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## December Meeting Minutes December 20, 2018

Mark Deshon called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

**Member attendees:** Mark Deshon (Chair), Bob McBride (Treasurer), Helga Huntley, Barb Hughes, Dave Saunders, Karl Hassler, and Jamie Magee

**Partner liaison attendees:**

Bike Delaware: John Bare

WILMAPCO and Newark Bike Project: Heather Dunigan

City of Newark: Mike Fortner (Planning and Development)

DelDOT: Paul Moser

**Guest:** Jeff Riegner (Whitman, Requardt & Associates)

### **Brief report on Bike Central and “Bike Lights Night” events on Oct. 25**

Barb Hughes said that she, Lauri Webber, and Brian Bahnson gave out 26 light sets during the two-hour Bike Lights Night, and it could have gone on longer if the weather had been better. She would like BikeNewark to do this in the spring as well. They could have used one or two more volunteers. Barb said she thought working simultaneously at two locations (corner of North College Ave. and on Main in front of the gate to Old College) would be ideal to engage the most bicyclists. Someone stated that it's still a tough sell for some students who don't believe in physics. We need to plan dates for the spring semester soon.

Helmets and lights were given away earlier that day during Bike Central on Delaware Avenue at The Green. Some 20 sets of bike lights were installed and six helmets were given away. Mark confirmed that this location has proven the most ideal spot for engaging the most bicyclists during the day.

### **Comments on Oct. 26 Community Night Event**

About 75-80 people attended our fall Community Night event at Wooden Wheels. Having had two organizations doing publicity (Wooden Wheels and BikeNewark) helped to increase attendance. We wondered how many times each year should we hold these Community Nights. We did two this year—summer and fall. It was suggested that perhaps we should do one earlier in the spring season and then do one around the fall equinox (i.e., late September).

Karl Hassler reflected that it was sometimes hard to break into conversations with non-members to emphasize what BikeNewark does through its participating members. It was suggested that

we have a formal time to reflect what we do, in a similar fashion to what we did at our June event. Jamie Magee suggested that a scavenger hunt with a prize might be a good engagement activity.

We don't want this to be just a cocktail party, and we don't want it to become so informal that we don't get people working together, meeting one another, and learning a bit of what we do as a partnership. It's important that people relate on a personal level to what BikeNewark does. Mixer games that result in a small gift might be a way to structure this. Any good games could be "recycled" for other community events in which we participate.

Mark suggested that we form a team for planning future Community Nights, which might help on these fronts.

### **Update on Safe Routes to School Project**

Helga Huntley reported that plans for the SRTS project at Downes Elementary School are still in development. The emphasis is bike safety along a specific portion of Casho Mill Road and removing ADA barriers, such as a set of concrete steps leading from one portion of sidewalk to the school. She said that DelDOT's Chip Kneaval said DelDOT would do the road marking at its expense. This makes the SRTS grant money go much further, possibly enabling more features. Along with bike-lane buffers, adding a crosswalk and pedestrian refuge island are now what remain to be implemented.

Helga said that District 1 Councilman Mark Morehead suggested that the City of Newark might help fund some of the improvements. It is not clear at present how much additional money would be needed, however.

Dropping the speed limit on Casho Mill Road did not seem to be in the planning; traffic-calming measures would be used to reduce speeds. Radar speed signs might be included in the final plans that will show the appropriate speed limit at any given time, as it changes during school hours.

### **Brief report on Newark Futures meeting series**

The Newark Partnership is being organized as we meet. There are open meetings for the organization. Heather Dunigan, Bob McBride, Helga, and Jamie sat with the Mayor and Parks & Recreation Department staff at the most recent Newark Futures meeting and discussed how nonprofits might be part of the Newark partnership. We need a new liaison from this group, as it will continue to be one of our partner organizations. Members who participated in this meeting (except Jamie) will probably continue working with these groups.

### **Potential showing of *Bicycle Revolution*—a Claremont (Calif.) Colleges movie about sustainability, advocacy, and bike-friendly community momentum**

Mark said he had received an email about this film from Tom Price. The film *Bicycle Revolution* is 47 minutes long and documents a course taught at Claremont Colleges that encouraged students to investigate local cities and build rapport with community resources for sustainability in transportation focused on bicycling. The entire course was an on-bike learning experience. Mark says that it might not hold any new information for BikeNewark but presented it things reasonably well. This might make a good public event (at no cost for the viewing rights) if we can

find a suitable venue to show it publicly. There is a possibility that the aforementioned film could be shown at Trek Bicycle Newark.

