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September Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2014

Attending were Mark Deshon (chair), Heather Dunigan (WILMAPCO), Mike Fortner (City of Newark Planning), James Wilson (Bike Delaware), 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 (Delaware Bikes), Tom Price (Newark Bike Project), Karen Rosenberg (resident), Angela Connolly (Delaware Bikes), Linda Smith (UD HealthyU Employee Wellness), Jonathan Kirch (American Heart Association/American Stroke Association) and Paul Moser (UD civil engineering student).

Special guests attending were Marco Boyce (DelDOT Planning) and Michael Nauman (DelDOT Project Engineer).

Anthony Aglio (DelDOT Bicycle Coordinator), sent his regrets.

- *Comments on this month's bicycle safety checkpoints*

Bicycle safety checkpoints were held on Delaware Avenue at The Green on Wednesday, September 3, 12-3 p.m. and Monday, September 15, 4-7 p.m.

Those who had volunteered time agreed that the Monday late afternoon session was very busy and probably the best bicycle safety checkpoint session we've had. Lights were given out as fast as Heather Dunigan could prepare the sets of lights. We ran out of M/L helmets; this was, by far, the most helmets we've distributed at one of these checkpoints.

Wednesday's checkpoint was also good, but mid-day is always hectic.

Mark Deshon thanked Tom Price and the other mechanic volunteers from Newark Bike Project, without whom none of the quick repairs could have been done, which the students really appreciated. The committee also acknowledged DelDOT's Anthony Aglio.

Heather suggested that 1) we do a press release in advance of the next round of safety checkpoints, and 2) that next year DelDOT might consider doing three in the fall semester and one in the spring.

Note: Anthony Aglio sent in the following statistics after the meeting and suggested that even these numbers may be underreporting the actual totals by about 10 percent:

Sept. 3

59 served in some way
49 light sets installed
11 bikes repaired
16 helmets given out

Sept. 15

85 served in some way
75 light sets installed
15 bikes repaired
24 helmets given out

- *Final details for NBC's presence at Community Day*

Community Day will be on Sunday, September 21, from 11 a.m.–4 p.m. on The Green. Mike Fortner will be setting up our booth (#731), which is right off Delaware Avenue, around 10:30. Mike will get materials and sign from Heather. Joe Spadafino indicated our booth is near that of the Newark Transit Subcommittee, DART, and RideShare Delaware, but we are not near the WILMAPCO or Newark Bike Project booths.

Mike said he'd be there for just about the entire time. Mark and Karen Rosenberg volunteered to come help in the morning; Linda Smith, Tom Coleman, and Karl Hassler said they'd come to help later in the latter hours.

- *Discussion on Engineering section feedback from the League of American Bicyclists*

Opening comments centered not on the *Engineering* section but on the feedback document's page-one numbers of Bicycle Friendly Businesses (BFB) and Universities (BFU) in Newark—both "0." Mark told Linda that he hoped the University of Delaware would take the steps necessary to apply as a BFU in the near future.

We should be able to contact the Downtown Newark Partnership about fostering interest in and maybe a competition for business applications for BFB. Mark said he thought that Mike DeMonte of The Ski Bum might be very interested in his business becoming a BFB. Some attendees insisted the bar is pretty low for businesses and that this should be pretty easy to accomplish.

Jonathan Kirch asked a question about where there were locations in which the bike lane directs one off a road. Mark pointed out that this occurs on Delaware Avenue near the Library Avenue intersection.

While encouraging "more people to cycle" is not a specific action item, we all agreed that the group and agencies/organizations we represent, including DelDOT, are "on board" with this overarching principle.

Progress has already been made with respect to beginning to implement the Newark Bicycle Plan. The City of Newark has been eager to cooperate with us on this (as

evidenced by Tom Coleman’s activity within the committee and the city’s agreement to send a partnership proposal letter to DelDOT regarding a cycle track).

Tom Coleman mentioned that Newark city manager Carol Houck has told him that the City has adopted NACTO guidelines. The City ordered copies of street guides. We know that DelDOT is also working on enacting NACTO (as much as it can).

Someone asked, “Is there a tight link between DelDOT and the City on a paving schedule?” No one had a definitive answer, but Marco Boyce indicated that DelDOT is working on it. The committee encourages this.

There was a lengthy discussion about the “high-quality bicycle parking” recommendation. The committee discussed resuming the effort to get some bike corrals at key locations in the downtown area and agreed to target the area on Main Street in front of the English Language Institute (ELI) as an initial location. We discussed where on the street it should be placed. Heather asked whether we want it to be sited at the easiest location for installation or the most convenient location for users. Consensus was to use the closest parking space to the east from the Academy Street intersection crosswalk bumpout on the north side of East Main Street (nearest ELI). Jeff Riegner suggested that sight lines would be better at this location. Mark asked who the key players are that will get this done. The reply was that we need permission from DelDOT and from there the City Parking Department will get involved. Tom Coleman indicated he thought the City would assume the cost of this protected bike corral.

