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October Meeting Minutes

October 15, 2015

Attending were Mark Deshon (chair), Heather Dunigan (WILMAPCO), Mike Fortner (City of Newark Planning), Tom Coleman (City of Newark Public Works and Water Resources), Paul Moser (DelDOT), Karl Hassler (resident), Susan Grasso (resident), Ban Phommachanh (UD Parking), Michelle Bennett (UD Sustainability), Kristen Jones (UD student), Jonathan Kirch (American Heart Association), James Wilson (Bike Delaware), and Corinth Ford (Bike Delaware).

Guests: Presenter – BJ DeCoursey (UD Institute for Public Administration), Marcia Scott (UD Institute for Public Administration)

Regrets: Jeff Riegner (resident), Joe Spadafino (City of Newark Parks & Recreation), Christine Schultz (resident), and Karen Rosenberg (resident) sent regrets.

- *Brief review of Newark Community Day presence*

Mike Fortner reported that the event went very well and that our committee had good coverage for its booth that afternoon. Corinth Ford signed on as a committee member at our booth while co-representing Bike Delaware. Many were interested in maps and off-road trails. Some were interested and engaged in conversation about the two-way, separated bike lane project.

Susan Grasso asked if the committee currently organizes any education-related classes. Mark Deshon said that, while we have been involved in some in the past, we have nothing planned at the moment. Heather Dunigan replied that White Clay Bicycle Club does classes occasionally and that we could get the club involved in a formal way to organize classes and possibly get funding from the Delaware Bicycle Council.

Susan also asked whether we have a handout about cycling and safety. (We have put together handouts with safety tips and general commuting tips; these are typically used during events like our safety checkpoints and Community Day.) Karl Hassler brought up the need for some information for local bike commuters. Mark said that he began working on a brochure that would address this, but hasn't made a lot of progress yet.

- *Review of September/October campus safety checkpoints*

Paul Moser reported that the two events went well, the second of which had to be rescheduled due to bad weather on the original date. About 60 people were served between the two events, including a few commuters (i.e., non-students). Many bike lights were installed, and several helmets were given.

Paul said that during our second event, a similar event organized by UD's T² transportation group was also operating at the pedestrian crossing at The Green. There was some interest in getting our partners together with their group and hosting a third, combined event in November. Paul is following up on its organization. Ban Phommachanh says that UD Residence Life is willing to help promote it.

Corinth asked if there is any bicycle orientation on campus for students. Ban said, "No," but indicated that there is a SafetyFest every fall. He will help us promote our events next year at SafetyFest and maybe get our committee involved directly.

- *Low-Stress Cycling Community Assessment*

Guest speaker BJ DeCoursey, from the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration (IPA), came to share a presentation about their Low-Stress Cycling Community Assessment tool, part of IPA's Complete Communities efforts in Delaware. (For general information on the larger project, see CompleteCommunitiesDE.org.)

With support from DelDOT and the Office of State Planning Coordination, the Low-Stress Cycling Community Assessment is a tool IPA is developing as part of a "toolkit" to help simplify daunting concepts for local municipalities. This particular tool deals with how to evaluate various approaches for assessing bikeability. In this case, it's all about connecting origins and destinations.

BJ began by explaining the familiar description of the four types of cyclists—strong and fearless (1%), enthusiastic and confident (9%), interested but concerned (53%), and not able/not interested (37%). The hope is that the largest group (interested but concerned) would be positively impacted by the creation of more low-stress cycling connections among routes within communities. This work is modeled after Northeastern U. professor Peter Furth's work—looking at road types by traffic stress level from lowest to the highest and seeing where logical connections can be made so that there are reasonable ways to get from place to place without a lot of detours.

The hope is that, using one of IPA's tools, communities can decide for themselves which level-of-traffic-stress (LTS) routes they want used and how they want them connected. BJ noted that Newark is a very good case study for this process; he then went on to describe three possible tools (varying in complexity) that he wanted us, as cyclists, to help evaluate for use.

DelDOT has the LTS maps, and it needs to coordinate with all the agencies involved, in order to help towns with their particular projects, which includes a mapping exercise.

These potential assessment tools are checklists that include prompts (see attachments to these minutes) based on facilities and networks. So that an engaged group of citizens or town staff could use these tools, prompts would include photos.

Marcia Scott said that this is part of a larger, more comprehensive document that previews a particular project; the checklist is the “audit.” She also answered a question from Susan about how this can be used by saying it’s intended for group (not individual) work, i.e., for citizen engagement and consensus-building.

