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May Meeting Minutes May 20, 2021 (Virtual Meeting)

Bob McBride called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Member attendees: Bob McBride (Chair), Christine Schultz (Secretary), and Mark Deshon

Partner liaison attendees:

WILMAPCO and Newark Bike Project: Heather Dunigan

University of Delaware: Ofc. Bill Wentz (Police)

Bike Delaware: John Bare

City of Newark: Mike Fortner (Planning & Development), Ofc. Greg D'Elia (Police)

Newark Bikeways Project Report

The North and Northwest Bikeways signage is up. A nice article was posted about the project in the *Newark Post*. The Engineering Committee met and agreed with the City to wait on the posting of the West Bikeway signs until the park (on the former site of the Rodney complex) is complete. Two signs are still missing on the Central Loop Bikeway. The signs have been with the City since January, and discussion ensued on how to ensure there is follow up. Minutes from the Engineering Committee that include discussion on future bikeways follow, beginning on page 4. Mark Deshon and Heather Dunigan noted we should include in conversations with the City how to connect with the already existing East Coast Greenway and the 911 Route. The Engineering Committee will continue to meet over the summer.

Event Reviews and Planning

UDPD/Newark Bike Project/BikeNewark Safety Event

UDPD Officer Bill Wentz organized the May 7 event, which was focused on students and any other cyclists who stopped by. There were giveaways, lights, and good safety information shared. Volunteers from the Newark Bike Project helped. Mark and Karl Hassler helped on behalf of BikeNewark.

May 16 Pop-up Bike Tent

Bob McBride, Heather, Mike Fortner, Christine Schultz, and Newark Bike Project's Jamie Magee met about 50 cyclists and handed out Bike Month t-shirts (both 2020 and 2021 editions), bike lights, and maps. Jaime and Mike also did light maintenance on several bikes. It was a great

way to speak to interested cyclists, and the event committee suggests adding a weekend tent to future May bike events. Mark suggested we collect names and contact info in the future.

Bike Month Social Media Promotion

It seems people are seeing the posts about the events and sharing a nice array of photos. It has been a nice way to reiterate messaging and share the joys of cycling all month. Bike Month t-shirts are at the Newark Bike Project and will be part of the giveaways for the photo contest.

Future in-Person Events (ride-oriented, safety-oriented, presentation-oriented)

Ofc. Greg D'Elia of the Newark Police shared info about future events, which include August bike rodeos in conjunction with Newark Parks and Recreation summer camps and Police Athletic League events out in the community. Heather noted the Newark Bike Project has grants for youth programming and suggested reaching out to NBP to discuss any needs/ideas. Everyone agreed that a Newark bike safety checkpoint would be great to plan in September when the UD students have moved in for the fall term. Mark will coordinate this with Ofc. Bill Wentz.

Planning for LAB Bicycle Friendly Communication Application

The League of American Bicyclists (LAB) offers a Bicycle Friendly University (BFU) award. In 2020 though this program, LAB recognized 38 institutions. Discussion followed on how to engage the University of Delaware to participate. Applications for the BFU are due in August. Mark volunteered to talk to BikeNewark members who work at UD to strategize. He also suggests including City Manager Tom Coleman, since this will help the city step up from Bronze-level to Silver-level designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC). This was a specific recommendation from LAB when the city was awarded its most recent bronze designation in 2018. The application date for the city's resubmittal for the BFC is October 5, 2022.

Transportation Improvement District (TID) Planning

Bob shared the modeling, done by DelDOT's Paul Moser, of traffic studies that BikeNewark submitted for Newark TID project consideration. He used public web maps to look at proposed improvements and how they connect to important public destinations. His data showed that a Marrows Road pathway had the highest connectivity rating. The next TID meeting is on May 26 at 1:30 p.m. to discuss future meetings with DelDOT and the City. Members are encouraged to attend this meeting since DelDOT will only select a few of the projects in their TID planning. Mike said that the link to the meeting will be on the City of Newark community calendar.

The Newark Partnership (TNP) Relationship with BikeNewark

TNP was created to help with the economic development of the city. They are developing a strategic plan and suggestions for them to include were solicited. Bob solicited strategic concepts from the group. Heather offered the idea that encouraging walking and cycling to Main Street to reduce car volume is important. She suggested that TNP look into having its businesses offer a bike-incentive program. Mark added that recognizing the value of and increasing bike tourism will bring money into the city, given the city's location near area trails and parks and the lodging available and restaurants within the city.

2021 Application for Delaware Bicycle Council Grant for Other Projects

The application for this year's grant funds is due in August. These are grants for studies of future projects and are typically awarded to creative or innovative ideas. The following ideas were shared that might win a grant.

- Connector between Pomeroy Trail and the new bridge over White Clay Creek, which is currently under construction
- Identify potential "bicycle boulevards"
- Marrows Road pathway connection to Wyoming Road (a Wyoming Road feasibility study is being funded through the DBC grant recently won), connecting areas surrounding College Square development
- I-95/Rt. 896 bike/ped project that connects to Lums Pond State Park and the Michael N. Castle Trail

Public Relations Actions Related to Newark Bikeways

Thank you to Mark for encouraging Josh Shannon of the *Newark Post* to write about the Newark Bikeways and the Bike Month pop-up tent event. Mark suggested there might be value in having a video of someone actually riding the newly signed routes. Bob noted that cyclists are encouraged to share videos of any bike-related events.

