

Minutes October 22, 2015

Asheville NC Bike /Pedestrian Task Force

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.

Introductions:

Meg Pigman, Terri March, Tony Hauser, Billie Lofland, Barb Mee, Grace Curry and Claudia Nix

Updates:

- Asheville Police/Fire/Rescue
 - Meg with APD reported that the Watch For Me NC decoy project has been in progress and will take place tomorrow in Biltmore Village at Brook St. and All Souls. Store owners in Biltmore Village have come out and thanked officers for the decoy efforts. There has been a lot of success so far at W. T. Weaver Boulevard, but poor compliance on Haywood in West Asheville. The locations were chosen by the folks in Raleigh from the Watch For Me program.
 - Meg mentioned that it is difficult to give out tickets to cars going through red lights because often you can't tell when the light turns red from where they are positioned. She mentioned that in some states (Florida does this) have a blue light mounted at the bottom of the traffic light which turns on when the light turns red. This helps with traffic stings.
 - Meg mentioned that eight of the APD officers will be participating in the Police Unity Bike Tour May 10th. Nine chapters across the U.S are participating. The ride starts in Richmond and ends in DC for 3 days. They ride in unity to honor those officers who have lost their lives during duty. Asheville lost an officer last year so they wanted to participate this year.

- Multi-Modal Commission
 - Terri reported that most of their meeting was taken up discussing the transit contract. For the past year the organization Just Economics has been meeting with the transit leadership because morale is very low, they lost their bus mechanic, there have been rumors that the new director had resigned, as well. The bus drivers are unionized and are not hired by the city but work for a transit company. The city must negotiate their

contract and they are trying to decide on that and how there can be more accountability.

- The neighborhood side walk plan was adopted by the city council this month. Billie said there is frustration by residents and neighborhood groups that there was not more public involvement in drafting the plan. She asked how the sidewalk plan/policy relates to AIM (Asheville in Motion Plan). Terri and Barb spent time explaining the difference between both plans. This sidewalk plan only deals with residential neighborhoods and has criteria on determining where sidewalks will be installed. Barb explained that the new policy was to be used to disperse special grant money for new sidewalks. The Multimodal Transportation Commission did recommend adoption.
 - NC DOT will be doing a pedestrian study in three locations with safety audits this fall in Asheville. The dates are October 27, 28, 29 and November 4 and 5. There will be two more next spring. Raleigh is bringing in a road safety team. A representative from Multimodal and the Police department are allowed to work with the team. NC DOT is seeking no public participation. The audit this October will be the Patton Ave corridor in West Asheville from US 19 to Regent Park. No one was sure where the others were. In choosing the sites they did an analysis of crashes.
 - The AIM project is winding down. The consultant is now putting together a priority matrix. Billie asked if there will be an opportunity for public input at the end and if there will be a wrap-up event to share the end results with the public. Terri said she didn't know about a wrap-up event and said there would be no additional public input. Billie said that the Walk-Friendly Subgroup is requesting that a representative from the AIM project come and provide and update at the December Task Force meeting.
 - The Transit Committee is looking for several new members, so please help refer folks. The Greenways Committee has just filled in several empty spots.
- MPO report
 - All MPO staff is in Raleigh at their conference this week. No real updates except the SPOT project submissions are going before the board next week.
 - The I-26 public hearings will be happening Nov 16 at the Renaissance Hotel. They will start with an open house from 4:00-6:30 and then have a formal presentation at 7:00PM. Unfortunately NC DOT still thinks they need 8 lanes through West Asheville.
 - The MPO has two traffic counters and Asheville gets to use them twice each quarter. This past count was made on the South Slope on Coxe Avenue. The results were interesting (see attached). They had a total 3,645 pedestrians which came to 21.7 per hour. The peak 24 hour usage was 789 people on Saturday and 2 hour peak of 205 on Friday Oct 8 from 7-9 PM.

- Asheville/Buncombe
 - Barb mentioned that the White Cane Day was on Oct. 15th. The group re-instituted the video about white canes and advertised it. This is the same video that lives on the city's YouTube site. Perhaps we can remember before the event next year so we can get a proclamation made.
 - DOT broke ground this past Monday for the new traffic light on Merrimon at Coleman. Barb said that there will be special enforcement at the intersection once the light is installed and explained this is done any time a major change is made. There is a possibility that something may be done in West Asheville at the intersection of Patton Ave and Leicester which has the highest crash data.
 - Barb reported that she has to have her request for capital projects tomorrow. Unfortunately she was told she needed that done last week and the Multi-Modal Commission doesn't meet until next week. She was requesting help with possible projects. We suggested Swannanoa River Road is in need of sidewalks as we are seeing more and more people walking along the roadway out there.

Claudia asked where we can find the listing of roads to be resurfaced for the year. There was discussion about that at the NC Bike Summit. Supposedly it is on their web site. We need to find this out so we can request improvements as the resurfacing is being done.

 - Barb had asked us to give Till the list of funding projects needed so we can give the list to the city council to ponder during their strategic planning session in January. We need to give to Till before our next meeting on Dec 3rd so he can get the list together for our next meeting.

