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February Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2016

Attending were Mark Deshon (chair), Heather Dunigan (WILMAPCO), Mike Fortner (City of Newark Planning), Karl Hassler (resident), Kirsten Jones (UD student), Paul Moser (DelDOT), Ban Phommachanh (UD Parking), and Brian Bahnson (resident).

Guest in attendance: Al Porach (resident)

Regrets: Jeff Riegner (resident), Susan Grasso (resident), Christine Schultz (resident), Karen Rosenberg (resident), Sean Watson (UD Residence Life), and James Wilson (Bike Delaware) sent regrets.

- *Recognition of Kirsten Jones's professional work*

Mark Deshon announced that Kirsten has been busy lately. Her co-authored publication *Planning for Complete Communities in Delaware: The Low-Stress Bikeability Assessment Tool* has recently been published by IPA, and she's had two national poster submission acceptances—one for the National Bike Summit and the other for the American Planning Association's national conference.

Kirsten also wants to attend the League of American Bicyclists conference. We all extended her congratulations and gave her a round of applause.

- *One accomplishment to feed Mayor Sierer for Feb. 22 City Council meeting*

The accomplishment most felt would be a good one to put forward is progress on the Delaware Avenue two-way protected bike lane project. Highlight the cooperative work done with Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson (JMT) on the feasibility study conducted last summer and fall, which resulted in JMT's final report published in November. This sets the stage for serious DelDOT project engineering, which has now begun. The report can be viewed/downloaded on DelDOT's project webpage (www.deldot.gov/information/projects/bike_and_ped/delaware_ave).

- *Bike to Work Day plans*

Mike Fortner reported that Bike to Work Day in Newark this year is on Friday, May 20. He handed out a draft event-task timeline, which he went through item-by-item with the committee.

We discussed potential venues and came to consensus. Mike will ask committee member Christine Schultz to see if she can again secure Mentors' Circle on the UD campus for the event.

Press releases, and the timing therein, were discussed. Mark pointed out that the Mayor's Fun Ride is scheduled for Saturday, April 30, and that Mayor Sierer wants this to act as a "kick off" event for National Bike Month. We came to the conclusion that we could help the City coordinate individual press releases for each of these two events, plus an overall press release on National Bike Month, which would highlight any and all bike-related activities happening in May in the local area.

The committee also discussed guests to invite and potential awardees. Mark told Mike that if we invite state Rep. Baumbach and state Sen. Sokola and Sen. Hall-Long, we should probably invite state Rep. Ed Osienski as well, as he also represents part of the Newark area. We came to quick consensus about the Bicycle Friendly Leadership awardee. Ban Phommachanh suggested we add a Bicycle Trailblazer Award as well. Awardees' names will be kept confidential within the committee at this time.

Mike will be contacting potential speakers.

Ban suggested we add a bicycle-safety checkpoint event the week before this event, as a way to build interest. He will coordinate this with Paul Moser.

We discussed the need for temporary bicycle parking at the event. Paul said he'll talk to the Delaware Bicycle Council, and Ban will call Jamie Magee to see if we can procure something for the event.

- *Status report on formation of Cleveland Avenue project task force*

Tom Coleman reported that the task force was brought up at the most recent meeting of the city's Traffic Committee. The committee's Fred Nelson will be assembling the task force and will be contacting potential members within the next month or so.

Brian Bahnson volunteered to be a representative of the Newark Bicycle Committee on this task force, if and when asked. Susan Grasso, who was not present, should also be asked to be on the task force as our representative, since she was very instrumental in movement on this issue.

Tom said that there are three major categories of businesses that should be represented on this task force—those west of Paper Mill Road (e.g., Wood Fired Pizza, and Hermann's Meat Market), Lang Development (which owns a lot of property that

would be affected by changes to Margaret St.), and the car dealerships. Mark asked that Fred make sure that the NAACP is included, so that interests of the residents of the Alder Creek development can be addressed. Tom assured us that this would happen.

- *Status report on Delaware Avenue two-way protected bike lane project*

Tom reported that he and JMT's Dave DuPlessis met recently, and he learned that DelDOT is funding the second stage of this project (more detailed design). DelDOT has been out surveying along the Delaware Avenue corridor. Heather Dunigan and Mark have each observed this during the past week.

- *Status report on UD-City BikeShare project*

Ban reported that the project is on hold at the moment, as UD will not sign off on anything with Gotcha (the bike supplier), until the issue of release of liability is brought to a successful conclusion. He did note that, whereas the launch timeline has been pushed back, Gotcha has launched BikeShare program on the campus of Auburn University and for the city of Charlotte, N.C., so he's anticipating that UD will be able to utilize some of the use data from these projects.

