

Newark Bicycle Committee

November 18, 2010, 4:00-5:30 pm
Wilmington Area Planning Council

Minutes

In attendance

Bob Bennett
Heather Dunigan
Mark Deshon
Charlie Emerson
Mike Fortner
Jim Grimes
Dan LaCombe
Rich LaPointe
Jeff Riegner
George Stanko
Frank Warnock
Arthur Wicks
James Wilson

Not in attendance

Anthony Aglio
Trevor Booz
Steve Hegedus
Willett Kempton
Amy Wilburn

Introductions

The meeting convened at 4:00 pm.

Newark Transportation Plan (Heather Dunigan)

- Heather thanked the Committee members that attended the workshop on Tuesday night. She said that although attendance was not as high as hoped, there was great discussion that reflected the level of understanding and engagement of the people present. She provided the Committee copies of the presentation, recommendations, and comment form (all attached to these minutes).
- There was extensive discussion about the 4.7% bike commuting mode share reported for Newark by the American Community Survey. Heather cautioned that there is a significant margin of error, but the ACS data are the best available. James Wilson asked whether there was a breakdown by gender; Heather responded that the male:female ratio of commuting cyclists in Newark is about 7:1. Jeff Riegner suggested that some more accurate means of measuring bike mode share be established, because we won't know how we're doing unless we measure our success. George Stanko suggested that data from City video cameras could be used for counts.

- Heather said the Newark Resident Survey was generally favorable, but that District 1 residents (west of Elkton Road) are particularly dissatisfied with bicycling.
- Heather reported on selected bicycle recommendations of the Plan:
 - A road diet is being considered on Cleveland Avenue between Chapel Street/Paper Mill Road and Library Avenue. This would convert the existing four-lane section to three lanes (including a center left-turn lane) and bike lanes. There would be no reduction in motor vehicle level of service.
 - Wider and more consistent bike lanes will be provided on South College Avenue.
 - A westbound bike lane will be recommended on Delaware Avenue. Preference was expressed at the workshop for a two-way cycle track (which should fit into the existing 33-foot curb-to-curb width). These are most often found on the left side of one-way streets, but intersections between the cycle track and driveways will need to be carefully considered.
 - Traffic calming and sharrows being considered on West Park Place. This recommendation differs from the bike lanes in the Committee's initial draft recommendations.
 - Bicycle recommendations for North College Avenue were not shown on the Plan map because they were missing from the Committee's initial draft recommendations. Rich LaPointe confirmed that the recommendation should be two ten-foot motor vehicle lanes and two five-foot bike lanes.
- Heather requested comments before Christmas. Jeff encouraged all committee members to provide their comments, not just on bicycling but on other aspects of the Plan recommendations as well.

Encouragement group (Mike Fortner and Frank Warnock): no report

Parking group (Heather Dunigan and Frank Warnock)

- Mike Fortner will submit a formal request to DelDOT (Anthony Aglio) for placing bike racks in the Main Street pavement adjacent to pedestrian bulbouts. Dan LaCombe said that after Anthony receives the request, it will be reviewed by DelDOT Planning and Traffic and then submitted for a safety permit.

Enforcement group (Jim Grimes and George Stanko)

- George said that the City's enforcement efforts this fall are continuing to focus on pedestrians; they have been very effective. Bicycle enforcement will likely be stepped up in the spring.

Infrastructure group (Anthony Aglio, Charlie Emerson, and Rich LaPointe)

- Jeff thanked Rich for the update on North College Avenue; it will be added to the bicycle facility list. The list will also include the Newark Transportation Plan recommendation for two-way bicycle travel on Delaware Avenue. Frank suggested that a shared-use path be considered along Library Avenue.

- Charlie Emerson said that the City is starting to work with DelDOT on a separate bicycle and pedestrian bridge over the White Clay Creek next to the historic Paper Mill Road bridge, which lacks bicycle facilities and has narrow, difficult-to-maintain sidewalks.

Education group (Arthur Wicks): no report

Survey results / key focus areas for the upcoming year

Jeff presented the results of the 17 responses received to the Committee's online 2011 priority survey. The following is meant to illustrate the consensus of the group on which items to pursue during 2011. At the December 2010 meeting the Committee will develop more detail on each item and assign specific actions to members.

1. Implement short-term bike lane and sharrow recommendations as presented at the October meeting and discussed during the October and November meetings. Main Street and Delaware Avenue are particularly important. This list will also be part of the Newark Transportation Plan.
2. Get downtown bike racks installed.
3. Continue and build on the success of 2010 safety checkpoints in spring and fall 2011.
4. Continue participation in Newark Nite and Community Day.
5. Make 2011 Bike Month (May) and Bike-to-Work Day a special event in Newark, partnering with elected officials, DelDOT, Bike Delaware, the TMA, Downtown Newark Partnership, and potentially others. Arthur Wicks will look into the possibility of a race to accompany Bike Month in 2012.
6. Promote DelDOT's upcoming brochure on why sharrows are installed and how they work.
7. Provide comments and offer support for formal adoption of the Newark Transportation Plan. The Plan is expected to include recommendations for other items on the Committee's list such as a bike facility re-marking policy (partnership needed with DelDOT for long-line markings) and bike boxes.
8. Develop a formal Newark Bicycle Plan, either in WILMAPCO's FY 2012 Unified Planning Work Program or through volunteer efforts. The plan would include a bike parking plan as well as potential model ordinances. James suggested the plan focus on getting more women to cycle. Heather said that Portland has found bicycle boulevards to be particularly effective in doing so.
9. Although there was a great deal of discussion about training for law enforcement and for planners and engineers, no conclusion was drawn about how that should be done or whether it will be a priority for the Committee in 2011.
10. Bob Bennett added that the Committee needs to focus on ensuring the University of Delaware's redevelopment of the Chrysler assembly plant provides excellent facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Review of action items

- The Committee will discuss its 2011 priorities in more detail at the December meeting.
- The infrastructure group will provide the Traffic Committee with recommendations on bicycle facility retrofits and on updating bicycle pavement markings.
- Mike Fortner will submit a permit request to DelDOT for in-street bike racks on Main Street.
- Mike Fortner will survey business owners on Main Street regarding sidewalk bike rack installation.
- Steve Hegedus will continue to work with Drew Knab on indoor parking policies at the University of Delaware.
- The Newark Police Department will look for opportunities to increase bicycle enforcement in the spring.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.