Open Discussion/Project Work

- There was discussion about changing our meeting date so that we can meet before the multi-modal meeting. Their next meeting will be Wednesday Dec 2nd and ours is the next day Dec 3rd. If we meet the third Thursday we have more chances to meet before them. Barb will send this out for our next meeting discussion. Barb provided a "Potential Month Patterns" calendar worksheet.
- There was a handout from Billie showing the changes to the Links/Resources page that she had asked Lee Pirtle to do. We did not discuss the changes to be made. (Note from Billie: These changes are being made because the links are redundant or are broken. Several new resources were added. See attached list.)

- Grace said that the Walk-Friendly Subgroup during its meeting this month talked about projects it wants to tackle, including getting more media coverage of pedestrian issues. She asked whether the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force folks thought it would be better for things like press releases to go out under the Task Force at large or as the Walk-Friendly group. The consensus was that it would be better for it to come from the Task Force.

Respectfully submitted by Claudia Nix
Additions made by Billie Lofland

Attachments:

- ✓ Walk-Friendly Subgroup Meeting Notes
- ✓ Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force Website Update: Links/Resources Page – Changes
- ✓ The French Broad River MPO *Asheville South Slope Pedestrian Count* report.

Walk-Friendly Workgroup
Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force
Meeting: October 15, 2015

Attending: Grace Curry, Janet Barlow and Billie Lofland

The focus of the discussion for this meeting was on how can the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force and the Walk-Friendly Workgroup be involved earlier in discussions of city-wide bike and pedestrian projects. Also, it was thought that the Walk-Friendly Workgroup could increase its effectiveness by engaging the important partners—the City, NC DOT, businesses, agencies and other citizen groups—in helping to identify and solve pedestrian-related issues.

1. Walk-Friendly Meeting Time

There was discussion as to whether more people would be able to attend if the Walk-Friendly Workgroup meetings were held at another time. It was decided to bring this before the full Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force.

2. Changing Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force Meeting day to precede the Multimodal Transportation meeting dates.

The group decided to bring before the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force the proposal of moving the Task Force meetings so they precede those of the Multimodal Transportation Commission. This may give the Task Force the opportunity to provide more and earlier input to upcoming Multimodal agenda items.

3. Enhance Bicycle & Pedestrian Task Force Communication

It was discussed that Till Dohse has a list of folks who have attended at least three Task Force meetings during the last year. This list could be considered as the nucleus of people involved in the Task Force and could be used to send email alerts and to ask for ideas and comments on proposed activities.

4. Letters to the editor from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force

What is the procedure for having the Task Force write and submit a letter to the editor, or otherwise speak on an issue? Also, could/should the Walk-Friendly Subgroup put out do its own editorials? An example is the plans for the new Mission Hospital building on Biltmore.

5. Request presentations to the Task Force by City, County and State representatives on major bicycle and pedestrian initiatives and projects.

December Meeting – Asheville in Motion project update.

There was a big push initially to have the public involved by completing surveys. We understood that the AIM plan was to be completed by August. Does the public and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force have input as the AIM plan is developed?

January Meeting – Safe Crosswalks

It is proposed that City Transportation (Jeff Putnam) and NC DOT representatives come to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task force for a discussion of having more safe crosswalks in Asheville.

Future Meetings

- City Planning and Zoning representative talk about how construction plans are reviewed for pedestrian and ADA access. This would also be a good time to discuss providing pedestrian access in construction areas.
 - Report on the PACE Car program
6. Ways to attract other people to the Walk-Friendly Workgroup
 - ✓ Table at Festival of Neighborhoods.
 - ✓ Press release?
 - ✓ Reach out to other organizations, such as the coordinator of the Asheville Safe Routes to School program?

7. Find effective processes for neighborhoods and organization to initiate pedestrian-related projects involving city infrastructure.

Neighborhoods have spent much time working with the city on projects, only to be told that the Legal department would not allow it. An example of this was the East-West Asheville sidewalk on Haywood.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force
Website Update Project

Links/Resource Page – Changes

- A. Change “Bicycle Information Center” to “Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center”
 - B. Delete, “Make your community more bikeable from bicyclinginfo.org” – same another link.
 - C. Change link for “North Carolina Bicycle Commuter’s Guide” to, http://www.ashevillecycling.com/pdf/NC_BicycleCommutersGuide_3rdEd-2011.pdf
 - D. Change link and name of link of “City of Asheville Pedestrian Plan” to “Update City of Asheville Pedestrian Plan,” http://www.ashevillenc.gov/portals/0/city-documents/TransportationEngineering/Bike_and_Ped_Services/2005PedestrianPlanChapters1-2PlanPurposePlanningContext.pdf
 - E. Delete “Contact Your Members of Congress” – broken link and maybe should be in another section.
 - F. Delete “CycleSports.com” – it is primarily a commercial site.
 - G. Delete “Who owns the road” – broken link
 - H. Delete “ [Ride Your Bike Safely](#) offers numerous links regarding proper equipment, dealing with motorists, riding at night, and disabled cyclists, among others.” – broken link
 - I. Delete “Make your community more walkable from [walkinginfo.](http://walkinginfo.org)” – same as the “Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center”
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- ADD: BikeWalkNC, <http://www.bikewalknc.org/>
 - Watch For Me NC, <http://watchformenc.org/>
 - NC DOT 2040 Plan, <http://www.ncdot.gov/performance/reform/2040Plan/>