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August Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2014

Attending were Mark Deshon (chair), Heather Dunigan (WILMAPCO), Mike Fortner (City of Newark Planning), Ban Phommachanh (UD Parking), James Wilson (Bike Delaware), Anthony Aglio (DelDOT Bike/Ped Coordinator), Tom Coleman (City of Newark Public Works and Water Resources), Joe Spadafino (City of Newark Parks and Recreation), Karl Hassler (resident), Jeff Riegner (resident), Frank Warnock (affiliation TBA), Christine Schultz (resident), Tom Price (Newark Bike Project), and Paul Moser (UD civil engineering student).

Special guests attending were Mayor Polly Sierer (City of Newark) and Alan Brangman (UD V.P. of Facilities).

Karen Rosenberg (resident), Angela Connolly (affiliation TBA), and Linda Smith (UD HealthyU Employee Wellness) each sent their regrets.

- *Report on upcoming bicycle safety checkpoints*

Bicycle safety checkpoints will be held on Delaware Avenue at The Green on Wednesday, September 3, 12–3 p.m. and Monday, September 15, 4–7 p.m., Anthony Aglio reported. He confirmed that representatives from the UD Police and City of Newark Police will be on hand.

Mark Deshon asked for volunteers to help during the aforementioned times. Tom Price said he'd be available to help on Sept. 8 and would check to make sure someone from Newark Bike Project is there on Sept. 3. Mayor Polly Sierer said she'd come and help out too.

- *Newark Bike Project opens new location*

Tom Price reported that the Newark Bike Project (NBP)—a community bicycle shop and 501c3 nonprofit—has opened at its fourth location in Newark. Its primary mission is to teach bicycle repair and maintenance while offering affordable bicycles to the community. Tom acknowledged help from the City of Newark in getting up-and-running

at its 136 South Main Street location. It held its initial open shop (“urgent-care center for bikes”) recently and is now actively interviewing.

Ban Phommachanh announced that he’s now in charge of bicycles at UD and told Tom that UD has excess inventory. He will talk with NBP about this. Jeff Riegner asked if there are any additional workdays planned to help NBP set up. Tom didn’t think so, but said that “closed shops” are scheduled for first and third Saturdays.

- *Final planning for NBC’s presence at Community Day*

Community Day is scheduled for Sunday, September 21. Mark asked Anthony if DelDOT intended to bring a tent for set-up. Anthony didn’t think so. Mike Fortner said he’d look into if the City of Newark could provide a tent for NBC to use that day. Mike said he would help. Mark will also be there but asked that others volunteer to spend some time at the booth as they can.

Two large items need to be produced—mounted posters of the Newark Bike Map and a nice photo of an example of a cycle track (two-way protected bike lane). Heather Dunigan said she’d print and mount these. Ban suggested adding a link on the Newark Bike Map for UD bicycle registration, which is now done online only.

- *University of Delaware bicycle-related projects, information, discussion*

- *signalization project at The Green on Delaware Avenue*

In conjunction with UD and the City of Newark, DelDOT will be doing design signalization on Main Street (2015) and for the large pedestrian crossing at The Green (2016). Mark said that, in light of the very real possibility of getting DelDOT to embark on a cycle track project in the next few years, project partners ought to plan for this signalization on Delaware Avenue with a forthcoming cycle track in mind.

- *bicycle-education and commuter-encouragement plans*

No report was given on this item.

- *potential bike-share project*

Mayor Sierer said that she had recently spoken with UD health sciences dean Kathy Matt and Michael Smith (who was supposed to have been here for this discussion) and that UD is very interested in moving forward with a bike-sharing program on the Science, Technology and Advanced Research (STAR) Campus. The initial idea would be to use this program to better connect the STAR Campus to the portions of UD campus north of the Amtrak overpass.

Karl Hassler said that everything should be done with intention and great care. It was pointed out that there is a lot of case-study information out there—successful and failed

projects. Jeff said that there aren't many cities of Newark's size that have done this. Heather stated that it would be great to have bike-share stations in key areas around town. Christine suggested that maybe the Blue Hen Leadership group could, as a project, start exploring how planning should be done for a bike-share program. It was asked what role NBC should play in this project. Mark suggested that we help in an advisory role and with coordination, as this is really our forté.

- *initial discussion on making STAR campus bicycle-friendly*

Meeting guest Alan Brangman talked at length about plans for the STAR Campus. He first said that they're working on a new master plan for the area. It's very much an "open campus" (with respect to ease of public interaction and thoroughfare) and will probably become "more urban" with increasing development. Alan said UD will develop for itself the area from the Health Sciences building to the train station (scheduled for design and relocation) and west to the water tower. DelDOT will be building parking for the train station further west than it is now. Construction was supposed to have started this fall, but UD is now hoping it will begin in the spring, including reconfiguration of the now awkward entrance road to the train station parking area. He went on to say that the campus will have a city-street grid design (with what he called "primary," "secondary," and "tertiary" streets) and described a primary street as having the typical traffic lane-bike lane-parking space configuration.

