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March Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2018

Mark Deshon called the meeting to order at City Council Chambers at 4:00 p.m.

Member attendees: Mark Deshon (Chair), Bob McBride (Treasurer), Helga Huntley, Karen Rosenberg, Ian Peters, and Tom Price

Partner liaison attendees:

Bike Delaware: John Bare

DelDOT: Paul Moser

City of Newark: Mike Fortner (Planning & Development), Joe Spadafino (Parks & Recreation), Tim Filasky (Public Works & Water Resources)

WILMAPCO and Newark Bike Project: Heather Dunigan

University of Delaware: Ofc. Michael Slater (Police)

Announcement

Mark Deshon opened up the meeting by announcing that Ian Peters has accepted a job at the state Office of Highway Safety. We congratulated Ian, who will likely move to the Dover area and have to drop out of BikeNewark membership at some point in the near future.

Adoption of meeting minutes from February 15, 2018

Minutes as circulated by email were reviewed; we decided that printed minutes should be available for review at the meeting, but that printed copies did not need to be made for all attendees. The motion to adopt the minutes was made and seconded, and members voted to approve the minutes.

Financial Report as of March 15, 2018

We had contributions of \$50 this month with \$25 in expenses for the Delaware state non-profit Franchise Tax for BikeNewark for 2018. This left us with a fund balance of \$772.74, including our Pay Pal account balance. The motion to adopt the report was made and seconded, and the financial report approved by the membership.

Update on status of 2018 infrastructure goals

Mark reported on the 2018 infrastructure goals. Mark said that he and Dave Saunders have sent letters in to the city with regard to some of our goals.

South College Avenue, from Rt. 4 to Main Street is a central concern with all the current and planned development along that corridor. Heather suggested that we consider including the piece from the I-95 interchange to Rt. 4. Helga Huntley thinks that there are separate needs north of Rt. 4 on South College Avenue than from that intersection south to I-95. Heather noted that the Rt. 896/I-95 interchange design is now up for public discussion by DelDOT. The section of South College Avenue near the UD central campus is also critical, with the proposed addition of two new buildings just south of Morris Library.

Some notable comments with regard to South College Avenue:

- We are interested in a bikeway through STAR Campus and UD Ag College campus.
- Tim Filasky met with UD officials, and UD is interested in changing the look of South College Avenue in front of the STAR Campus, since they own most of the frontage. This may involve infrastructure improvements for bicyclists.
- Ease of changing transport mode from bike to rail in and around the Newark Train Station.
- Paul Moser indicated that DelDOT may be able to include bike lanes on South College Avenue between Delaware Avenue and Main Street.
- Some parking limits beside Morris Library may be needed.
- Access to the James Hall Trail northbound is also a problem from South College Avenue.

The work on envisioning a low-stress bikeway still needs to be done.

Discussion on the stability of BikeNewark

Loss of several members is imminent; we need to replace them. We need some new members who are passionate about biking and can help contribute to our advocacy work. Residents or non-residents are welcome.

Ismat Shah is joining BikeNewark and will help UD's Student Government Association with UD Bike Days this spring.

We should have public service-announcement opportunities at Bike to Work Day and the Mayor's Fun Ride to announce our desire for more volunteers. We need to think of new ways to get to people as well as working with our partner organizations.

Helga noted that BikeNewark needs to make clear that interested people need not commit to meetings but can serve BikeNewark in other ways or they may volunteer for committee work only.

Our current meeting times may make it difficult for some to participate, particularly those who work during the day. Many of our past meeting times have been during the work day. Times are not set in stone and could be changed. We also may not have as many choices in order to take advantage of free meeting venues such as WILMAPCO and the Newark Municipal Building.

Heather suggested we think about other categories of meetings, with quarterly meetings being different and more fun (i.e., social) and reminded us that changing to times later in the day may make it more difficult for partner liaisons to attend. We might also include incentives to attend (raffles, etc.).

Spring events update

- ***First Friday Rides – Mar. 2, Apr. 6, May 4, June 1***

No further information given. The March 2 ride had to be cancelled due to poor weather.

