

museums and rail heritage events. We started a discussion forum for key news plucked from the flood that comes through our aggregator.



Rockcastle County is beautiful.

There are three big October meetings:

- 10/01 at Lexington Public Library: Joint meeting with commuter rail advocates to merge or associate our efforts.
- 10/14 at Broomwagon: KYPath Richmond, Lexington, Georgetown strategy.
- late Oct/early Nov in London/Corbin: KYPath Laurel and Whitley County strategy.

We're organized and strong in Kentucky. This fall, we must identify a champion for our proposal in the Kentucky state legislature and ask Rail Passengers of America to supply research requested by legislators and unions. It's also time to build capacity for the Ohio and Tennessee campaigns.

In 2024, we plan to have county and municipal partnerships along the whole corridor, legislative action in support of the corridor in Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee, and a place in Amtrak's plans for new intercity service.

On the internet:

- instagram: @kentuckypath
- facebook: kypath
- web: kypath.sdf.org
- news forum: kypath.imrva.org
- subscribe to newsletter: send blank email to kypath-announce-subscribe@lists.riseup.net
- email: kypath@sdf.org

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KYpath's work in 2023 (so far)

by Anna, Madison County KYPath

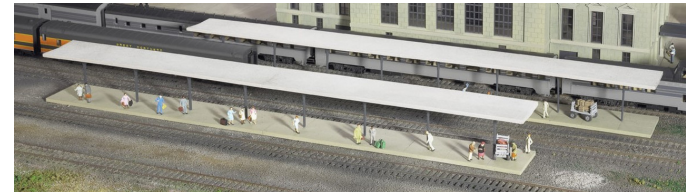
January and February

We gathered interest, did research, wrote a proposal, and put it online. We started a group, chose a route, made a timeline, and got an idea of challenges we're up against.

March

We partnered with the city of Winchester KY to write a half-million dollar "Corridor ID" federal grant application. The Corridor Identification and Development Program of USDOT's Federal Railroad Administration was an initiative of the bipartisan infrastructure act to identify and aid development of new intercity passenger rail service.

The grant would have been better written by the commonwealth, but we only had local relationships. Winchester did not submit the application; they were concerned it would burden the city with a financial commitment. However, we found a champion of the project in Winchester city government, and maintain a strong relationship. The city commissioner assigned to be our point of contact by the mayor is studying whether the city could locate a combination Amtrak boarding platform and farmer's market shade structure at 1 Depot Street.



Boarding platform.

April

We built a relationship with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. Our proposal is under consideration for the next state rail plan, which is underway. We must demonstrate grassroots support and find a champion in the state legislature.

We met with Kentucky Steam Heritage Corporation during Mountain Mushroom Festival in Irvine, KY about how they're working with CSX to operate on track from Winchester to Hazard. We discussed sharing a boarding platform at 1 Depot Street in Winchester.

We met with Jim Sinnette of the Appalachian Regional Commission's Network Appalachia initiative, and learned where our proposed line would fit into regional plans. We proposed a passenger rail panel for Appalachian Regional Commission's

Ashland annual meeting. Our proposal was rejected. We'll try again next year, with the benefit of another year of work under our belt.

We spoke with Laurel County Historical Society about where London's historic L&N stations were located, as we tried to identify a location for a new station. We participated in State of the South, MDC's annual conference, and networked with policy and community development experts. We were interviewed on WRFL's Radio Free Eskippakithiki, and found a champion on Lexington's city council.

May

We presented to Berea KY City Council. We initiated a partnership with the city to bring passenger rail back to Berea's lovingly restored L&N depot. We launched the KYPath website, discussion email list, and announce/newsletter email list. We designed a logo and brochures.

We studied the Section 230 constitutional issue preventing use of road funds for passenger rail development, did customer discovery on an interstate Greyhound trip, and studied Norfolk Southern and CSX employee timetables to determine track speeds, double vs single-tracking, and other capabilities along the 500-mile proposed corridor. We drove and walked 30 rugged miles of CSX track along the proposed corridor in Madison and Rockcastle Counties to study the height and condition of tunnels and beauty of the section.



Berea's historic L&N depot.

June

At our booth at Historic L&N Days in Berea, we did customer discovery, interviewed railfans, train crewmembers, and track maintenance workers, and hunted for volunteers from northern Kentucky. We gathered information about track condition, Positive Train Control signalling, etc.

To track relevant local news, city council and city commission meeting minutes, state budget decisions, and infrastructure projects, we built an online news aggregator. We also continued research into Amtrak fare structures, state transportation politics, rail worker union politics, and municipal transportation politics.

We attended an event at the Erlanger, KY historic L&N Depot. We walked and drove 15 miles of Norfolk Southern track in Northern KY.

July

We participated in the Kentucky Student Environmental Coalition's week-long annual retreat and conference in Garrard County. We developed our analysis and strategy, and built partnerships with skilled organizers.

We drove and walked 20 miles of Norfolk Southern and CSX track along the proposed corridor in Fayette and Clark Counties, paying special attention to

accessibility of our proposed Lexington station, grade crossings, and the view in horse country.



Amtrak observation car.

August

We established a social media presence, turned down inquiries from traditional media outlets, and were joined by a Laurel County organizer. A Lexington commuter rail proposal garnered spectacular social media and traditional media attention. We met with them and started to work together.

We participated in a meeting in northern Kentucky about the I-75 Brent Spence Bridge rebuild, which involves a decade of construction on one of the US's busiest interstates. We networked with the City of Cincinnati, Ohio Department of Transportation, and Laborer's Union (LiUNA). We proposed Amtrak intercity service between Cincinnati and Lexington with stops in Ludlow, Erlanger/CVG Airport, Dry Ridge/Williamstown, and Georgetown, as part of the traffic easing strategy.

We met with the president of Morehead State University's Evergreen student group and leadership of Morehead History and Railroad Museum about how their organizations can support passenger rail redevelopment. We watched the Kentucky Senate Interim Appropriation and Revenue Committee meet, and familiarized ourselves with Solutionary Rail's modeshift proposal.

We applied to speak at the Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) summit in Corbin. Our talk wasn't accepted. We'll apply again next year.

September

We participated in a meeting with Rail Passengers of America organized by the Lexington commuter rail proposal. We visited historic L&N depots in Cartersville, GA and Etowah, TN to assess suitability for Amtrak use, walkability of the area, accessibility to area attractions and lodging, etc.

Based on concerns raised by KSEC members and on social media, we wrote a black history of passenger rail in Kentucky and Tennessee to distribute to rail