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August Meeting Minutes

August 18, 2016

Attending were Mark Deshon (chair and resident), Heather Dunigan (WILMAPCO and Newark Bike Project), Mike Fortner (Newark Department of Planning), Karen Rosenberg (resident), Al Porach (resident), Barb Hughes (resident), John Bare (Bike Delaware), Tom Coleman (Newark Department of Public Works and Water Resources), Joe Spadafino (Newark Department of Parks & Recreation), Paul Moser (DelDOT), and Amy Roe (resident).

Guests in attendance: Megan McNerney (City of Newark Community Affairs Officer), John Morgan (resident), Jerry Clifton (resident), Linda Clifton (resident)

Regrets: Christine Schultz (resident), Mike Baez (UD Police), Taras Gerasimov (Newark Police), Karl Hassler (resident), and Susan Grasso (resident)

- *One talking point to feed Mayor Sierer for September City Council meeting*

The city's Safe Routes to School grant has been approved. This will provide \$150,000 over the term of three years to help improve infrastructure and safety for bicyclists and pedestrians along the section of Casho Mill Road between Nottingham Road and Barksdale Road, which borders John R. Downes Elementary School. (see more in minutes below)

- *Notice of Intent (NOI) submission for "The Big Jump" grant*

Megan McNerney helped us help the city submit the notice of intent for The Big Jump grant, for which, if approved by City Council, the City of Newark plans to apply in October. There were four basic pieces of information that needed to be input online by Megan, who has been appointed as the potential project "lead" (official liaison with People for Bikes) on behalf of the city. We contributed the following information for the NOI.

1) Name of proposed Big Jump focus area (City of Newark, Delaware)

2) Population of Big Jump focus area (approx. 32,000)

3) What opportunities exist for bicycles to connect to places of employment, education, transit, or recreation within the proposed Big Jump focus area?
(city bicycle map; bicycle improvements in form of road diet on South Main Street; Hall and Pomeroy Trails connect downtown, White Clay Creek State Park, East Coast Greenway, and train station for access to Amtrak Northeast Corridor and SEPTA system routes)

4) What other activities or developments are gaining momentum or excitement in the proposed Big Jump focus area?
(Planning for new train station is underway, which would include passenger links south as well as north; three-year Safe Routes to School grant awarded to local elementary school for safety improvements to road in front of school; community First Friday Rides promote downtown cycling; two-way protected bike lane project underway for Delaware Avenue—a major west-east conduit; pave and rehab improvements being planned for Cleveland Avenue—an alternate east-west conduit; new bike/ped bridge over White Clay Creek project funded—which will link more city parks and recreation with Pomeroy Trail and downtown; multi-use pathway part of state Department of Transportation project improvements to Elkton Road from Maryland line northeastward toward center of city)

- *Input and final version of our proposed code changes re: bicycles on sidewalks*

Amy Roe had no specific suggestions but said that most, if not all, of the city's sidewalks did not meet the safety requirements for bicycle traffic. John Morgan insisted that too many people won't understand the language of the City Code with respect to sidewalk cycling regulations anyway and felt, too, that cyclists simply do not belong on sidewalks with pedestrians. Still, the question of exceptions to the City Code is problematic, and it seemed the committee does not want to wrestle with that complexity. And yet, it wanted to follow through and try to bring some further clarity into being as a means of helping educate the breadth of city cyclists in Newark as to where they cannot use sidewalks within the city while achieving more uniformity with the State Code on the subject.

Mark Deshon reiterated that the city's Traffic Committee had been fine with what we had brought to it in July for comments, as long as the words "eastbound on" were removed, with respect to Delaware Avenue.

Heather brought forth additional language to recommend adding to section (g) (1) of the Code, shown in red on recommendations pages included in these minutes.

Also suggested for additions to sidewalk-cycling-prohibition recommendations were Apple Road between South Main Street and Barksdale Road (because of the Apple Road bridge), Amstel Avenue, and South College Avenue from West Park Place to East Main Street.

