

Complete Streets Committee

Minutes of meeting held Nov. 17, 2014

Present: Beth Emery, John Hall, Ron Krom, Howard Reid, David Sandler, Amy Vaillancourt, Kate Wolfe (minute taker)

Action plan:

- River Road fix information needs to be updated. The City did the repair/fill and the crossing is much improved.
- For #6, John attended meeting. There is support for our group. They would like to have a bike rack installed at the Senior Center. We have no money to do this but can offer our support.
- #8B—traffic counts completed. Most recent count showed very little activity on the new section of the multi-use trail. In general the new part of the trail is not as much used as the part in the condos. We may see a dramatic increase in the numbers in the future. Downtown count had much more activity. Should add another count to the action plan for future. Amy suggested before and after counts in areas where we know there will be work done such as the West St./Washington St. area.
- We have not done tabling at the Farmers Market. Need to get materials printed first. Ideas for tabling: Amy suggested presenting some of the items on the action plan. John talked about a folding board with a changeable surface to display completed and future projects. About \$500. Could apply for funding from Rockfall Foundation. Beth will contact Pam about working on display.
- Beth suggested adding our calendar to the action plan. Kate will send latest calendar to Howard so he can do this along with the other updates to the plan.

Multi-use trail update:

Malone and McBroom are ready to go, but contacts need to be signed by city and state which could take 3 months at least. Best case scenario—engineering completed in summer; bids out fall/winter; bid selected in spring, construction summer 2016. Not likely to happen that fast.

Woodrow Wilson Middle School visit update:

Laura and Kate met with Joe Cassella in the spring. Laura was to write a report. Cassella was receptive to ideas and had a few of his own. As he is no longer at the school, it would be worth meeting with the new principal, Robert Conroy. Howard mentioned the recently extended sidewalk coming to the school property from the Newtown St. side. This is an example of a quick and cheap project we could promote with schools. Another suggestion was to count bikes at school bike racks and track numbers over time.

Ideas for rides:

- Spring ride along River Rd. Mayor green lighted at least in principle. Could prompt fix in Eastern Dr. area to make it more bike-friendly.

- Ron mentioned that we are on radar for another ride at the Kids' Health and Safety Day June 13. The hours of the event this year are 11-3, and it will be held downtown. They would like us to run a ride before the event—10 am. We could do a loop through the North End to make a 4-mile ride.

- Beth mentioned a brand new idea from Bike-Walk CT to take the "Discover Hartford" tour on the road to other communities. This is a very new idea, just under initial discussion now. The tour is usually the 3rd weekend in Sept.

- Amy mentioned CT Tourism sponsored a recent ride through the county visiting bed and breakfasts. Could we do same thing here?

- General discussion of what we are in the position to arrange at this point. What do we want our event/ride to be? What's our audience? Length, locale, sights? For now we still need to piggy-back on other events (like Kids' Day) to get experience.

Complete Street policy:

John met with the Mayor, who agreed with the need for a policy. City lawyer, Brigg Smith, needs to be involved, and the Mayor has to initiate this. John feels someone else other than him, someone outside City Hall, should be involved in pushing the Mayor on this. Amy suggested Michiel Wackers, the new planning director, could be a direct line to the Mayor. She has already talked with Michiel about our work and will continue to push him.

Bike-Walk CT has a state complete streets document online. We should get this to local leaders.

Regional updates:

- Portland now has a Complete Streets committee—not a city committee. Recent improvements on Route 17 in Portland ended up with wider shoulders due to citizens' knowledge about the issues. The city will be working on riverfront improvements.

- John talked to people in Durham about our group, and they were very excited. Their selectmen are very proactive and interested in these issues.

- River COG will have a new director in December, Sam Gold. Their bike-ped committee had been stalled previously. Any Federal funds would go through the COG. Howard shared his impression that most likely the rail would remain but there was still a chance of having a trail along it also.

- We should be considering regional planning more.

Saybrook Rd. sidewalks:

Project is proceeding. Cardinal Engineering is doing the study.

2015 meeting dates:

Dates have to be submitted now for whole year. We will keep same schedule—meet monthly on the second Monday unless that day is a holiday, then the 3rd Monday.

Metro Square plans:

Project plans are on the city web site.