

COMPLETE STREETS COMMITTEE
CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
April 8, 2019 Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Howard Reid, Beth Emery, Cat Young, Laura Baum

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM.

Review of minutes of March 2019 meeting: accepted with two changes

Old business:

Bike/Walk to School: Bike to School Day is May 8, 2019 and Walk to School Day is Oct. 17, 2019.
4/8/19 – Laura and Lisa attended MPS’s Wellness Committee meeting and reviewed the plans for the May 8 event. Lisa is completing the flyers for the schools to distribute.
3/11/19 – Draft flyers are being reviewed and routes are being planned. CS to meet with the Wellness Committee about details and funds for printed flyers and sticker costs.
2/11/19 - Howard, Laura, and Lisa had a good kickoff meeting with Mark Langton and Mary Emerling. Plan is to largely replicate bus drop off used last year and extend it to a second day in October. Also plan to encourage school-specific initiatives, and Laura and Lisa will work to do so through MPS’s Wellness Committee.

Sidewalk Priorities near Schools: 4/8/19 - Howard reported on communications with Chris Drake, Board of Ed chair, regarding a joint effort to improve sidewalk networks surrounding schools; tentatively we will plan a presentation at an upcoming Board of Ed meeting. Beth reported on design planning for the new Woodrow Wilson Middle School, including the status of the traffic pattern design and its ability to safely accommodate students riding their bikes. The Committee agreed to send a letter to the Building Committee with recommendations regarding this.

Transportation Alternatives Program: 4/8/19 – Howard reported that the City has chosen the Newfield Corridor to downtown spur trail as the preferred project for the TAP grant application, and the application is being written. The Committee agreed to send a letter of support.
3/11/19 - John and Beth reviewed with the Committee an RFP issued by the River COG for new projects under the federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside program, which provides 80% funding for bike/ped and other projects over \$500,000. Possible projects identified were the design of the connection between the Newfield Corridor Trail and downtown, extension of the Long Lane Trail, design of the western extension of the Westlake Trail to Meriden, and extension of sidewalks and bike lanes along Saybrook Rd.

Newfield Corridor Trail: 4/8/19 – The Committee agreed to send a letter to Public Works encouraging that they move forward quickly with the route design.
3/11/19 – The city is seeking an engineering firm to design the route

Complete Streets website: 3/11/19 Beth reported that City is open to adding what we would like to see on the website and asked that CS Committee members continue to make suggestions about content. A shared Google doc has been established for comments.

Sustainable CT: 4/8/19 – From the last meeting of the City’s Sustainable CT team, Cat reported that it would be very helpful if City officials and staff could receive training in Complete Streets by July. Laura will research whether the upcoming Bike Walk Connecticut training will be certified by Sustainable CT as meeting this requirement, and if so we will encourage City staff to attend.

3/11/19 – Cat noted that 5 points can be gained by training municipal staff on bike & pedestrian travel planning; CS to look out for events that might offer such training. Laura to notify the wellness health supervisor of a free 1 day course offered by Bike-Walk CT on 4/6 teaching bike education curriculum..

2/11/19 Howard reported that we need a new CS representative to this team, and Cat Young volunteered.

Teaching safe cycling: 4/8/19 – Laura reported that the BikeWalk Connecticut workshop for educators regarding teaching safe bicycling in PE classes went well, and it is hope that it will be repeated in other locations and that, with more advance notice, some Middletown PE teachers will participate

POCD revision: 4/8/19 – Beth reported that the Planning Department has distributed the public input surveys and encouraged members to complete a survey. The charrettes have been scheduled for April 25 and 27.

3/11/19 – Our new City Planner, Mark DeVoe, attended the meeting to brief the committee on current Planning Department initiatives, including revision of the POCD. CME has been contracted to develop a survey and reach out to sub committees. An environmental planner has been hired for the wetlands conservation. Mark is rewriting the regulations and sees multiple areas where the Complete Streets plan will be mentioned. Applying parts of the CS plan is easy to some sections of town (Main St.) but other areas (Washington St.) would require a change in code to force change. Mark recommended CS review West Hartford and New Haven Complete Streets plans for material that may be useful in the updated Middletown plan. Mark’s comments on specific sections:

LU 1-2: This is happening on Main Street but would require a change in code in other areas of town such as Washington St.. Parking regulations can be rewritten to “make a way” from the street to businesses by pedestrians.

LUI.1.5: This is illegal in CT and cannot happen.

Mark will encourage low impact development. It was recommended that CS attend PoCD meetings to make sure the whole CS Plan gets into the PoCD.

New business

Beth reported that she and John attended a meeting hosted by the River COG regarding the DOT’s new Active Transportation Plan. She encouraged members to familiarize themselves with the interactive map of bike priorities that is part of the plan, and offered to demonstrate its layers at an upcoming CS meeting. She also noted that the DOT and River COG emphasized the importance of following priorities established in municipalities’ POCD’s, and raised the question of whether we need to propose adding a specific street/bridge priority list to the upcoming revision of our POCD.

Discussion took place regarding the best method of ensuring that our priorities are stated, whether directly in the POCD or in a document referred to in the POCD.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Prepared by Howard Reid

Next meeting scheduled for May 13, 2019.