

## **Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force Meeting minutes**

**January 27, 2011**

**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.

Present: Claudia Nix, Barb Mee (City of Asheville), Janet Barlow, Mike Lamb (Asheville Police), Jim Grode (Greenway Commission), Tom Redinger, Terri March (Buncombe County Health Department), Ching Fu (REI)

### **Reminders**

NC Safety Summit (DOT) is scheduled in Asheville on Feb 23 – targeted group, invitation only

NCDOT PedBike survey is open until Feb 8, 2011

### **Meeting business**

#### 1. Report from Officer Lamb, Asheville Police Department

- Police are going to increase directed patrols of downtown area – there have been three recent ped/motorist crashes. Police are increasing enforcement activity, also tracking those numbers
- Claudia suggested that maybe TF could do some public education; Mike responded that they would appreciate public education and are working on coordination with others Asheville downtown association, DARN, Kennilworth and others to do some
- Question about whether Asheville U-tube channel is still showing pedestrian safety video; police officer talking about share the road? No one was sure; Barb and Claudia said they would check.

2. Claudia reported on her meeting with Cathy Ball, Asheville Director of Public Works about bike lane maintenance, parking on sidewalks, and the downtown parking garage (51 Biltmore). Cathy is looking at developing a plan for maintenance of the bike lanes, the parking ordinance addresses parking on sidewalks, and Claudia sent a letter from the Bike-Ped Task Force to council regarding the 51 Biltmore parking garage. (Her letter is attached at end of minutes)

3. Claudia asked for a volunteer to monitor the Technical Review Committee agenda for things we may need to attend – no volunteer at meeting; someone else??

#### 4. **Bike/Ped Task Force Goals – 2011** - Prioritization

After some discussion, it was decided that the small group at the meeting couldn't prioritize goals. All of the items listed seem important, but our ability to possibly complete them depends on volunteers and assistance from the community; some require city support as well. We decided to develop a better descriptions of the various activities and send the information out through a survey (Terri said she'd set up a survey) to the email list and see what people are willing to take on. Ching is willing to help with getting the word out to people about various activities through REI network.

Description of goals (and some decisions about them) listed at the December meeting with the addition of a few other requests or suggestions since that date. Additional information and explanation of the various goals was developed and added at the meeting, and after the meeting. Numbered for ease of discussion/reference; NOT in priority order at this point. We need help from everyone to prioritize them.

1. Develop wayfinding information or signage to improve knowledge of bicyclists about existing bike lanes and the best or recommended routes to use between currently available facilities
  - a. Committee together to work on best routes and connections between bike lanes and parts of town
  - b. Work with Barb and develop information and/or plan for signage to help cyclists get between the various locations
2. Connect missing links on facilities, do a reality check of what is possible to accomplish vs what we wrote down last month. Coordinate with and work within the bike plan
3. Do at least one safety audit of an area/corridor
  - a. Description: safety audit is an assessment of walking and biking environment of given corridor; small group spends one day walking measuring, photographing the walking and bicycling environment, then develop and present report of findings
4. Complete a Bicycle-Friendly Community application again this year
  - a. participate in group working on bike-friendly community application [deadlines for applications this year are February 18, 2011 and July 22, 2011] Application available for review at <http://applications.bikeleague.org/application/docs/Bike%20Friendly%20Community%20Application.pdf>
5. Begin Walk-Friendly application process
  - a. Participate in group working on walk-friendly community application
  - b. Application deadline is June 15, 2011 (we may not get it completed in time for this year; if not, we'll have a head start for next year). Application available at <http://www.walkfriendly.org/>
6. Check the signage on the neighborhood recreational bike loops
  - a. There have been reports of signs missing on the signed neighborhood bike loops
  - b. Need volunteers to ride the routes in both directions, noting missing or inadequate signage
7. Field verification of the sidewalk map, as well as verify field conditions for the MPO sidewalk projects

- a. A map of all sidewalks in the city has been developed from online data (satellite photos) and Barb needs people to confirm condition of sidewalks, taking photos where appropriate, and note locations of transit stops, crosswalks and other connecting features
8. Develop and carry out at least one pedestrian education activity – one event/activity – ask task force members to suggest something they’d like to see as pedestrian education activity – please indicate if you have interest in working on this
9. Continue to participate in National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project
  - a. Description of project: For the past two years, we have done pedestrian and bicycle counts at selected locations, often near where new pedestrian or bicycle facilities are planned or have been installed, on specific dates as part of the National Bicycle & Pedestrian Documentation Project, co-sponsored by and Alta Planning and Design and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Pedestrian and Bicycle Council
  - b. Dates for 2011: September 13 – 15; could add additional count dates if enough interest/volunteers; other national count dates are May 10 – 12; July 5 -7

