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## June Meeting Minutes June 24, 2021 (Virtual Meeting)

Bob McBride called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

**Member attendees:** Bob McBride (Chair), Karen Rosenberg (Vice-Chair), Karl Hassler (Treasurer), Mark Deshon, Dave Saunders, Dave Schultz, and Shashank Ravichandran

**Partner liaison attendees:**

WILMAPCO and Newark Bike Project: Heather Dunigan

Bike Delaware: John Bare

Delaware Greenways: Adam Crosby

### Engineering Committee Report

Mark Deshon reported on the Southwest Bikeway route and how the committee had met to discuss two route options—the original route that includes a portion of Chrysler Avenue and a lower-stress alternative to Chrysler Avenue that would include Gravenor Lane. The goal is to ensure the East Coast Greenway (ECG) is contiguous with this bikeway route. Input from the City was solicited, and Public Works & Water Resources Director Tim Filasky sees challenges to using Gravenor Lane and would prefer to work on how to better accommodate cyclists on Chrysler Avenue. It was decided to continue with the plan for Southwest Bikeway signage along the original route with the potential to change as the City reassesses its concerns.

Paper Mill Road likely will be closed August 6–8 for installation work on the new bike/ped bridge over White Clay Creek. The consensus of BikeNewark member attendees on the committee was to give priority on the Northeast Bikeway to the planned bike/ped pathway through Olan Thomas Park, as it is the more logical connection to downtown Newark via the Pomeroy Trail (North Bikeway).

Karen Rosenberg asked about what’s happening with the Elkton Road project with respect to bikeability. Heather Dunigan replied that the adjacent bike/ped pathway that runs from the Maryland state line to Gravenor Avenue on the south side of Elkton Road is nearly completed, though Dave Saunders mentioned that the bridge sections are still “caution”-taped. Though the Elkton Road pathway is not yet open, the Christina Valley Stream Trail can now be used to bike to Newark Charter Elementary and Intermediate School locations.

## **Bike Month Committee Report**

In Christine Schultz's absence, Heather shared social-media photo-submission awards have not yet been determined but that these awards, as well as a T-shirt for all participants, will be available at the Newark Bike Project. It was suggested that the BikeNewark website and Facebook page feature some of the photos.

### **Event Planning**

#### ***Fall safety-checkpoint event(s) on UD campus***

Mark reported that he had checked with event-partner liaisons Sgt. Bill Wentz (UDPD) and John Fiori (DelDOT) regarding possible fall dates. Meeting attendees selected Monday, Sept. 20, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. DelDOT will bring tables, bike lights, and helmets, BikeNewark will supply the tent, and Heather will make sure that mechanics from the Newark Bike Project will be on hand. Any interested volunteers should contact BikeNewark.

#### ***First Friday Rides***

Mark mentioned that there had been an email inquiry about the resumption of First Friday Rides, noting no one stepped forward to organize these but that Karen had agreed to reach out to a past organizer and assist. Karen shared she has discussed the events Barb Hughes, who indicated she might be willing to organize again beginning sometime this summer. Mark suggested that someone who is a *current* BikeNewark member should be the responsible party, assuming this will continue to be a BikeNewark-sanctioned event, but that anyone who wants to help is welcome to do so.

#### ***New Paper Mill Road Bridge dedication***

Bob McBride said that there will be a dedication ceremony, possibly late this summer, and that BikeNewark should be present and take advantage of this opportunity. Karl Hassler suggested that we emphasize the connectivity aspect of this bridge (which is meant to become part of the Northeast Bikeway) in the larger context of our low-stress network planning, i.e., Newark Bikeways. Mark suggested that we could bring a poster-sized map of the Newark Bikeways network to display and have representatives on hand to be able to talk about it.

#### ***Newark Community Day***

Community Day is for September 19, 2021, and there was agreement that BikeNewark would participate that day.

