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## May Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2015

Attending were Mark Deshon (chair), Heather Dunigan (WILMAPCO), Mike Fortner (City of Newark Planning), Tom Price (Newark Bike Project), Karl Hassler (resident), Karen Rosenberg (resident), Paul Moser (Bike Delaware), Linda Smith (UD HealthyU Employee Wellness), Ban Phommachanh (UD Parking), and Brian Bahnson (resident)

Regrets: Christine Schultz (resident), Anthony Aglio (DelDOT Bike Coordinator), Joe Spadafino (City of Newark Parks and Recreation), James Wilson (Bike Delaware), and Kirsten Jones (UD student) sent regrets.

Guest: Al Porach (resident)

- *Cycle track progress review*

Mark Deshon indicated that there is a meeting on June 3 at Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson (JMT) for the committee that will be overseeing this portion of the project. Karl Hassler asked if this was a feasibility study. Heather Dunigan answered that it is a feasibility study that is about 20% design. The results will be detailed engineering plans recommended for the cycle track project. Mark said that DelDOT's Mark Luszcz shared his caveat that (as far as DelDOT is concerned) Newark could have a simple two-way protected lane within a couple years but that a nicer, more complex treatment might take way longer or never be completed.

Mark said that the committee comprises representatives from JMT, DelDOT, the City of Newark, WILMAPCO, Bike Delaware, and the Newark Bicycle Committee and that he is representing our committee.

- *FHWA newly issued Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide*

"Separated bike lanes" is the federal term for what we've been referring to as a cycle track, as noted in the Federal Highway Administration's newly issued publication titled *Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide* (document attached with these minutes). The guide includes a comprehensive review of nomenclature, planning, and guidance on funding.

Karl asked if we, in Newark, are bound to what's in this new publication with respect to our cycle track project. Heather insisted that "this is advisory" at this point and went on to explain that, for Delaware, the NACTO guide has been endorsed and is what DelDOT is following at present. The new federal document goes beyond NACTO and opens up additional engineering alternatives.

- *Review of Delaware Walkable Bikeable Summit*

Six of the committee members present (Mark, Karl, Mike Fortner, Paul Moser, Ban Phommachanh, and Tom Price) said that they had attended the Delaware Walkable Bikeable Summit, held on May 7 in Dover. Several other committee members also attended.

Ban said he thought the "stress maps" that were shown by Peter Furth were interesting. Heather noted that we have similar connectivity maps in the Newark Bike Plan. Tom thought it was worthwhile. Ban said that, for him, it was a great chance to meet and network with transportation folks from downstate.

We talked a bit about Newark's rather prominent role in the summit. Mayor Sierer was one of four afternoon panelists and, along with Milford's mayor, one of only two local government representatives on the panel. Heather said that Newark is so prominent because it has been ahead of the other cities and towns statewide in terms of our bicycle-friendly status with the League of American Bicyclists, and now its Bicycle Friendly Business status adds more attention. She noted that Bicycle Friendly University applications are due in August and that it really would be good for UD to apply.

Karl was most effusive about the summit, saying he thinks the event has really improved and matured over the past several years. Of all the past Delaware Walkable Bikeable Summits he's attended, he felt this one was the most positive in terms of what he called "actionable traction." He, too, really liked Peter Furth's low-stress connectivity presentation.

While at the event, Mark took the opportunity to personally thank committee member Kirsten Jones for her outstanding video work, which was featured prominently during DelDOT's morning presentation on the Delaware Avenue cycle track project. This video has provided great visual proof of the bicycle-related issues along this major corridor in Newark.

- *Bike to Work Day review*

- *Venue/Set-up*

Anthony Aglio commented in an email that he thought it went well but liked the other location a little better, because he thinks it drew more attention to what we were doing. Those present thought it was a good venue space-wise and that the sound was better because of the lack of competing traffic noise. Heather did concede

that this venue is less visible to the public, though. If we stick with this venue, more bicycle parking is needed.

- *Publicity and Media Coverage (posters, flyers, news articles, etc.)*

Heather insisted that next year we need to get publicity out earlier and cover the Main Street businesses with posters, something we didn't do this year. Brian Bahnson said he thought the attendance was down this year. Mark said that, statistically, it was just the opposite. Last year, there were 40 registrants; this year more than 65. Mark suggested that more were coming and going at varying times throughout the 90-minute event and that this combined with the roomier venue may have made it seem like there were fewer participants.

We need to have a better strategy for promoting this event. Shifting the focus to "employees riding bicycles" has to be a priority. The University of Delaware is obviously a big potential pool for this activity. Brian suggested engaging individual departments on campus. Linda Smith said that her program has been trying to do this on a personal (i.e., employee) level but that she might be able to help with this kind of approach from a health and wellness angle.

