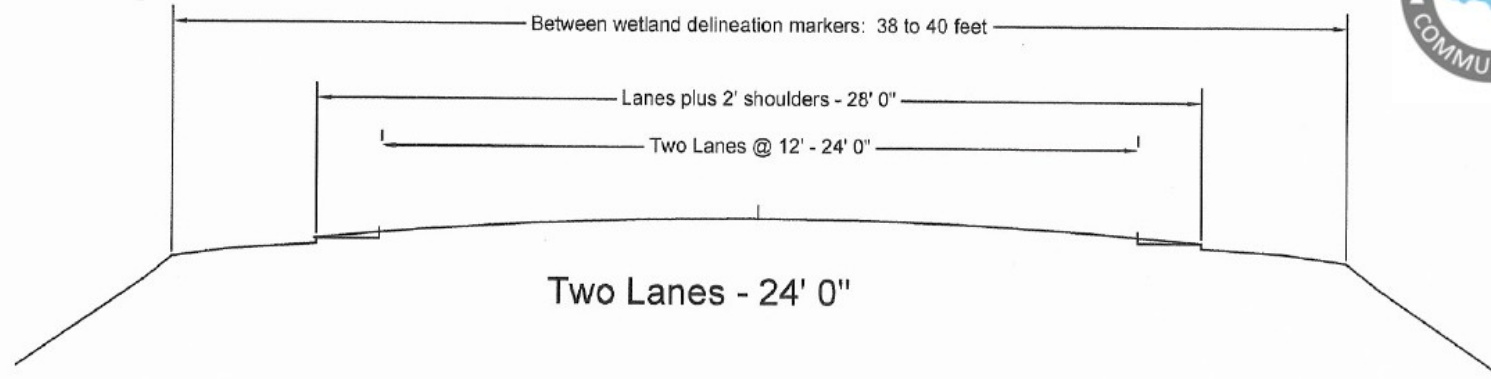
West Side 5', 7', 6', 7.5', 8', 8', 9.5' – East Side 8', 8', 9', 24.5'

What do the neighbors say*?

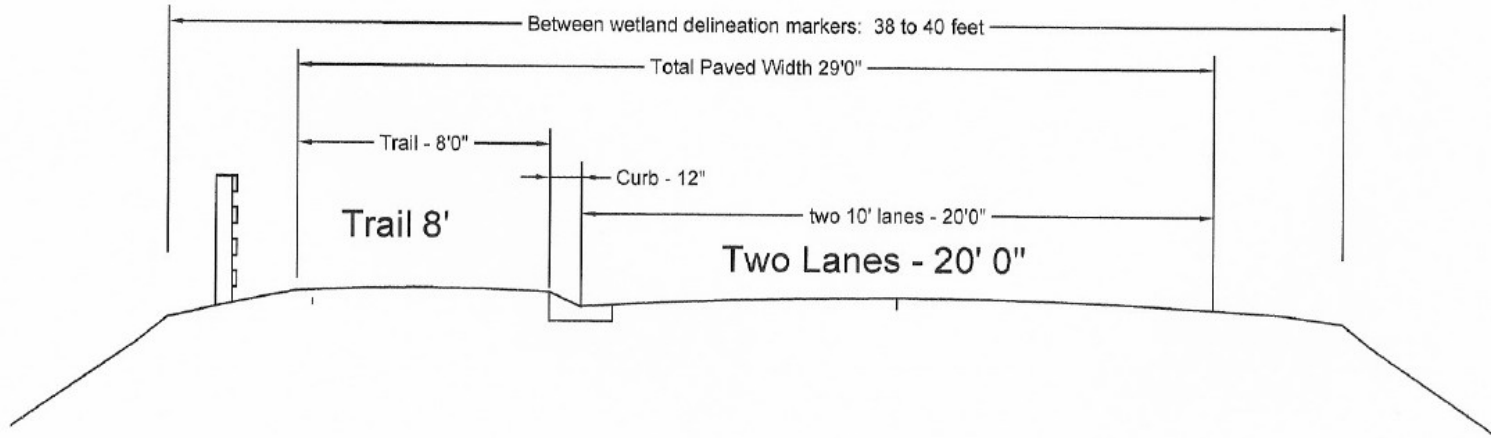
- **Current Concerns** – speeding traffic, unsafe walking and biking
- **Position on Lake Links** – support, delight, enthusiasm, but also want to **avoid great impacts.**
- **Concerns about a trail/route**
 - What will happen to wildlife, both flora and fauna?
 - What can be done to slow traffic?
 - How much land will be needed, and how many trees lost?
 - What about the turtles?

*Based on hours of conversation with neighbors, visits or correspondence with virtually all Birchwood Roaders, and time spent on measuring, talking and reviewing.

Birchwood Road Today



Birchwood with side trail



What are Lake Links Design Standards?

1. Use existing right of way, on street if necessary and low traffic
2. Where a trail, 10' wide if possible, hard surfaced
3. 12 mph bike speed limit – cruisers, not racers
4. Safe, as shown by existing applications
5. Easy on the neighbors, easy on the nature
6. A solution that meets the needs at each location, not a cookie cutter

Conditions on Birchwood/Hall?

- AADT (Average Annual Daily Traffic) - 1,600 cars
- Speed limits – 30 mph on Birchwood – 25 mph on Hall
- Comparables for perspective –
 - Traffic on Long Lake Road -5,600 aadt
 - Traffic on Dellwood Road at Meadow – 4,700 aadt
 - Traffic on South Shore west of Bellaire – 2850 aadt

Clear Zones

The profile doesn't show a dirt space between the trail and the road. Are there other trails that don't have such a space?