- ***Bike Central – Wednesday, Apr. 18***

The venue for this event is at the bike racks near the intersection of Delaware Avenue and South College Avenue. DelDOT will bring its tent, and UD will supply the free bike lights. There was some discussion about when to best start the event to maximize exposure to the class-change traffic. Mark had asked Ban if we could start at 12:30 and go until 3 p.m. Ban told him he was OK with that. Some wanted to move the time slot up further, possibly into the late morning. We decided to hold off on that and re-evaluate after the April event. Mark said that we'd be looking at the efficacy of our current venue as well. Ofc. Slater said he feels that the location at The Green is better. Paul Moser said he'd be willing to work with others to organize another Bike Lights on Demand session one evening. Mark mentioned that five sets of bike lights were installed yesterday's Bike Central [March 14], as the cooler weather kept a lot of bicyclists away.

- ***Walkable/Bikeable Delaware Summit – Thursday, May 3, in Dover***

Mark said that he and Bob will be attending but that we need two more volunteers as part of the bargain for BikeNewark sponsorship status for the event, which will be 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Summit this year will focus primarily on bicycle infrastructure and will feature the NHWA head and Seattle's chief traffic engineer. No one came forward to volunteer during this meeting.

- ***Bike to School Week – TBD***

No one was able to comment on what plans were in the works. Mark asked Heather if Randi Novacoff knows anything. Heather said that she is really only involved in the Safe Routes to School project with respect to elementary schools. Helga said she'd check with the staff at John R. Downes to see what, if anything, is being planned for this year, as Susan Grasso will not likely be able to help organize.

- ***UD Bike Days – TBD***

Mark mentioned that Ismat Shah had agreed to work on behalf of BikeNewark with the Student Government Association at UD to begin planning this event. Nothing more is known at this time as to what this may involve. Mark said whatever will be planned may require some more volunteer help, though.

- ***Bike to Work Day – Friday, May 18***

Mike Fortner reported that Mayor Sierer has pledged funds from the Mayor's Fun Ride to cover all the expenses for this year's B2WD event. Mike will focus on larger employers to get them interested in participation. Speakers have not been confirmed yet; Mike will follow up on requests. Heather had printed out a promo poster to show meeting attendees. Joe Spadafino said that the City Parks & Rec. Department will provide setup and tables/chairs.

We will again be awarding the Bicycle Friendly Community Leader award; we need to think of who might deserve this. Mike encouraged everyone to work with their indirect contacts to encourage more groups to participate. Mark was asked about publicity; he will be contacting UDaily contact through Beth Finkle, director of UD's Employee Health and Wellbeing. DelDOT will bring T-shirts, which will be produced in coordination with the Delaware Bicycle Council and distributed statewide that day. Mike announced that the next planning meeting would take place on Mar. 29 at 8 a.m. at Brewed Awakenings.

- ***Mayor's Fun Ride – Saturday, June 2***

Joe Spadafino reported that this event will again be staged at Newark Shopping Center. Past funding has helped with several infrastructure improvements, including the Pomeroy Trail bike shelter. Joe said we need some planning volunteers as well as day-of-event helpers. The next planning committee meeting will be on Friday, April 6.

Quick committee updates

- ***Education and Encouragement***

No report this month, although Tom Price indicated that he would be contacting folks to schedule another meeting.

- ***Safety and Enforcement***

No report this month, as the committee has not met.

- ***Communications***

The committee has not met recently, Mark said he's been working on some updates for the website. Mark and Karen Rosenberg stressed that we need to identify someone who can and will coordinate social media, as Sean Watson would prefer not to have to continue in this role. Everyone was encouraged to either write a blog article or share a photo.

One talking point to suggest to Mayor Sierer for April City Council meeting

The Mayor may be missing a few meetings in April, and there will only be one City Council meeting due to the election. So we thought that if the Mayor is available at the April 23 meeting, she should announce the May bicycling-related events. The first May City Council meeting isn't until May 14, which would be too late for this announcement.

Old or new business

- ***City Council candidates survey***

Responses were received from all candidates for Newark City Council and posted on the BikeNewark website, and links to it were posted on its Facebook page as well as NextDoor Neighbor. Thanks to Bike Delaware for the technical help with the survey.

- ***9-11 Memorial riders arrive, Apr. 30***

Heather mentioned that there will be a dinner on Tuesday, April 30, for the September 11 Memorial Bike Tour riders in Newark; contact Heather if you're interested in coming to the dinner. The six riders will be staying in Newark on their way from New York City on the way to the Pentagon and the 9-11 Memorial in Schenksville, Pa.

Our next monthly meeting will be Thursday, April 19, at 4:00 at WILMAPCO.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. Minutes were taken by Bob McBride and Mark Deshon.