

Minutes Bike/Ped Task Force – Dec. 2, 2010

Vision: For Asheville to be a community of connected pathways that is healthy, safe and accessible for people of all ages.

Mission: To educate the public about bicycle and pedestrian transportation. To advocate for the development and maintenance of safe, convenient and inter-connected facilities. To promote the benefits of walking and biking for individuals and community health.

Attending: Claudia Nix, Terri March, Zac Altheimer, Don Kostolec, Barb Mee, Drake Fowler, Janet Barlow, Heather Strassberger, Tom Redinger, Krisopher Hinz, Lou Lieb

1) Minutes: Claudia asked for a volunteer to take minutes at each meeting this year. Janet Barlow volunteered, with Kris Hinz as backup when she's out of town.

2) Review accomplishments for 2010: Claudia shared a list of accomplishments for 2010 (attached to a end of minutes. Particularly highlighted numbers this year, provided bicycle training to 730 kids this year. Terri shared a Strive Not to Drive powerpoint showing accomplishments over several years
A suggestion was made that we develop a spreadsheet listing of the accomplishments and numbers to show better “performance measures” from year to year. Another suggestion was that the several-page document be shortened to bullet points to hand out to Council and others.

3) Bike Plan goals for 2011: Group was asked to brainstorm a plan of work & review proposal to present to city council. Claudia noted that she'd sent an email to the mayor and hadn't heard back, asking that bike and ped safety be an issue for the coming year that is discussed during the strategic planning session. Terri suggested sending copying the Mayor's administrative assistant and Gary Jackson on request. Claudia planned to talk with Gordon, Esther, &/or Cecil to get them to bring up the issue. Zac mentioned that Cecil had been working with him on the Bike Park under the Patton Ave/Smoky Park Bridge and discussed hurdles with DOT and working on developing the idea further.

Discussion of 2011 goals for *bike and pedestrian issues*, and prioritization of ‘gaps to be filled’ on bike lanes followed. Some suggestions:

Signs or Sharrows for bike lane gaps:

Bleachery Road Wal-Mart from Fairview Road put sharrows where lane doesn't exist.

Riverside Dr. from 12 Bones to Hill St. put sharrows where lane doesn't exist

Hilliard Rd across from Biltmore to College via Market put signs to route folks.

Put down center line on So. French Broad (probably not possible)

Put up signs to direct folks:

Kimberly/Edwin

Charlotte St north of Chestnut

Depot to Choctaw/Livingston signs to connect to Choctaw
Chestnut from Charlotte to Montford – do what bike lane calls for.
Woodfin from round about to Lexington
Central signs to direct folks
Hominy Creek Road from Shelburne to Hominy Creek Park – probably not on
bike plan but getting more bike traffic with Greenway connection at park
Haywood Road – bridge to top of hill bike lane
Montford to UNCA
Broadway
Wayfinding on Starnes, Haywood Street to Clingman
Barb said that she hopes to do these with grant money.
Connect what we have
Link ped-friendly community to transit; consider working on Walk-Friendly Community
application?
Bike Friendly Community application
Talk to businesses to apply pressure for Bike Friendly status
Reach out to other communities in MPO to do Bike Friendly Community application
Push the 5 E's. Note that we're working on three of them (education, evaluation,
encouragement) and really need some help on enforcement and more on
engineering.
Do one "audit" (like was recently done on Haywood, was done a couple of years ago in
the Mission Hospital area) per year
Consider working w/ folks wanting a Bike Park under Patton Ave Bridge – could be used
as another connection for riverfront to downtown
Ask Ken to update TF on processes for getting sidewalks, etc.
Consider a "critical connections ride" to help inform riders about some of the little known
roads to get from one route to another
Neighborhood routes – check signage and see what's missing?

4) Update on safety audit of Haywood Road: Don briefed TF on audit done on
Haywood from new roundabout to Vermont/Sand Hill/Haywood intersection on 11/19.
Lots of photos were taken and a number of issues were identified, along with some
possibilities for extending the bike lane up the hill (wide vehicle lanes). More later after
info has been compiled.

5) Report from bike & pedestrian counts: Don passed out a summary of the 2010
Pedestrian and Bicycle Counts. 39 locations, and over 5000 pedestrians and more than
750 bicyclists, were counted this year, with particular emphasis on locations where bike
or ped facilities had been added. Thanks to all the volunteers who assisted in this effort.
There was some discussion of counting "commuters" vs "tourists". Terri mentioned the
Community Health Assessment being conducted which included questions about
commuters and about walking.