The committee voted to include the aforementioned additions to our corporate recommendations, except for the South College Avenue piece, citing that it would be much more feasible to recommend adding this if there were no on-street parking spaces

in front of Morris Library. The changes will be combined with previous recommendations and forwarded to the city's Traffic Committee for its consideration.

- *Community Day (Sun., Sept. 18, 11 a.m.–4 p.m., UD's The Green)*

- Call for volunteers

Mike Fortner will be there early to set up the tent and table(s). Mark said he'd volunteer time there, and Barb Hughes said she thought she'd be able to spend a little time at our booth as well. Because this is a five-hour event, we still need volunteers to represent the committee.

- List materials needed and who will be responsible for providing

NBC banner (Susan Grasso)

Handout material (Susan and Heather)

Poster-size images—Del. Ave. cycletrack and potential bike boulevards (Heather)

Bike to Work, Newark! brochures (Mark)

Feedback sheets on low-stress routes in Newark (?)

- *"SafetyFest" call for volunteers (Tue., Sept. 27, 5–7 p.m., UD's Harrington Beach)*

Mark and Paul Moser volunteered to help at this event.

- *Status/progress reports on/from*

- Cleveland Avenue project task force

Tom Coleman reported that at the August 16 task force meeting, DelDOT showed model results. Options were available for most intersections, but the roundabout concept at Paper Mill Road was deemed not to be workable. Concepts included a road diet for the section from Kirkwood Hwy. (Capitol Trail) to Paper Mill Road, a bike/ped "scramble" signalization at North College Avenue, and conversion of Margaret Street to one way (in). The idea of a pedestrian refuge island (protected intersection model) at Wilbur Street crosswalk was discussed as well. Parking along the section between North College Ave. and Paper Mill Road is still to be determined. Removing parking would open up the possibility of bike lanes in both directions.

It was suggested at our meeting that bumpouts of concrete, rather than the standard treatment, might make it easier for cyclists to negotiate the Wilbur Street crosswalk. Paul will check on this.

Tom also presented three off-road options for cyclists that would provide alternatives to Cleveland Avenue, which would not be part of DelDOT's Cleveland Ave. pave and rehab project (see last page of minutes). These would involve McKees Lane, which borders the Alder Creek development. Two of the options would involve a new bridge across White Clay Creek, the trail of one of these options linking to Karpinsky Park and then onto Old Paper Mill Road. As an alternative to sidewalk use of a small portion of

Cleveland Avenue in front of the Porter dealership, a trail through Dorothy Miller Park has been proposed, which would then link to McKees lane and the aforementioned options. This alternative would involve two small bridges. Paul asked if hazard mitigation funds could be applied for by the city for this trail work. Tom thought so.

Tom reported that the most fascinating part of DelDOT's presentation centered on the potential reconfiguration of the intersection at Kirkwood Hwy. as a "Florida-T." This configuration would allow eastbound through traffic on Rt. 2 (right lane) to not have to stop and traffic westbound on Rt. 2 to not have to stop when making a right onto Cleveland Ave. This concept would change this intersection from level-of-service "F" to "B," a major improvement, though it might result in a longer queue at Winner Blvd.

Tom said that not much was mentioned with regard to the section between New London Road and North College Ave.

- Safe Routes to School proposal

Heather reported that the SRTS proposal was accepted for improvements to Casho Mill Road. This program brings to the table a pot of federal money (in this case, \$150,000 over three years) to make ways to school safer and more appealing.

Earlier this spring, representatives from Downes Elementary School, WILMAPCO, NBC, and the Newark Police performed a safety audit along Casho Mill Road from Barksdale Road to Nottingham Road. Ideas for protected bike lanes and improved crosswalks were submitted with the proposal. DelDOT is now proceeding with design work.

