



www.wilmapco.org/bikenewark

August Meeting Minutes

August 20, 2015, 3 p.m.,

UD Perkins Student Center, Collins Room

Attending were Heather Dunigan (WILMAPCO), James Wilson (Bike Delaware), Tom Coleman (City of Newark Public Works and Water Resources), Jeff Riegner (resident), Paul Moser (DelDOT), Kirsten Jones (UD student), Christine Schultz (resident), Jonathan Kirch (American Heart Assoc./American Stroke Assoc.), Tom Fruehstorfer (Newark Planning and Development), Polly Sierer (Mayor), Carol Ireland (Bike Delaware/White Clay Bicycle Club), Tom Brooks (DelDOT), David DuPlessis (JMT), Angie Zann (JMT), Martin Wollaston (UD Institute for Public Administration), Jerome Lewis (UD Institute for Public Administration), B.J. DeCoursey (UD Institute for Public Administration), Michael Fortner (Newark Planning and Development), Linda Smith (UD HealthyU Employee Wellness), Joe Spadafino (City of Newark Parks & Recreation)

- ***Two-way, separated bike-lane/facility (cycle track) progress review***

Tom Coleman gave an overview of the Delaware Avenue mock-cycle track trial. Approximately 75 people tested the facility, and surveys were collected to gauge opinions of the proposed cycle track. Those who completed the survey comprised a mix of cycling comfort levels, ages, and genders. Overall, respondents favored a north-side facility. Riders indicated some discomfort bicycling between oncoming traffic and bicycles. Also, with a south-side facility, trucks were too close to the north side utility poles in the narrowed lanes. Respondents also expressed concerns regarding the risk of right-hook crashes with a south-side facility.

JMT is currently drafting the report and is still evaluating the Chapel Street intersection, transition areas at either end of the study area, and on-street parking near the high school. Based on feedback from the mock-cycle track trial, a north-side facility is recommended. The recommendation may be to implement the cycle track in two phases, with phase 1 from Orchard Road to Tyre Avenue and phase 2 from Tyre Avenue to Library Avenue. It was suggested that the Main Street on-street parking could be removed east of the Pomeroy Trail to place the cycle track on Main Street between the Pomeroy Trail and Library Avenue rather than Delaware Avenue.

- ***Schedule September bicycle safety checkpoints***

Paul Moser indicated that DelDOT would like to hold two September bicycle safety checkpoints and will be looking for volunteers from NRC and the Newark Bike Project to assist. Paul will coordinate with Ban Phommachanh to select days and report back to the committee via email.

- ***Old or new business***

Suggestion for better Pomeroy Trail access/crossing at N. Chapel St.

Carol Ireland discussed her concerns about the sharp turn to cross Cleveland Avenue along the Pomeroy Trail, and noted that it is particularly difficult to maneuver the crossing with a recumbent bicycle. She presented a diagram of the existing crossing and suggestions for how it could potentially be reconfigured based on observations riding in Boulder, Colo., and along the Chester Valley Trail. She also presented a photo of a trail crossing along the Chester Valley Trail, which allows riders room to maneuver and is a two-part crossing to reduce the distance.

The group discussed Carol's ideas and concurred that this is a challenging crossing. It was noted that many need to dismount to cross, and it can be particularly chaotic during group rides such as the Mayor's Ride. Tom Coleman will have City staff evaluate the intersection to see if the design might be feasible. Participants noted that the grade is different beyond the intersection and that private property boundaries might limit what can be easily done.

The committee also discussed the Pomeroy crossing at Creek Road and noted that better warning signs should be added to alert bicyclists and drivers to the intersection. Joe Spadafino offered to have Newark Parks & Recreation evaluate the signs.

Tom Coleman briefed the committee on improvements to the Wyoming Road crossing along the Pomeroy Trail. Bicycle crossing pavement markings were installed over the summer and Newark Public Works will be installing flexible posts to create an interim bump out at the crosswalk. This will serve to reduce crossing distance, improve visibility of crossing pedestrians and bicyclists, and eliminate drivers passing in the bike lane.

Present and Community and Volunteers

Several committee members agreed to volunteer for part of the day on Community Day. Mike Fortner will contact Newark Parks to request a location. James Wilson requested that NBC's booth be located next to the Bike Delaware booth. Mark Deshon will reach out to the committee via email to confirm volunteer times.

New Business

- The Newark Triathlon was attended by 280 people.
- Hillside Road was restriped with wider bicycle lanes.
- ***Presentation on Cycling in Copenhagen and Amsterdam*** (Kirsten Jones)

Kirsten Jones shared her observations about bicycling in Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands, based on her research completed in Europe over the summer. Her presentation included a short video showing what it is like to bicycle on a Sunday in Copenhagen.

She noted that bicycling is better for the economy. Cyclists travel at a slower pace and can observe more of their surroundings. Because they can carry less, they must shop more frequently and thus spend more.

Most cyclists are *civil* cyclists as opposed to U.S.-style *militant* cyclists, meaning they travel more slowly, in normal clothes and in groups as opposed to wearing special cycling gear and riding alone. In Copenhagen, 52% of trips are by bicycle and 74% of cyclists report feeling safe while cycling.

Copenhagen has taken the four Cs approach to bicycle planning: (1) *continuous* routes throughout the city, even in construction zones, (2) *consistent* designs throughout the infrastructure, (3) *connected* routes, meaning riders can get to and from anywhere, and (4) *comfortable* facilities for all ages and abilities.

Kirsten discussed the history of cycling in Copenhagen. In the 1970s, Copenhagen was a car-oriented city with congestion, pollution, and many pedestrian crashes. The City gradually began transitioning toward bicycling in the 1970s due to the oil crisis and protests by mothers regarding the high number of pedestrian crashes. Under political leadership of the Mayor, small infrastructure investments were made. These small investments have gradually made Copenhagen the city it is today after four decades of improvements.

Copenhagen approaches bicycle planning with the goal of having a livable city. The city plans for people rather than cars. Approaches to providing for bicyclists encompass “hardware” and “software” measures. “Hardware” measures address bicycling infrastructure, including protected bicycle lanes, intersections with bike boxes, bike signals and footrests, maintenance, and measures to discourage driving. “Software” measures including cyclist education, marketing, and policies.

Lessons learned include possible short and long-term actions for Newark. Short-term actions might include improved sweeping and maintenance, bicycle-friendly signal timing and sensors, branding projects and creation of a bicycle-friendly business district. Long-

term actions include implementation of the Newark Bicycle Plan in its entirety, rounded curbs and barriers to protect bike lanes, bicycle signals, and bicycle-friendly laws.

Kirsten observed that helmets were not often worn. The government recommends their use, but most people don't feel that they are needed. People prefer not to carry helmets around and usually cannot lock the helmet to the bike because most locks are integrated into the bicycle wheel. Bicyclists ride in all types of weather and will ride in the rain wearing raincoats or carrying umbrellas. In Amsterdam, the city issues tickets to those riding without lights at night; those ticketed have the choice to pay or install lights.

Smaller suburban communities have retrofitted their transportation systems as well. Measures included narrowed lanes, plants in the street, and on-street-parking "parklets."

The committee discussed some of the challenges Newark faces. These include high amounts of regional cut-through traffic, convincing businesses to promote bicycling (e.g., retail-branded bike corrals near shops), and lack of bicycle training in schools.