6) Article in paper regarding cyclist killed by motorist. More needs to be done to
educate bike riders on safety, but TF members also expressed concern about how the
bicyclist was portrayed in the newspaper article with personal information included that

seemed to be intended to show her as “irresponsible” (last address was jail, etc.). Barb mentioned that a driver was charged in another crash with a cyclist on 11/21; she didn’t have more details on that situation.

ATTACHED: Accomplishments for 2010, SNTD powerpoint, Pedestrian and Bicycle Counts

Accomplishments for 2010

Education:

How have we fared regarding our goals set at the beginning of the year? This year we made a concerted effort to concentrate on educating children in the school setting where we would be able to reach more children than through community rodeo events. We are still doing community education (bicycle rodeos) but the efforts are more rewarding when we can reach a larger number of children. We found that holding the rodeos in conjunction with events that draw large numbers of children are more beneficial. We have not met with the city or county school superintendents so our efforts are of a limited benefit to the schools where we have good contacts. In those schools we have accomplished a lot. With our limited means this may be a more realistic endeavor. We do want to make more headway on making policy changes.

In 2010 we held 3 community bicycle skills rodeos **reaching a total of 219 children**, one in April with the YMCA Healthy Kids Day at Carrier Park, one in September with the Black Mtn After School Shindig and one in October with the Candler Fire Department during their Fire Prevention Open House. We had to turn away two other events because they were too close to our other events.

The in-school bicycle training programs were held **at three Middle Schools reached 501 students** during their school PE classes. The schools which participated were Evergreen Charter School 6th graders, Owen Middle School 8th graders and half of the Erwin Middle School 6th graders. We plan to finish the Erwin Middle 6th grade classes in the spring of 2011. It was surprising to learn how many of these students had never learned how to ride a bike. During the program a number either learned to ride or balance at the end of the class.

The number of adults who took part in the Traffic Skills 101 classes this year totaled **19**. It is our hope to increase that number next year and with the hosting of a training session for the League of American Bicyclist in October, we trained seven local individuals as certified Cycling Instructors. This brings us to 11 instructors in the Asheville area. These individuals bring variety to the program through their own skills and employment of their day jobs. They include city and county employees, a nutritionist, a transportation planner, retired occupation therapist, and a middle school teacher. We hope that with this increase we will be able to train more individuals in proper bicycling behaviors and be able to offer programs in bicycle commuting to area businesses who have committed to increase physical activity in their employees. The group has already begun the process of creating a structure and time frame for holding classes.

With the most recent news article in the Asheville Citizen Times on 11-28-2010 about another bicyclist being killed by a motorist while riding on a dark road and not having lights or reflective items to protect herself. She was not wearing a helmet and suffered massive brain injuries. It is apparent that we are not reaching a segment of the

community who uses a bicycle for transportation. There are a number of reasons why they are not driving and we need to develop a program to reach these folks.

Driver's Education program – We are having some trouble getting this program off the ground on a regular basis in more than one school. There were three volunteers who participated in leading classes for the driver's education program this past year and one individual who coordinated the program as his in-service training at UNC-A. Only one of the volunteers continued teaching on a regular basis. There were 8 classes taught and a total of 340 students were reached with the message of sharing the road with bicyclists and a discussion of what that means. Most of the classes were taught at Reynolds and Asheville High.

Education can take many avenues beyond just offering classes. We have been involved in presenting information for articles which appeared in the Mountain Express and Asheville Citizen Times and wrote letters to the editor and guest editorials on bicycle and pedestrian needs. The League of American Bicyclists' video "Share the Ride" has appeared on both the city and county TV channels in an effort to get more safety information out to the general public.

Regarding the **Pedestrian training program** we have not accomplished much besides talking with Marsha Stickford and Asheville Greenworks about starting a program and doing a pilot in the Kenilworth neighborhood. I was unable to get involvement from the Kenilworth neighborhood association. Cathy Ball with the city of Asheville Public works department did get their ordinance drawn up regarding charging fees to property owners who do not maintain their sidewalks. The blind community with the help of the city developed a 30 sec and a 4 min video on the white cane what it stands for and how motorists should behave around blind pedestrians. Perhaps we should keep our efforts on putting together a media campaign around appropriate behaviors for both motorists and pedestrians from available messages as a first effort and then look for funding to move this forward.