Mark recently met with Dave Schindler, new manager at Trek. Schindler says Trek is very interested in community support and sponsoring First Friday Rides in particular. Trek is interested in hosting an open house with BikeNewark at some time in the future. Barb noted this was a good venue for meetings, based on an event she had attended there.

### **Compilation of this year's accomplishments**

- Submitted LAB Bicycle Friendly Community application on behalf of the City of Newark. Newark received its third consecutive bronze-level designation, this time for 2018-2022.
- Submitted Places for Bikes application on behalf of the City of Newark. According to the data gathered by People For Bikes, Newark ranked 39th overall nationwide and 7th among cities with a population of 100,000 or less in terms of bikeability.
- Organized 9 First Friday Ride events (January and March events were cancelled due to poor weather). These social slow rides through Newark averaged about 25 participants.
- Co-sponsored 2 Newark Historical Buildings Bicycle Tour events in the fall, in cooperation with Newark Bike Project. Each event drew between 10-20 participants.
- Held 4 Bike Central events in cooperation with the University of Delaware, Newark Bike Project, and DelDOT:
  - Spring event, during which 10 sets of bike lights were installed free of charge.
  - August 25, in coordination with UD's 1743 Welcome Days, during which 6 sets of lights were installed free of charge.
  - September 12, during which 20 sets of lights were installed and 6 helmets were given out free of charge.
  - October 25, during which about 20 sets of lights were installed free of charge.
- Held a Bike Lights Night event on October 25 at the corner of North College Avenue and Main Street, during which 25 sets of lights, courtesy of UD, were installed free of charge.
- Executed and posted results of a City Council candidates survey as public service in advance of April municipal election.
- Distributed bike-safety flyers in four languages—English, Spanish, Chinese, and French—to the English Language Institute. These were based on the “4 Safety Tips for Bicyclists” cards that were printed in January for use by partner organizations.
- Volunteered at and co-sponsored Walkable/Bikeable Delaware Summit in May, which was organized by Bike Delaware, one of BikeNewark's partners.
- Successfully rescheduled (due to poor weather) and held annual Bike to Work Day event on University of Delaware campus on May 21. Keynote speaker was New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer. More than 70 participants came to the event, which was supported by 6 corporate sponsors. During the event, the annual Bicycle Friendly Community Leader Award was presented, and a Trek hybrid bicycle was given out as a random prize.
- Aided with organization and execution of annual Mayor's Fun Ride on June 2.
- Held 2 Community Nights—June 21 at Handloff Park and October 26 at Wooden Wheels, attended by 31 and 50 participants, respectively.
- Hosted an information table during Newark Community Day (September 16).
- Consulted with and provided input to Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson on Delaware Avenue two-way protected bike-lane project.

- Further refined Newark low-stress network concept and map in advance of initial production and application of signage on a “Central Loop.”
- Several members attended series of UD-led Newark Futures workshops.
- Advocated on behalf of the bicycling community at various City Council and city Traffic Committee meetings.

Comments on above-listed items:

Mark noted that we gained about a half-dozen full members, based on their participation in First Friday Rides during 2018. Prior to our recent election, Barb’s listing from First Friday Rides had been only used as a database for this event. Both she and Mark think we could make further use of these lists encouraging repeat participants to become more involved.

Mark noted that there are several separate affiliations lists at the present time. We are now in need of a database and someone to manage it in order to keep track of participants.

Jamie suggested we translate the “4 Safety Tips for Bicyclists” into Arabic as well.

Kudos were expressed to Bloom Energy for sponsoring Bike to Work Day, even though their large group or employees could not participate because of the rescheduling.

Jamie added that for the Newark Historical Buildings Bicycle Tour events a custom Google Map for smartphone and a new website was made available, including printed resources.

## **Goal-setting for 2019**

The partnership engaged in a period of open discussion, summarized in the below items.

- ***On coordination***

We should be looking to coordinate our efforts with state/county bicycle planning.

- ***Lovett Avenue***

Because the University Courtyard Apartments will now essentially be UD “dorms,” Lovett Ave./Chapel Street intersection improvements should be on our agenda. This was an area that had been identified for attention by Heather some time ago. This would include bicycle infrastructure improvements along the length of Lovett Avenue leading to UD’s Central Campus.