- *Status report on recent NBC communication subcommittee meeting*

Karen Rosenberg organized a meeting early this month with Susan, Mark, and new committee member Sean Watson to begin discussing how we can more effectively communicate with constituents and the community on a regular basis.

Sean, who is very interested in helping out with social media, has since developed a simple correspondence-oriented Google survey (which will go out after this meeting), set up a Twitter account for our committee (@BikeNewark), and opened up a Gmail account (BikeNewark@gmail.com).

As quick as he is smart, Paul immediately signed up and became our committee's first Twitter follower.

We chose the "bikenewark" to remain consistent with our website and Facebook handles. Karen and Sean will be instrumental in helping keep our activities and progress in front of the public through these tools.

- *Status report on potential Bicycle Community Meetings*

Heather reported that we can go ahead and begin getting meetings scheduled for a Wednesday evening in March and a Tuesday night in April, and May, even though the new restroom facility at the Newark Bike Project (NBP) is not yet completed. Brian asked if a Porta-Potty was ever a consideration. Heather explained that it had been proposed, but the building owner declined.

Al Porach, who was unfamiliar with the meeting concept, asked for clarification. Heather explained that we came up with the idea for community meetings as a response to a comment about the inability of most people to attend our meetings during the workday. She described it as a partnership of NBC, NBP, and the two local bike clubs—White Clay Bicycle Club and Delaware Trail Spinners—and noted the general meeting agenda as follows:

- Guest speaker
 - Status reports from each of the four partner bike organizations
 - Time for community comments
- *Status report from Education/Encouragement subcommittee*

Mark reported on behalf of Susan on her progress with this subcommittee. She met with Heather and Paul recently to discuss potential work. In her meeting notes, she highlighted the following as key components:

- Local schools (support and initiate efforts around bike education/encouragement)
- Monthly bicycle education classes (UD, ELI, and the community)
- Bicycle coordination at UD (urging the University to create a specific position)

Susan is currently focusing their subcommittee's efforts on two schools—John R. Downes Elementary and Newark High School. She has already contacted the phys. ed. teacher at Downes for program planning.

If time permits, Susan is interested in organizing a fall "Tweed Ride."

Mark mentioned that, in conjunction with this subcommittee's efforts, between now and our next committee meeting, he will be canvassing the organizations mentioned on the back panel of the proposed "Bike to Work, Newark!" commuting brochure to see if we can collect enough sponsor money to pay for printing [about 7,500 to start].

- *"Dress rehearsal" of Feb. 22 presentation to City Council*

Kirsten, Karl Hassler, and Mark planned, discussed, and finalized a presentation to give before City Council on Monday, Feb. 22. They practiced the brief presentation today before the committee. It timed out at 15 minutes, which we agreed was too long. We discussed ways to trim time without having to adjust or edit slide content, because the Council already has the presentation as is.

Mike suggested Kirsten concentrate more heavily on the final two information-related slides, the "how to's" and "suggestions" for City Council. Al suggested that we provide a bit of biographical information about the presenters—Mark, Kirsten, and Karl. Mark agreed this was a good idea and suggested that each of the presenters give a few words about themselves at the beginning of their respective parts of the presentation. This will help "humanize" the presentation and lend some legitimacy to our effort.

We also anticipated a couple questions that might be asked and discussed how we might best answer, particularly about passing and enforcing bike-safety ordinances. Overall, Tom, when asked, thought our approach was good.

Mark asked the committee to come to support this presentation and noted that we would be first up on the agenda.

- *Old or new business / announcements*

- Paul Moser will be speaking on Friday, Feb. 26, at 7 p.m., at Newark Natural Foods in the Newark Shopping Center. His topic will be transportation issues. Arrive and 6:30 and share in a pot-luck dinner (with folks from the Down to Earth Co-op) prior to the presentation.
- Ban received approval for a Safety Fest during the first week of the fall semester on the UD campus and for our committee's representation at the event.
- Tom noted that there will be new "Walk Your Wheels" sidewalk decals being installed on East Main Street. He also mentioned that the City will be doing crosswalk upgrades and pedestrian refuge areas along East Main, as the match of federal funds was approved in the City's budget. Someone asked if we have pedestrian-count information for Main Street. Paul and Heather both said "yes." It is available through DelDOT.



Our next meeting will be on Thursday, March 17, at 4 p.m. at WILMAPCO.
Call-in #302-737-6205 x126.