Enforcement:

It is our hope to work more closely with the Asheville Police Department to enforce appropriate behaviors of both motorists and bicyclists in our community. We have had some difficulty with having an officer working with us because their duties make it difficult for them to attend our meetings.

Encouragement:

We had an exciting year encouraging individuals to use bicycles rather than drive their cars to the local festivals. A group of various individuals and organizations including Asheville on Bikes, the Blue Ridge Bicycle Club, Healthy Buncombe, and the Bike/Pedestrian Task Force, increased the number of festivals where we offered free bicycle parking with staffed bicycle corrals. During the past three years we held bicycle corrals at the Downtown After 5 festival and the Lexington Arts Festival. This year we added the Mt. Sports Festival, Bele Chere, Beer City and the Belgium Brewing Clips of Faith Festival giving us a total of 5 festivals and 14 days where the bike corral parking

was offered to the citizens of Asheville. **We parked** a total of 1043 bicycles; this averages 208 bikes per event or 47.5 bikes parked per day.

For Strive Not to Drive this year, the mayor's ride we forgot to record how many participants took part. The ride took individuals to the various new facilities and held an "inner tube cutting" to christen the new bike climbing lane on North Lexington and then took individuals through some of the not so pleasant riding situations that must be negotiated through town. Although we did celebrate the opening of this one bike lane none of the others have been celebrated.

Infrastructure:

Bike lanes were added to Kimberly Avenue after the road was resurfaced. Bike lanes were also added on Ashland Avenue, Hillard, Choctaw from South French Broad to McDowell and Martin Luther King Blvd. adding 10 miles which doubles the number of lanes in the city. Sidewalk gaps were filled in the city by adding sidewalks on Hillard from Coxe to Biltmore Avenue, Choctaw, and Depot Street and along Hendersonville Avenue from London Road to within 2 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The city is in process of adding sidewalk on Patton Avenue and up Louisiana Avenue to Emma Elementary School. A small section of sidewalk was added to Tunnel Road at Beverly Road to connect the bus stop to Governors' View Road.

Safe Routes to Schools activities address education, encouragement, enforcement as well as infrastructure. Several grant funded initiatives are in place this year to address Safe Routes. Sidewalks are beginning to be constructed in the Emma Elementary School neighborhood at long last (part of a SRTS award from 2005 (?)). An Eat Smart Move More Community Grant will explore SRTS activities at Erwin Middle School and a Fit Community Grant was awarded to Buncombe County and the Town of Woodfin with sidewalk infrastructure being installed now and plans being developed for a Walking School bus and other encouragement activities. We anticipate SRTS workshops will be held at both Erwin Middle and Woodfin Elementary in the next several months.

The Task Force has been involved in reviewing a number of transportation plans this past year. Transportation Engineer, Ken Putnam came before the Task Force to get our input on the City's Manual for Specifications this year. We were asked to comment on the greenway and bike lane plan for Choctaw Road before the improvements were made. We were intimately involved in the new Hospital Drive that Mission Hospital is in process of implementing and we gave input into the planned bridge into the future Enka plant redevelopment plan. Giving input into future transportation plans is extremely important to make sure that the needs of bicyclists and walkers are being considered and costly mistakes are avoided. A bridge is a long time commitment that is difficult to correct.

We are working with several other organizations to get a "Complete Streets" policy in the city of Asheville and the MPO. The Community Health Assessment which was put together by the Buncombe County Health Center and a number of volunteers has formed a Build Environment Committee which has taken Complete Streets as their goals to work

on the for this year. The Pioneering Healthy Communities group has taken this as one of their three goals for the next three years and the Metropolitan Planning Organization has just formed a Complete Streets Committee. All these efforts should help us work on making our communities more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.

Evaluation:

The Bike/Ped Task Force again conducted a series of bike and pedestrian counting during the week of September 13th. For two hour periods during morning and afternoon drive time we covered 42 counting sites to see how many bicyclists and pedestrians were out there getting to and from work or school or conducting their errands. Many of these spots were locations that had improvements made to them in the past year. It is planned to conduct these counts on a yearly basis so we can evaluate how successful we are in our encouragement process.