Long Lake Road, Mahtomedi 5,600 aadt



Lake Avenue Trail, WBL



Woodland Drive, Mahtomedi

And Birch Lake Boulevard!

Questions:

Who will own the trail/route? The cities of Mahtomedi and Birchwood Village

Will the Lake Links proposal require taking my land? NO!

Who will pay for the trail? The State – via a grant for this purpose, no local assessments, no increase in local taxes to pay for it.

What is Lake Links Association? A non-profit created for this purpose with directors from all around the lake. www.lakelinks.net

How wide is a trail supposed to be? Minimum 8' per Minnesota Administrative Rule 8820.9995. Note, though that those requirements are for a trail designed for bicycles going 20 mph – not the limited 12 mph speed of the Lake Links trail.



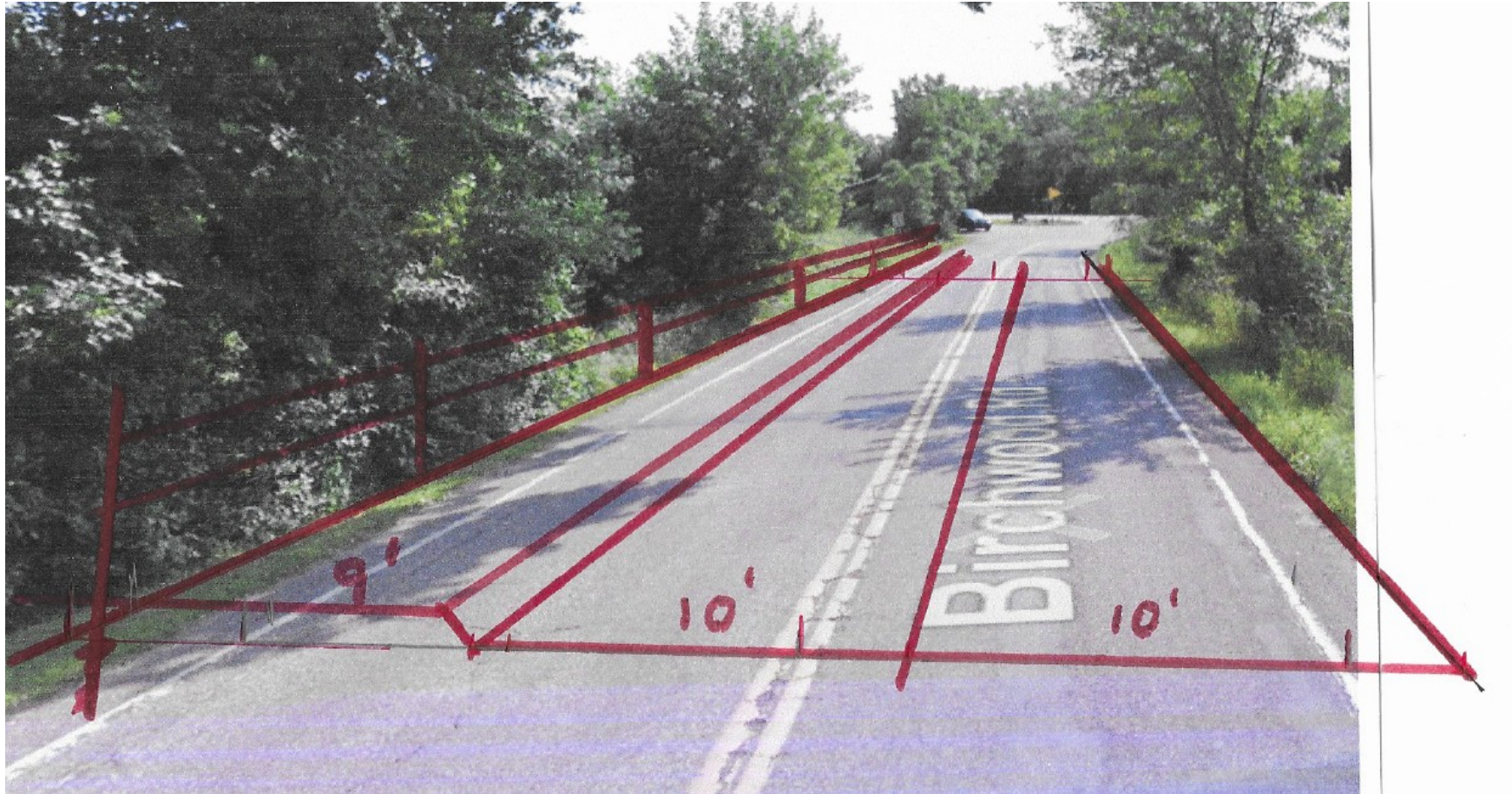
Objects 10' apart, thus 30' – at one of the narrowest points on Birchwood Road



Birch Lake Boulevard, by the water – note the flashing speed limit sign and 20 mph limit
This is what we would like to see Birchwood Road become.

Want to see it? Drive It? – Take 4th Street in WBL west across Otter Lake Road – you're on it!

What would it look like?



These three composite photos incorporate the roadway and trail of Birch Lake Boulevard. Everything else is Birchwood Road. Photos taken with the same camera on the same day.









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 - Dorian Grilley, dorian@bikemn.com (Dorian was co-chair of the original Lake Links study, completed in 2001)

www.lakelinks.net