- *Quick subcommittee updates*

- Communication subcommittee

Karen Rosenberg reported that Sean Watson is going to make the database of NBC supporters more accessible to subcommittee members. He has been handling the committee's Twitter account (@BikeNewark) and much of the committee's scheduled posts on Facebook (Facebook.com/BikeNewark). Mark mentioned that the subcommittee is recommending that NBC finally have its own website. Amy stated that she felt as though the fact that WILMAPCO had been hosting the committee's page inferred some sort of formal relationship of NBC to WILMAPCO. Heather insisted this was not the case, yet she is glad that we've come to this decision point (as it's fallen on her to maintain the page). Hearing no objections to this idea, the committee is fine with the subcommittee moving forward on this on its behalf.

- Education/Encouragement subcommittee

There are three upcoming events planned, which will target University of Delaware students as they either return to campus or come for the first time.

Freshman move-in day at UD is Saturday, August 27. NBC and the Newark Bike Project will be at a tent at Perkins Student Center between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. to register

student bikes and provide a complimentary bike check, including free bike lights. We'll share information about bike parking, rules of the road in Newark, and biking safely around campus and town.

Our "Welcome to Newark" Ride for students will follow on Sunday, August 28. Paul will lead a tour of Newark and show students our favorite spots and how best to get around by bike. This will be a great opportunity for students to get to know their new community, hear from an insider on life at UD, and learn how to feel comfortable getting to class, the downtown area, and local recreational resources on two wheels. The ride begins at Perkins Student Center at 5:00 p.m.

An "Ask Me" Tent will be set up in at Perkins Student Center on Tuesday, August 30. Information about bicycling on campus and in Newark will be available. A member of the Newark bicycle community will be on hand at the Perkins Student Center Ask Me Tent from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon to register bicycles and answer questions about bicycling in Newark and on campus.

- Safety and Enforcement subcommittee

Barb Hughes reported that the committee met recently and discussed the "Idaho stop," among other things. Committee member and Newark Police Officer Taras Gerasimov was present, as was Emmitt Robinson from the UD Police.

The subcommittee is exploring is how to monitor student cycling behavior; they will talk further with Emmitt Robinson and UD's Hugh Farrell about this. The subcommittee is also interesting in using data to help determine a violations hierarchy for prioritizing enforcement. One thing that is needed on the input end is to have bike/ped accident data differentiated when entered.

Heather mentioned that NBC would like to have wrong-way-riding signs installed, particularly along Delaware Avenue facing westbound (i.e., contraflow) riders.

With regard to inquiry into the "Idaho stop," John Bare said he'll investigate with state lawyers. Amy made a good suggestion that, before expending a lot of energy, the subcommittee ought to ask Mayor Sierer to consult the City Solicitor to get some legal answers first.

- Engineering subcommittee

Tom reported that the major portion of the subcommittee's recent meeting focused on imagining a bikeway in Old Newark that would effectively utilize and link Chrysler Ave., Apple Rd., Ritter Lane, Orchard Rd., and Winslow Rd. Al Porach suggested a crosswalk on South College Ave. at Ritter Lane, but Tom said that a crosswalk without signalization is actually less safe than not having a crosswalk at all, particularly in this case, as car traffic coming north off the bridge is still reducing speed coming into a slight curve approaching Ritter Lane and sight lines are poor.

Tom also mentioned that he presented an idea for flow heading north from North College Ave. onto Ritter Lane by way the Hall Trail under the bridge to the west side and onto a little known city right-of-way we're calling the "Jimmy Carter" path, a federally funded sidewalk/path through the city property and around the Newark Center for Creative Learning to Phillips Ave.

Mark and Susan will be meeting with UD officials to discuss two ideas for linking Orchard Road, which we hope will become a designated "bike boulevard," with North College Avenue that would help deter cyclists from using the Trabant Student Center patio.

- *Old or new business / announcements*

Nothing to report.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, September 15, at 4 p.m. at WILMAPCO.
Call-in #302-737-6205 x126.