James Wilson and Heather both said that there are some good alternatives to the above-mentioned street configuration that NBC would be able to share with UD, which would help bicyclists avoid "door zone" incidents. Mark also asked if there would be any streets that would be designed as "bike boulevards." Alan said that there would be some paved off-road options for bicyclists along a tributary stream that runs through the campus. He also mentioned that another pedestrian overpass would have to be created to link to the north side of the Amtrak rail line at the propose train station.

Tom Coleman asked is the signal on Christina Parkway (current entrance for Bloom Energy) will be reactivated. Alan replied that DelDOT has told him traffic isn't at a minimum saturation point to warrant it at this time.

On behalf of the committee, Mark thanked Alan for attending and providing us with an update.

• *Update on City's cycle-track letter*

Mark asked Mayor Sierer if she would talk a bit about the letter NBC helped draft for the City. The Mayor stated that Mark had made a brief presentation on Monday, August 18, at the City of Newark's Traffic Committee meeting, explaining the rationale for a cycle-track project and urging it to support a letter from the City to DelDOT for such a project. The Traffic Committee voted its support. Mayor Sierer then read the letter that will be given to the City Council for their preparation for discussion and support vote at their Monday, August 25, meeting.

Jeff thanked the Mayor and suggested that one change be made—change it to say we’d like this completed by the end of 2017. Mark discussed this with the Mayor, and she advised him to make this suggestion to City Council on Monday, when he speaks on behalf of the project.

- *Initial discussion on feedback from the League of American Bicyclists (LAB)*

Mark asked Heather to take the lead in beginning to examine LAB’s feedback. Heather said she agrees with some things and that we should take others “with a grain of salt.” Jeff stated that he thinks it’s fair to say that the category scores seldom match the descriptive text and that the description [advice] is much more useful. Heather suggested we need to do what we think is more important, especially in terms of improving connectivity.

There was a brief discussion about what streets might make good “bicycle boulevards.” Several were mentioned—Orchard Rd., Ritter Lane, Winslow Rd., Dallam Rd., and Chrysler Ave.

Tom Coleman asked if the state is ever going to go by NACTO guidelines. Jeff answered, “Yes.” There was talk about how the City could move on this within its jurisdiction. It was suggested that a staff recommendation for the City to enact NACTO guidelines is all that would be needed.

In terms of education and safety, Mark suggested that we could have more of an impact if we worked with the local elementary schools, some of which are already doing things on their own (like Safe Routes to School). Tom Price said that NBP might be willing to partner on a safety program at elementary schools in conjunction with its bike-donation program. Mark said he’d make an initial contact with the phys. ed. teachers at Downes, West Park, McVey, and Charter.

Mayor Sierer volunteered to host a “Mayor’s Ride” at some point in the future. We all thought this would be a great event for the community.

Tom Coleman asked about the ridership percentage figures as stated in the feedback document. Heather said this part of the data came straight from the American Community Survey figures.

It was suggested that we work to increase the amount of high-quality bike parking. Tom Price said that he had noticed a lack of adequate parking for bicycles along South Main Street, relative to East Main. Tom Coleman said that many of the buildings were built before the current city standards had been enacted.

- *Bike-ped issue on Elkton Road from Casho Mill Road to Maryland line*

This discussion was tabled until our next meeting, anticipating that DelDOT’s Marco Boyce will be present.

- *Resurfacing in west Newark – Barksdale and Casho Mill Roads*

Mike and Tom Coleman spoke briefly about the ongoing work on the key corridors near the western Newark neighborhoods and said that work is progressing. Mark and Frank Warnock indicated that there still doesn't seem to be a provision for a bike lane marking through the right-turn lane on Apple Road as it meets Barksdale Road. Tom said he'd look into it.

- *Report on follow-up with Bike to Work Day attendees*

Mark said that he emailed everyone on the list, thanking them for coming to Bike to Work Day and encouraging them to take an active role in helping make bicycling better in Newark, either by affiliating with our committee, supporting bicycling-improvement projects, or communicating with their city councilperson or state legislator about their support for bicycling in Newark. He still needs to contact others by phone who had registered with a phone number instead of an email address.

- *Old or new business*

Frank said that a correction to the bike lane still needs to be made on Delaware Avenue as it approaches the Library Avenue intersection. The bike lane still disappears into the right-turn lane.

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Thursday, September 18, at 4 p.m. at WILMAPCO.