Treasurer's Report

Per email from Karl Hassler, a \$625 grant was received from the White Clay Bicycle Club. Mark mentioned that the amount paid to the city for the Newark Bikeways phase 2 signs was about \$4K. Mark noted this was much more than initial estimate of just over \$3K and that, through conversation with Tim Filasky, he found out that this amount included signs *and* additional needed posts, something that was not in our original proposal. It was suggested that in the future we document in writing what BikeNewark will be responsible for paying for and what the City will contribute.

New or Old Business

"Delaware Yield" Bill

Bike Delaware's John Bare reported that the Delaware House Transportation Committee met on April 21 and voted 9-0 to move the bill out of committee. There were no negative comments or questions, only positive testimony. Now the bill resides with Speaker of the House, Rep. Peter Schwartzkopf, to bring it to the House for a vote. Once presented, John believes it will pass the House and then pass in the Senate. The current General Assembly session ends on June 30. John will contact BikeNewark if any action is needed by its members.

Adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Minutes by Christine Schultz

Engineering Committee meeting notes – May 7, 2021

Attending were Mark Deshon (chair), Karl Hassler, Dave Saunders, Paul Moser (DelDOT), Heather Dunigan (WILMAPCO), and Joe Spadafino (City of Newark Parks & Recreation)

Absent: Helga Huntley and Tim Filasky (City of Newark Public Works & Water Resources)

Southwest Bikeway signage discussion

Mark Deshon began with an overview of the current draft version of the Southwest Bikeway signage plan (beginning of project phase 3), noting where he had made updates (see page 3).

Mark then began to show specific locations E, F, G, and H* and explain theoretical sign placement and some potential infrastructure improvements at location E (Casho Mill Rd. at Elkton Rd. and its adjacent service road). Karl Hassler made a couple inquiries with regard to additional signage needs in conjunction with the bikeway. There was agreement that we do need to consider how bike traffic gets to the bikeway from Suburban Plaza side of the intersection (location F). Heather Dunigan said she thought that there were newer plans that included an additional crosswalk at that intersection but that she had been unable to find them online recently. Mark asked Paul Moser to investigate and send him the newest project plan, so that he can update the signage draft.

Heather said that 1) if we keep the current plan for the Chrysler Ave. portion of the bikeway, the ECG cannot certify it as part of its official Maine to Florida route, because of the current configuration and level of stress, and 2) if Gravenor Lane were improved and the fence opening separating it from Cornwall Drive in Devon, then it would be logical and lower stress for the ECG and Southwest Bikeway to go in that direction.

Joe Spadafino said that he and Tom Coleman had talked about that at one time. Mark asked that Joe find out if it is feasible to improve Gravenor Lane and the fence opening within the schedule that would coincide with the completion of DelDOT's Elkton Rd. project.

Paul Moser suggested it might be better, if DelDOT were willing at this point, to have signs that are to be located within their Elkton Rd. project boundary (locations F, G, and H) be "plugged in" to its project plans. His thinking was that it might expedite installation to have them handle these signs. Mark asked Paul if we had any say over the signage quality, given the fact that the DelDOT-supplied signage for the Central Loop Bikeway was of less quality than the City-subcontracted signs that have just been installed. He felt that it is worth asking of DelDOT.

Dave Saunders asked about how this bikeway might interact with the Christina Valley trail, the wayfinding signage for which he has been involved in planning through another committee. Mark reiterated the philosophy of keeping Newark Bikeways traffic on actual paved, low-stress amenities but said that Dave might want to make that part of his committee's signage mandate.

Status of Bikeways phase 2 wayfinding signage installation

Mark explained about the recent installation of the North and Northwest Bikeways signage. He indicated that, upon inquiring about the West Bikeway signage installation, Tim Filasky thinks we ought to wait until the new park between the CSX tracks and Hillside Road is complete and open. The consensus of our committee agreed that, though there is a way through (around the construction fence), it's not really "low stress" at this point and won't be until the park sidewalks

are installed and the fencing removed. When asked about the projected park completion, Joe said he thought mid-August to September would be a good estimate.

Mark asked Joe whether the ingress to the park at South Main Street (the CSX tunnel) would be cleaned up and made more bikeable. Joe said this is really Tim's area but that he believes JMT will be working on that. Mark then asked that the JMT engineers coordinate that work with the anticipated terminus work on the Delaware Avenue project, which involves a specific bike-crossing treatment from Amstel Ave. to the tunnel entrance.

Other Bikeways within phase 3 (Northeast, South, and East)

Most of the planning and work on our part that includes the final three Newark Bikeways segments to be addressed—Northeast, South, and East Bikeways—is contingent upon existing, planned, or speculative DelDOT or City of Newark projects. Project timelines may shift, but based on what we know now, this is our best-guess timeline.

- Southwest Bikeway signage (installation probably sometime in 2022)
- Northeast Bikeway signage (installation possibly in 2022, as Emerson Bridge project is now under contract)
- South Bikeway signage (soonest installation after Del. Ave. project is completed is 2023)
- East Bikeway signage (unknown, coordinates with potential Wyoming Rd.-improvements project)

*E – Casho Mill Rd. and Elkton Rd.

F – Christina Parkway at Elkton Rd.

G – Otts Chapel Rd. at Elkton Rd.

H – Elkton Rd. from Maryland state line