

Bike / Ped Task Force meeting minutes August 28, 2008

Members present: Pattie Moore, Tom Redinger, Officer, Don Eberhardt, Katie Chappell, Barb Mee, Michael Sule, Bill Crownover, Don Kosteter, Dwayne Stutzman, Allison McGehee, Tracey Roizman, Andrew Bick, and Claudia Nix

This meeting moved at an organic manner as one topic morphed into the other and we jumped from one project to another. This not bad thing because so many of our topics are inter-related, but there are things we did not get to deal with. A few individuals had to leave early or before we had time to review everything. Please take time to review the minutes completely to find out about everything. I will mention several items that we never discussed at the end.

The Bike Corral for the four After 5 Concert Festivals over the summer were very successful. Our first one had around 30 bikes stored during the festival and at the last we almost reached 50 bikes. This was a great way to build awareness and build a bike culture for the city. At the first concert Cynthia's Twiggs donated bike baskets (seconds) as a give away to the first 20 individuals. These were greatly desired, and then we noticed that few bikes were outfitted with lights. For the rest of the concerts flashing red lights were provided to participants who gave a donation. This was a win/win as we raised a fair amount of money for bike projects and got lights on riders. The last night's donations of \$220+.00 Were donated to Jeremy Johnson's family for his cremation. Jeremy was killed while riding his bike home from work on July 24th at 10PM. He was not wearing light clothing nor had lights on his bike. We will provide a bike corral for LAFF (the Lexington Arts Fun Festival from 11 AM – 9:30 PM. Michael Sule is asking for volunteers to help man the corral and other bike events. Please contact Mike at ashevilleonbikes@gmail.com or 582-4705.

Officer Eberhardt reported on the bike warning program which the APD has been working. They have been stopping cyclists doing inappropriate things, but they need our help in determining how long the program should be carried out as warnings and when to begin ticketing. They are also concerned about getting stopped individuals names and managing the program. This created much discussion. We decided that education was our main purpose but agreed that actual tickets should eventually occur. Our final decision was that we would help distribute the warnings through our connections, bike shops, the recycler, the bike clubs and LAFF. Officer Eberhardt will talk to staff about number of copies to have made and get with us to distribute. He and Mike will get together to have some laminated for the LAFF. After a month or two of warnings and getting the word out they would conduct random Opt days of enforcement with actual tickets. We discussed fines. Running stop sign &/or red lights for a vehicle is an automatic \$171.00 fine. The individual can go to court and ask for a prayer for judgment or they may be given an amendment which would go to an inappropriate equipment where the fine would be reduced to about \$20.00 and the incident would not be placed on their license. However, we all agreed that running a red light or stop sign could be a very serious situation and cause harm to the individual or someone else and that person in certain situations should be given a ticket. In all situations the actions and behavior of

the individual stopped goes a long way in what happens with the officer. We also mentioned that having a ticketing program by bike patrol on cars not being considerate with bicycles should happen while the bike ticketing program was happening so one group was not being singled out. We were unable to come up with a way of identifying bicyclists but as patrols are outfitted with more equipment that will probably work out.

Officer Eberhardt also mentioned that Captain Swain and Kathy Step of the department have made a clip for the city TV station about the APD using bicycles, the officers attending bike school and giving safety tips. He has seen it several times and believes it will continue to show. Another Police bike school will be happening to train more officers. They have had some issues at Carrier Park and Haywood Park and are using bike officers to patrol these parks.

Officer Eberhardt also mentioned that a training bulletin has been given to all officers about the pedestrian in crosswalk issue. The APD has determined that all crosswalks are official and an additional sign is not needed for them to enforce vehicles stopping for pedestrians in a crosswalk. At an intersection the extension of the sidewalk is considered a crosswalk even if it is not drawn on the street, however mid-block the pedestrian is only protected in the crosswalk. They will continue training all officers in this and hold special Opt days on issuing citations for vehicle drivers who do not follow this ruling. We agreed to work with them in getting the word out on these issues.

There was much discussion about how to get the word out to individuals who do not shop at bike stores or belong to clubs and are using bicycles and walking to get around. We felt that we need to enlist the media's help. Claudia will write an OP Ed piece for the papers and we will see about getting small posters made to be placed around town in public spaces. There was discussion about using the resource police officers and traffic control officers to give out business cards with a way to contact a definite person who would help educate them and give them the equipment they need (i.e. lights, helmet, etc.). More discussion is needed on how to do this. Officer Eberhardt felt this would be acceptable with the officers. The resource officers work in the schools and know the children who are in need. There is also a program funded through the city schools foundation where certain schools hold parent nights to educate the parents on helping their children with school work and assisting them with other life skills. Perhaps we could work with this program. More research is needed on this program. Michael Sule would be interested in working with it.

Claudia talked about the Bicycle Awareness Module for Driver's Education classes that was developed by the League of American Bicyclist in Illinois. She and Gwen Wisler have been using it in a pilot program with the Erwin Middle School driver's education classes. It has been a positive experience for us and giving these young new drivers information and awareness they would never have received before. We would like to continue and expand it and are looking for helpers. Katie and Tracey expressed an interest in helping with the program. If others are interested let Claudia know. They will train and go with folks to get them started. The module lasts about 30 minutes.

If we can pull these programs off we will start to see some real changes in our community and will definitely help us become a more friendly community for bicyclists and pedestrians. Katie mentioned that in the eight years she has been commuting by bicycle to work, this is the first summer she has not been yelled at. So she is already seeing a change in attitudes in our community. Yea!

Claudia mentioned that the Old Hwy 70 or Lookout Point Trail is progressing. NC DOT has begun clearing the kudzu off the road and will be repairing all the drainage ditches, erosion and fill voids with concrete. They will be repairing parts of the roadway so there is a clean area for trail and be free of cracks from gate to gate. The trail will be 10 ft wide. NC DOT will repair the overlook with gravel and wooden guardrails. Other amenities like parking or screening would have to be another project. Perhaps this could be funded by the State Trails in Parks and Rec.

Barb Mee reported on the bike plan progress. The city has been asked to partner with Healthy Buncombe in a grant which they applied by providing more facilities so folks will feel comfortable to ride bicycles to increase their daily physical activity. She is hopeful this will make it possible to put more sharrows on more city streets. The streets she is looking at are Montford, Chestnut, the city part of Charlotte and to put bike lanes on Coxe Ave. It was suggested that she include Hillside and South Liberty as ways to get around the narrow parts of Chestnut.

She also asked for clarification on our feelings about Kimberly since the city has been unable to mill the groove down. Everyone present felt it important to put down the bike lanes but not put the markings until that area could be resurfaced. Unfortunately, there is no money to resurface.

Bill Crowover quickly reported on his request from Fort Collins, Co. who did not replay to his request of information on their bike friendly program and Spartanburg, SC who did reply. He will be writing an update in the Blue Ridge Bicycle Club's newsletter and will send it to Barb who will share it with our group.

Claudia quickly reported she is ready to print the updated bike transportation map.

BRBC wants to help with getting lights for individual's bikes who cannot afford to buy them. We need to discuss how to effectively do this.

Beginning next month we need to start going over our priorities for new bicycle and pedestrian projects and rate them so we can get them into the MPO Priority Needs List they need to have completed for NC DOT by the end of December.

Barb reminded everyone that Tues, Sept. 16th the NC DOT is holding an open house to update us on I-26 from 3-6PM. The official hearing begins at 7PM all at the Radisson downtown. We need a presence there to comment on needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

As you can see this has been a busy time and much exciting is happening in our town.