Tom Coleman met recently with DelDOT with respect to the cycle track project and said that DelDOT recommends that the City look at engineering solutions first and then come back to DelDOT with its choice. He also said that writing state legislators who represent the area (and those whose districts abut the downtown area) urging them to support this project for Newark through the Community Transportation Fund. Heather reminded the committee that federal funds are also applicable for such a project. Mark, Tom Coleman, and James Wilson agreed to work on drafting such a letter.

Someone asked about connectivity plans beyond Newark. Marco Boyce said that the Newark–Wilmington trail is in the project-prioritization phase, and he described the path of the proposed trail, which would connect to the Hall/Pomeroy Trails on the Newark end, follow a power-line easement, pick up a trail near the New Castle Farmers’ Market, and finally head to Wilmington’s Riverfront on the Industrial Track Trail.

Tom Price was very interested in Tri-Valley connections, and we had a brief discussion about the trails issues therein. As a result of this discussion, Jeff identified the completion of the old Smith Mill Road right of way as a connectivity solution between the Tri-Valley trails and the off-road bike paths on Linden Hill Road, which would help one avoid the dangerous Fox Den Road. The committee said they liked this suggestion.

Mark asked if the City plans to add more shared-lane markings (sharrows). Tom Coleman said that the City is looking at West Park to Apple Road for the next application. Mark

asked about the possibility of sharrows on North Country Club Drive. Tom said there is a traffic-calming project scheduled there first. Hillside Road was another possible location for sharrows, and repaving is scheduled for sometime in 2015.

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

DelDOT project engineer Michael Nauman began by indicating that plans for this part of the corridor from Maryland into Newark are scheduled for completion in 2018 and include a separated path on the eastbound side and bike lanes in both directions.

Frank Warnock said that he is concerned that something be done to improve conditions for biking at the intersection at Suburban Plaza well before the project is finished and that the multi-use path (MUP) along Christina Parkway needs work. Michael indicated that the developer of The Retreat is responsible for installation of crosswalks at that intersection. There was some talk about a possible repave, but no one was sure.

Frank demonstrated the problem visually by using the projector to show an aerial shot of the intersection, pointing out the lack of a crosswalk at that intersection on the southwest side, which is where anyone coming from The Retreat would need to cross in order to access the Christina Parkway MUP. A point was also made about the lack of real bike lanes on Elkton Road through that intersection now.

Mark brought the discussion to a close by summarizing the committee's feeling for Michael that DelDOT should figure out how to ameliorate this situation as soon as possible to increase connectivity and safety for bicyclists in that particular area as was discussed.

- *Report on Pro Walk Pro Bike Pro Place Conference (Sept. 8-11, Pittsburgh)*

James reported that Jeff and Marco also attended this conference. He said that, by far, the biggest topic at the conference was protected bike lanes. Data indicate that these protected lanes improve safety and decrease crash incidents. James said that U.S. DOT Secretary Fox announced a federal bikeway safety initiative and that the U.S. DOT will be issuing federal separated-bikeway guidelines in the form of a design manual.

Marco added that the downtown Pittsburgh core is very reminiscent of downtown Wilmington and that Pittsburgh's separated bikeways provided seamless transportation in and around the city's top destinations. It was "fun to ride on 'em," he said. Marco said there was great emphasis on the "design vehicle" for a 12-year-old rider (i.e., how to make a bike trip comfortable, safe, and very navigable).

Jonathan then mentioned that at the conference, committee member James Wilson of Bike Delaware received Professional of the Year award in the nonprofit sector from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals. We took a moment to applaud James on his well-deserved recognition.

- *Follow-up with Bike to Work Day attendees*

Mark said he had not yet made phone contact with those attendees who only gave a phone number.

- *Follow-up on outreach to local elementary schools*

Mark said he had not yet done any outreach and will make sure he does so by the next meeting.

- *Old or new business*

Tom Coleman presented one of the four new City of Newark employee-share bicycles that were purchased with funds received from the city's Healthy Communities Award.

Mark asked if there was anyone who could facilitate October's NBC meeting, as he will be away that day. Several others indicated they would also have to miss the meeting, so we agreed to skip a month and have our next committee meeting in November (see below).

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Thursday, November 20, at 4 p.m. at WILMAPCO. Note: There will be no October meeting.