- ***Low-stress bikeway***

- What should the name of this official system be?
- In terms of signing for the system, can we include local organizations in the naming rights/signs, and, if so, what regulations might there be in requirements for signs from DelDOT?
- This bikeway should meet the needs of low-stress bicyclists, newcomers, area visitors, and people with special needs.

- ***Suggestion for new off-road emphasis***

Dave Saunders expressed that we should take a look at long-term off-road bicycling needs and planning, including existing (Hall and Pomeroy) and other trails.

- ***UD bicycle coordinator***

Mark mentioned that we'd ultimately like to have a connection with a designated UD staff member who would be in charge of all bicycling affairs on campus. Apparently, the UD Board of Trustees has not acted on this recommendation from the ad hoc bicycle-safety committee on which Ban Phommachanh and UD Police Chief Ogden participated.

- ***Resurrecting UD Bike Days***

Mark reported that UD Recreation Department hopes to partner with BikeNewark to encourage staff members and students to use bikes recreationally. In 2017, we did First Friday Rides in conjunction with a student civility poster campaign. We still have T-shirts for this if needed. Ismat Shah wanted to help with this but will on sabbatical in the spring semester. Getting students interested in the fall seems like a better idea than the spring.

After the above discussion, the following partnership goals were agreed upon for 2019.

### ***Goals for 2019***

- Continue to advocate for the formation of a South College Avenue task force, which will examine and create a plan for the corridor (between I-95 and Main Street).
- Continue progress on Newark low-stress bike network.
  - Implement signage for low-stress Central Loop.
  - Involve local businesses in funding.
  - Provide associated resources.
- Focus on Lovett Avenue improvements, including intersection at Chapel Street.
- Co-organize UD Bike Days with University of Delaware groups as a fall event.
- Advocate for requirement of more and better bicycle parking by developers, including incentives for retrofits.
- Begin discussing a long-term plan for off-road routes/trails in Newark.
- Follow up on 2018 infrastructure goals not yet achieved. These include
  - Evaluate addition of "Except Bicycles" signage on Ray Street at New London Road and McKees Lane at Cleveland Avenue for contraflow bike travel. *Status—still a point for discussion with City of Newark*
  - Add "Except Bicycles" signage to current prohibitive turn signage on Amstel Avenue at Orchard Road. *Status—needs to be proposed to Traffic Committee*
  - Add sharrows southbound through the underpass on Casho Mill Road. There is currently a bike lane that simply disappears at the underpass without direction for cyclists. *Status—signs have been installed but no new (clearer, more obvious) pavement markings*
  - Re-mark sharrows on the one-way section of New London Road between the CSX tracks and Cleveland Avenue. *Status—not done*

### **Results of BikeNewark election and installation of new officers (effective Jan. 1, 2019)**

A new slate of officers was finalized. There were no contests in each of the officer categories; there was one write-in vote for Chair. Forty-three percent of the voting-eligible membership casts ballots. The following were installed.

***Officers for 2019-2020***

*Chair* - Bob McBride

*Co-Chair* - Helga Huntley

*Treasurer* - Karl Hassler

*Secretary* - Dave Saunders

Appreciation was noted for Mark, having worked as Chair of the partnership and its predecessor committee for five years. Mark reaffirmed the importance of our membership and liaison partners in being able to make significant progress. He said he will continue to be active, maintaining the BikeNewark website and working on the Newark low-stress bikeway project.

**Financial report and adoption of report**

The December financial report was presented and, with the amendment of an addition of a \$25 PayPal donation, was adopted. Contributions since the October Community Night totaled \$535. The fund balance, including PayPal account is now \$840.69.

Jamie said that Newark Bike Project (NBP) would be willing to sponsor BikeNewark as 501(c)(3) co-organization, which would allow charitable donations to BikeNewark through NBP. No action on this offer was taken at this time.

**Old or new business**

• ***Performance Bicycles – Newark***

Performance Bicycles is in bankruptcy and may close the Newark store by Jan. 15 as part of this restructuring. The local store is currently posting going-out-of-business sales.

• ***WILMAPCO Regional Bicycle Plan***

Heather said that she would like BikeNewark to co-sponsor Bike Plan Night from 4-7 p.m. sometime soon. This would help with the WILMAPCO Regional Bicycle Plan, a project she is shepherding.

• ***First Friday Rides***

First Friday Rides will resume in March.

**Next Meeting**

Our next meeting will take place on January 17 at 4:30 p.m. at WILMAPCO.

Meeting was adjourned around 6:00 p.m.

Minutes were taken by Bob McBride and Mark Deshon.