After a good bit of discussion, the group moved some items from “goals” to two other categories: 1) issues that we support but will not be taking the lead in and 2) items that are definitely already planned. Those included:

1. Support
  - o Bike park under Smoky Park bridge, pedestrian linkages to transit
  - o A “critical connections ride” (AOB or BRBC?) to show cyclists best routes across/through town
2. Planned
  - o Ken to update ABPTF on sidewalk process in Feb or March,
  - o present recent audit of Haywood Road to DOT, Asheville transportation department staff, West Asheville corridor planning group and others as appropriate
  - o Keep up with what we’ve done, ie. “celebrate our successes”
    - update spreadsheet to capture work of the activities of the people involved throughout the year
    - After some discussion about who reports the various items/activities and what should be considered an ABPTF activity and what was carried out by other entities, it was decided that it would be helpful to gather all pedestrian and bicycle activity information that we know about, sorting it to avoid double-counting, and keep track of the numbers, who’s doing it. For example, police department does bicycle safety skills rodeos and The Healthy Buncombe Coalition are doing some bicycle training and education, at Owen Middle School. Group decided it was valuable to show interconnections and tally volunteer hours (in addition to city or county staff hours) and yearly accomplishments
    - Do some kind of celebration and recognition of new bike lane/sidewalk project completions

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**Announcements/other information of interest**

Claudia announced Traffic Skills 101 Classes for Bike Riders; full day class, \$20.00; planned for March 26, April 10, June 18, passed out flyers to put up around town

Please take photos of people out and about in Asheville in winter weather, snow, etc.; send to Barb with time, date, location

Beginning bicycle skills program at Owen Middle School program again, teaching 6<sup>th</sup> graders bicycling skills beginning March 28<sup>th</sup>

Bobby Croome, city traffic engineer, leaving, going to Goldsboro so we'll be getting someone new

Haywood County is starting on a county-wide bicycle plan, has funding from the MPO

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Email message from Claudia to City Council

1-24-2011

Subject; parking garage at 51 Biltmore

Dear City Council members,

I am writing to you both as a citizen of Asheville and as the Facilitator of the Bike / Pedestrian Task Force. This is when I am glad I don't have your job, because this is a difficult decision to make. I am unable to attend your council meeting this week as I have a prior commitment. I feel obligated to let you know of my feelings and concerns. I have done a little research of my own but still do not feel I totally understand all of the issues. A lot of people are jumping against the project and I am not sure they all understand the issues either.

As you know I want to see this city become friendlier to people who want to walk, use the bus or bicycle to get around this town. We need a dedicated funding source for these modes of transportation that can be depended upon to provide the funds that are needed to make the changes for this community. Many people in this community agree with me on this which is why you are receiving so many complaints about this project. I believe this project is becoming the poster child for this issue. I know that in the past couple of years a little bit of parking fees have gone to purchase bike lockers, which are not being used enough.

I know that the parking audit shows that there is a need for parking along Biltmore Avenue and that if the PIP parking lot is developed into a hotel without your involvement that you will probably lose the 100 spots that are there now creating more of a deficit. I also understand that you can not borrow the type of funds you plan to borrow for this project if you wanted to put in the requested projects folks are asking for instead of doing this project. I doubt many people who are against this project understand this.

I am not sure that the information that is running around our community via the internet is totally clear and doesn't have some misinformation or exaggeration. I sure hope that you all have all the information and that you will need to make educated decisions. If not please get more information before you do so. I have been told that if this project goes through that after 2 or 3 years that other loans the city has will be ready to be terminated and that moneys can be generated for multi-modal projects. If you do decide to vote for this project, I believe you will need to provide a Resolution of Intent that the council will do all in your power to insure that money is dedicated to make more sidewalks, bike facilities to improve transit and for maintenance for these modes of travel. I also believe that you need to work on making these modes a priority in your strategic plan so folks in this community will know that you are serious about these modes of travel.