### **2021 Application for Delaware Bicycle Council Grant**

A couple options for grant applications were suggested: Chrysler Avenue and Lovett Avenue. Mark said that maybe the Chrysler Avenue section that will become part of the Southwest Bikeway would be a good improvement project and that the City's Public Works & Water Resources director Tim Filasky had indicated a willingness to investigate improvements. As more of a timing issue, Karl suggested that Mark ask Tim if the City might be interested in an application for this purpose. Heather said that Lovett Avenue, between South Chapel Street and Academy Street, is a

good candidate because of the amount of student use. She also said that this might be a good opportunity to involve the UD Living Labs group. Mark commented that this was been one of the recommendations in the *2014 Newark Bicycle Plan* that has sat dormant for seven years now. Karl said that we could get UD involved from the standpoint of showcasing the campus's relatively new multidisciplinary ISE building, which is at the corner of Lovett and Academy.

### **Transportation Improvement District (TID) Planning**

Bob reported that the projects we submitted to the TID committee got trimmed significantly, unfortunately. A Marrows Road pathway project had been our top-rated potential project, based on destination and demographic data that DelDOT's Paul Moser had analyzed. Bob noted other projects that were at the top of our wish list as well. (note: maybe list the top 10?) The next step is a presentation to the Newark Planning Commission in July, which will precede decision-making at a planning council meeting on August 23. Heather and Bob noted that the TID committee's work is about a year behind schedule at this point.

### **The Newark Partnership (TNP) Relationship with BikeNewark**

Bob said that there's a big sustainability project, funded by Chemours through a three-year grant, for which TNP is looking to identify worthy projects.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Karl reported that \$.06 in interest has accrued since last month, bringing the new balance to \$5,746.56.

### **Old and New Business**

#### ***Bike Delaware update on "Delaware Yield" legislation***

John Bare reported that the bill (HB121) had been released from House committee and had unanimously passed the House. The bill now resides with the Senate Transportation Committee, which is chaired by Sen. Tizzy Lockman, who is a strong bicycle advocate and on which Sen. Dave Sokola, the bill's co-sponsor, also sits. So, John is highly optimistic that the bill will pass, though the time of the legislative session is growing short.

In connection with John's explaining about certain opposition to this bill by some in the Lewes area because of "bad cyclist behavior" on the Lewes to Georgetown Trail, Bob mentioned the tragic collision-related death of longtime Newark cyclist Ed Woodrum that had occurred on South Bank Road in nearby Pennsylvania.

#### ***Update on Christina Valley Stream Trail wayfinding***

Dave Saunders reported that post-hole digging is now proceeding on the trail for the installation of 4-in. x 4-in., 4-ft.-high posts that will bear wayfinding information, similar to those in Redd Park. Plastic sleeves have been ordered, and Dave expects this process to wrap up in two to three weeks.

Adam Crosby commented on the impressive usage of “you are here” trail maps on similar posts in Philadelphia’s Morris Park.

***BFU-application effort with the University of Delaware***

Mark reported that he had just met with a few BikeNewark members, who are also University of Delaware faculty or staff, and Sgt. Bill Wentz to begin discussing strategy for completing a Bicycle Friendly University application by the October 1 deadline. Lou Rossi (Dean of the Graduate College), Brian Bahnson, and Ismat Shah are involved. Mark also mentioned that past UD liaison Beth Finkle (UD Employee Health and Wellbeing) has assigned Fitness Coordinator Chelsea Finch to become involved with BikeNewark and she will be a participant in this effort.

Having asked new BikeNewark member Shashank Ravichandran to introduce himself and based on Shashank’s comments about his own recent activity and interest in the BFU process, Mark suggested that he become a part of the ad hoc committee that is hoping to move this application forward for UD.

***Honoring Delaware’s Freedom Seekers story map***

Adam reported that he had recently taken a bike trip on the Jack A. Markell Trail, which coincides to a degree with Delaware’s Black history. As part of the annual Juneteenth celebration, a “story map” is being created along this trail.

Adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

*Minutes by David 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