

Minutes Bike / Ped Task Force May 27, 2010

Present: Stephen Jones, Janet Barlow, Stephen Sachs, Barb Mee, Tom Redinger, Terri March, Don Kostelec, Michael Sule

Barb Mee asked that we discuss where we would like to place Sharrow markings (shared use markings) for other city streets besides South French Broad. The suggestions were:

1. Riverside Road from 12 Bones to Hill Street between the two bike lanes to connect them until the Wilma Dykeman Riverway can be completed.
2. Haywood Road in West Asheville from the bridge at Roberts St. to Patton Avenue.

A discussion ensued regarding the Haywood Road Corridor. It was decided that we would invite Jay Swain, District Engineer, Ricky Tipton & Mike Calloway to do a safety walk of the Corridor also include Heather & other MPO staff and city staff i.e. not more than 12 people to walk it. Suggested dates to do the walk are Wed, Oct 6 and Mon, Oct 4. We will begin planning this next month.

Also discussed were intersections where it is difficult for pedestrians to cross. New member, Stephen Sachs mentioned that he has recently completed a survey of the downtown area intersections and found a number of intersections where pedestrian timing issues pedestrians against motorists. They are all listed below:

*Broadway & College

*Broadway & Patton

*Biltmore & Aston

Aston & Coxe

*Haywood & Patton

*Haywood & College

Lexington & College

*Lexington & Patton

*Broadway & Woodfin

* are DOT streets Those not marked are city streets

Some of the intersections have buttons that don't activate the indicators (meaning the indicators are already active i.e. Aston & Coxe) and some have buttons that do activate i.e. Broadway and Woodfin. Many of the pedestrians ignore the activation buttons when they are not located conveniently.

Terri mentioned that the signal at Merrimon Ave. and W.T. Weaver needs to have a phase for pedestrians to start walking so they do not conflict with left turning cars from Weaver Blvd. Now they are phased together which is dangerous. There being a greenway at either side of the intersection is not acceptable. We decided to write a letter to Jay Swain with our resolution about this danger and requesting that these intersections be changed so they are safer.

Michael mentioned North Lexington and College which is the top of the bicycle lane. Motor traffic is entering into the bike lane when making a right turn onto College. We would like to have a green box at the top to impress on the cars that this is not a turn lane and they should yield to the bicyclist who may be going straight. We decided that a traffic count would give us an idea how often this is happening. Mike will see if he can find a volunteer to do 2 hrs in AM and PM during drive times for a day or two.

There are some intersections that are DOT roads where the traffic light is triggered to change by the traffic coming across the intersection. Presently these lights are not changing for bicyclists. The city has identified where the bicyclist should stand with their bike to get lights to change on city streets. We would like to see the sweet spot identified at these DOT intersections. This will help bicyclist and hopefully reduce the need for them to run through red lights, making conditions safer.

Heather, a MPO staff member continues her request for help from our committee to review pedestrian projects in the Asheville area. A number of them do not have enough information. She wants us to take pictures of the area and answer questions about each project. This will assist the staff in evaluating the projects. Several members chose projects with which they were familiar.

Heather also mentioned there is a need for public comment on the extension of the 5 lane portion of Leicester Hwy. She asks us to pass the word to those we know who live or work in the area to come speak about their requests for the roadway. The TAC will hold their next meeting on June 24th and again in July when they will adopt the MTIP.

Don Kostelec presented the power point he gave at the Asheville Design Center with Marc Hunt of Asheville Greenway Commission. It was very informative and showed how other communities are integrating greenway features into their street designs where more than a sidewalk is needed. Often parking was moved or removed or a lane of traffic was taken and bike and pedestrian features were added. This shows how the investment of bike and pedestrian counts and usage combined help to identify the needs. There were some relevant ideas for the Smith Mill Creek proposed greenway which parallels Patton Avenue and the bridges for I-240 & 26 if they get changed to a city street. Don also mentioned that there are NC DOT streets which have bike lanes on them, examples are Hwy 64 in Manteo and Horseshoe, NC 211 and Hwy 251 in Asheville.

Next month we will discuss the September National Bike/Ped Counting Project and determine which intersections we want to add to our count this year. We are thinking that we will do those we missed last year, plus ones where improvements were made since the last count.

Our next meeting June 24, 2010 at the same location.