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September Meeting Minutes September 17, 2020 (Virtual Meeting)

Bob McBride called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

Member attendees: Bob McBride (Chair), Helga Huntley (Vice-Chair), Dave Saunders (Secretary), Karl Hassler (Treasurer), Mark Deshon, Lauri Webber, Karen Rosenberg, and Paul Baumbach

Partner liaison attendees:

WILMAPCO and Newark Bike Project: Heather Dunigan

University of Delaware: Bill Wentz (Police)

Guest: Savannah Sipes (UD Graduate Student Government)

Improving Cycling for the UD Community

This discussion involved the issues and what BikeNewark can contribute.

Savannah Sipes, a graduate student in Civil & Environmental Engineering who is part of the Graduate Student Government at the University of Delaware, joined the meeting. She has special interests in food-waste recycling and in bicycling to reduce dependence on bus transportation to campus for off-campus residents. One issue she raised was concern for debris in bike lanes. Discussion identified Christina Parkway and Casho Mill Road, particularly just south of Downes School and near the underpass, as areas needing clearing. Paul Baumbach said that he could bring this topic to the attention of DelDOT. It was agreed to organize an email to Paul listing target areas for cleanup.

Savannah also brought up the idea of a bike-share program. The University might have a greater interest now due to the motivation to save costs in the bus transportation service.

It was noted that in the past a bike-share program had been planned in considerable detail, but was shelved after the bike accidental/death lawsuit.

UDPD has planned patrols, "Walk Your Wheels" reminders and other programs. Laird Campus has not been especially targeted since the biking prohibition on the bridge to that part of campus was ordered; however, Ofc. Bill Wentz did say that officers have been stationed at the bridge during peak-period class changes to ensure compliance. Mark Deshon brought up the fact that bicyclists had not been given a reasonable alternative to dismounting at that critical entry point to/from Laird Campus. Others chimed in, noting that there should be a good compromise such that bicyclists would not have to dismount there while crossing the bridge.

Bicycle Safety Advocacy

The death of a cyclist in an accident on South College Avenue near Corporate Boulevard reminds us of the importance of safety advocacy. The Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia has organized a memorial ride emphasizing the “Vision Zero” goal to reduce pedestrian and cyclist deaths.

Recording zero deaths is an aspirational goal; zero preventable deaths might be achievable. This goal is part of the Cecil County Highway Plan update underway. We might poll Newark Council members and staff to see if they are amenable to embracing Vision Zero.

New member Katlyn Cofrancisco has offered to be a liaison on behalf of BikeNewark to University Public Safety and City of Newark Police, helping with bike safety and enforcement.

Membership Update

There have been no additional paid memberships this month. We continue to seek to learn what people might like to volunteer for.

Delaware Bicycle Council Grant Application Update

The grant application was submitted on time (August 31). In response to feedback from the Delaware Bicycle Council, Mark Deshon and City representatives will meet and walk the Wyoming Avenue area with DBC staff. A revised application will be submitted reflecting these discussions.

Transportation Planning Updates

A Newark Transportation Improvement District public workshop is scheduled online for Oct 14.

Treasurer’s Report

Attached at the end of the minutes.

New or Old Business

• *Sharrows discussion*

Cars are ignoring the shared bike lane on Paper Mill Road and squeezing cyclists against the curbs. Speed seems to be a factor. Also mentioned was lack of sufficient number of sharrows on Hillside Road (from West Main Street to New London Road). Where sharrows are the only bike infrastructure, there can be confusion for both cyclists and motorists. We will need to address this soon.

The green-backed Main Street sharrows are great but not well understood by cyclists or motorists.

Now is a good opportunity to market the bike-sharing nature of Main Street. We have produced posters in the past. Heather Dunigan will research what we have there. Mark will work with City of Newark communications to see what we might do.

- ***Off-Road Trail Improvement Update***

Lauri Webber and Dave Saunders have organized an ad hoc committee to install signposts for wayfinding on the Rittenhouse trail. In addition to Lauri and Dave, Gary Kirk of the Wilmington Trail Club and David Bartoo of Delaware State Parks.

The City of Newark is agreeable to the project, estimated to cost a few hundred dollars for materials. In other trail news, a wooden trail bridge that was dislodged by flooding will be replaced by Newark Charter School staff at their cost.

Regarding accessibility, note that the bridge across the river in Rittenhouse park has very high step-up. Ramps for the bridge and raised walkway on the pavilion side would be welcome improvements. It was suggested to involve BikeNewark's Engineering Committee for future actions. Note that State Senator Hansen and State Representative Kowalko represent this area in the Delaware Legislature. The new City of Newark Council Representatives are Sharon Hughes (District 2) and Jay Bancroft (District 3).

- ***BikeNewark Election Process***

New officers are to be elected and announced at the December meeting. Nominations are open and must be settled by the November meeting. Send nominations to BikeNewark Secretary, Dave Saunders (who won't be able to stand for reelection himself). Mark Deshon will receive votes cast via email.

Incidentally, Newark Bike Project is also holding an election. Needed is a new Treasurer for their Board of Directors, as well as other members at large. Tell potential volunteers to contact Heather Dunnigan.

Adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Minutes by Dave Saunders

Beginning balance 8/20/2020		\$ 6,638.03	\$ 0.00	\$ 6,638.03
Additions:				
	8/31/20 Interest	0.16		0.16
Total additions		0.16	0.00	0.16
Deductions:				
Total deductions		0.00		0.00
Surplus (deficit)		0.16	0.00	0.16
Ending balance 9/17/2020		\$ 6,638.19	\$ 0.00	\$ 6,638.19