Committee feedback

- Ban said he thinks detail about level of bicyclist usage should be added to the survey tool.
- Karl Hassler suggested looking at a capability maturity model (CMM) as an addition.
- Corinth, Susan, and Ban all liked the idea of adding a comments section to the checklist.
- Heather said a mobile app would be a cool application and added that this would be a great tool for the Cleveland Avenue project.
- In terms of complexity, the majority of committee members present favored the “Technical” (multiple-choice) checklist version of the assessment tool. Heather noted that it seemed easier to use, as opposed to the “Simplest” or “Intermediate.”
- Paul asked how this could be made relevant to communities so that they’ll be ready to work with DelDOT.
- Jonathan Kirch stressed the need for involvement of advocacy groups in the process. He also said that he thinks that the characterization of a particular cyclist may not be absolutely necessary.

Mark thanked BJ, Marcia, and committee member Kirsten Jones for making this presentation.

- *Report on two-way, separated bike-lane/facility (“cycle track”) progress*

A third and final feasibility study committee meeting was held on October 1 at JMT. There was much discussion and some level of ambiguity regarding the scope of work required for a project that is feasible to be labeled as “short term.” A north-side application has been agreed upon, and most of the content of the meeting focused on 1) the termination point at Orchard Road and how to funnel cycle traffic on and off at that point and 2) how best to handle the intersection at South Chapel Street with respect to a left-turn lane.

Tom Coleman submitted notes that indicate a planned fall 2017 start to the work on this project. The feasibility study committee is waiting on a meeting with FHWA before finalizing its report. DelDOT’s Traffic section is “on board” with this schedule.

- *Report on Cleveland Avenue pave/rehab project proposal*

Susan reported that this project will be completed within the next couple years, prompting us to consider what we want as a community. After one of the recent safety checkpoints, five of our committee did a site visit. They came up with a lot of ideas for what to do with the Paper Mill Road intersection and the section between there and North College Avenue, which Susan shared with a handout that she and Paul had prepared (see attachment to the minutes).

The City of Newark, through Tim Filasky, has filed a Cycling Infrastructure Innovation grant application, citing 1) the need for bike lane(s), 2) Cleveland Ave. could become a bicycle connector between Paper Mill and New London Road, 3) no adequate facility for crossing the intersection at Paper Mill Road on the Pomeroy Trail, 4) limited facility for bicycle-crossing at high-volume intersection with North College Ave., and 5) the corridor's identification in the Newark Bicycle Plan as a problem area.

Our committee is committed to coordinating this effort with the City of Newark.

The Mayor is currently researching potential elimination of on-street parking on Cleveland Avenue.

Mark mentioned that, in an email, Tom Coleman had indicated that DelDOT is now including the entire length of Cleveland Avenue in its project scope. This largely came about because of a petition filed by the NAACP (under the Complete Communities model) with regard to the new Alder Creek development, which is situated between car dealerships and has limited, if any, good bike/ped amenities.

In discussing the intersection at Paper Mill Road, Susan suggested that this could be a demo site for a "Euro-style" intersection (see attachment to the minutes). Ban asked if a roundabout would work just as well. Most attendees didn't think so.

- *Progress on UD-City bikeshare project*

Ban says that this project is slowly progressing. UD is funding the project right now (through UD Parking and UD Health Sciences), though he'd like to have more buy-in from the City of Newark, so that it can truly be a community bikeshare. The vendor has passed the insurance clearance piece. As of now sponsors include an IT company, a medical/hospital, and a bank. Ban is hoping UD Admissions will also agree to sign on as a sponsor. Initially, there will be 75 bicycles.

On Monday, October 26, a presentation will be made to City Council about this program. Mark urged as many as possible to attend at 7 p.m. in support of this effort.

- *Progress on coordinating Bicycle Community Meetings*

Heather had to leave the meeting but submitted notes on potential Bicycle Community Meetings as follows:

- Partners
 - Newark Bicycle Committee
 - Newark Bike Project

- White Clay Bicycle Club
- Trail Spinners
- Day and Frequency
 - Wednesday nights
 - Monthly or every other month
- Format
 - Organizational updates
 - Guest speaker
 - Community comment period
- Possible Speaker Subjects
 - Newark BikeShare
 - Delaware Avenue Cycletrack
 - Lessons for Newark from Copenhagen
 - Bicycle Commuting 101

We'll continue to flesh these details out at our next committee meeting.

- *Old or new business*

Mayor Polly Sierer submitted the following suggestions:

- Add a UD student or two and a Newark High School student to our committee.
- Could we meet at one of the City parks as an alternative to WILMAPCO?

Mark mentioned that there will be a webinar on bike/ped safety on college campuses from 1:00–2:30 tomorrow [October 16], featuring a panel that includes a U. Wisconsin–Milwaukee professor, a Cal Berkeley transportation planner, and a North Carolina State transportation demand management coordinator. Register at pedbikeinfo.org/webinars.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, November 19, at 4 p.m. at WILMAPCO.