- *Bike Trains*

Christine Schultz reported that she had 3 others meet her at Downes to ride in together and said, "It was definitely fun to arrive in a group, even though it was a small one." No one showed up at Mark's departure point (Fairfield Shopping Center). Karl and Lauri Webber came in from the reservoir with 2 other riders. Paul and 4 others came from the Field House. Brian said he had 2 riders in his train from the Delaware Technology Park. Mark said that City Councilman Rob Gifford had captained the Elkton Road train but that only Jamie Magee of the Newark Bike Project (actually caught up to and) rode in with him.

We need to do a better job of publicizing these trains if we are to continue this event feature, and Heather suggested that we include information and/or maps about these on next year's posters.

The largest "train" was that of Bloom Energy, which brought in 10 riders around 8 a.m.

- *Special Guests*

Mark said that getting UD Provost Domenico Grasso next year would be great and added that he believes that the Provost can possibly become a real bicycle ally for us with the UD campus. Mark also mentioned that he's looking forward to having Grasso's wife Susan join our committee as soon as she moves down here from Vermont. Someone also mentioned maybe getting the Blue Hens veterans group involved.

- *Partners, Sponsors, Supporters*

Mike Fortner explained that the giveaways were all contributed through the Downtown Newark Partnership organization. It would be nice next year to specifically engage the local bike businesses again as sponsors.

Karl said that we can and should be doing more to “explain” Bike to Work Day and suggested we make up a resource package to hand out for educational outreach. This seemed like a good idea to all. Mark said that he and Heather could work on developing such a tool for the public.

- *Food*

The quantity of food was just right for the crowd we had, though we ran out of regular (i.e., caffeinated) coffee. We might have to order more coffee next year.

• *Mayor’s Fun Ride review*

Joe Spadafino reported in by email that 92 people registered for the Mayors Bike Ride on Saturday. It was a great day, and we had weather! Thank you to everyone who helped out with the event.

There were plenty of helpers from our committee there.

Problems cited:

- Not everyone wore a helmet.
- Five miles was probably too long for younger children.
- Riders “outpaced” police protection by the time they got the turn onto Main Street.

Mark indicated he expected there would be a post-event committee meeting to discuss what went right/wrong in this, the event’s initial year.

• *What’s ahead? What can we be doing in the next few months to meet the recommendations of the Newark Bike Plan?*

Karl’s suggestion (from p. 3 of the Newark Bike Plan) was to identify links needed to connect low-traffic, low-stress routes. Karl had asked by email, “Can we obtain copies of the stress maps Peter Furth [showed at the Walkable Bikeable Summit]?” Anthony replied by email, “These are not complete yet we are still refining the data. We will work with the City and the MPO as we move forward. We are getting close.

Heather said we can use the “useful connector” data we already have from the development of the Newark Bike Plan, like if there are lower-traffic intersections where we can reconfigure as traffic circles. Karl encouraged everyone to check out the Google Docs spreadsheet on the plan. We need to come up with some mid-term goals.

The availability of bike parking along Main Street again became a topic for discussion. Karen Rosenberg says that Ryan German of Caffé Gelato says he wants bike racks for

his business. Mike chimed in that Ryan has created his own difficulties in that regard. There's not much available sidewalk left because of the outdoor seating area, its valet parking feature, etc. Funding from Transportation Alternatives (TA) programs may be able to help when it comes to reconfiguring for some bicycle parking along Main Street.

Mark mentioned that he would get together with Mayor Sierer and share a piece in the recent issue of *Bicycling* about the success of Ft. Collins, Colo., because of how businesses there drove the changes in favor of cyclists. Mark says he feels that getting businesses to not only "buy in" but to lead the charge is critical.

- *Old or new business*

- Mark encouraged all to attend the DelDOT workshop on this last phase of the Industrial Tract, which will connect New Castle to downtown Wilmington, to show support for this important walkable, bikeable link between the two cities.

Tuesday, June 2, 2015, 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM  
DuPont Environmental Education Center  
1400 Delmarva Lane  
Wilmington, DE 19801

DelDOT is wrapping up design of Phase 3 of the New Castle Industrial Track Trail. When complete, this seven-mile trail will connect downtown Wilmington with Old New Castle.

Interested persons are invited to express their views in writing, giving reasons for support of or in opposition to, the proposed project.

For more information:

<http://www.deldot.gov/information/publicevents/publicworkshops/workshop.shtml?id=5780>

- The Pomeroy Trail crossing at Wyoming Road will undergo improvements, presumably under the direction of Newark's Parks & Recreation department. Mark mentioned that he had received an email from Amy Wilburn about the insufficient warning for cyclists at the intersection of this trail with Creek Road. Mark agrees that there is a visual impairment that has to be taken into account as bikers approach that intersection.
- Tom brought up a rather unfortunate issue over which the Newark Bike Project (NBP) is now wrestling. It is one of the few venues in the city that hosts community functions, but they have been told that, when they do have a building full of people, they are in violation of a code that requires an additional bathroom facility. This would be a crippling cost to the NBP of about \$12K, and they don't know where it will come up with that kind of money. Mark suggested that NBP talk with both Rep. Paul Baumbach and Sen. David Sokola with regard to identifying a money source.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, June 18, at 4 p.m. at WILMAPCO.