



August Meeting Minutes

August 17, 2023 (Virtual Meeting)

Bob McBride called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Member Attendees: Bob McBride (Chair), Kevin Monahan (Vice Chair), Karl Hassler (Treasurer), Michael Smith (Secretary), Mark Deshon, Karen Rosenberg, Helga Huntley

Partner Liaison Attendees:

City of Newark: Mike Fortner (Planning & Development)

DelDOT: Paul Moser

WILMAPCO and Newark Bike Project: Heather Dunigan

Develop Bike-parking Proposal and Needs Assessment for Newark

- Bob McBride asked what the first steps are for increasing bike parking in Newark and asked if the University of Delaware is including it in their new transportation plan from the Office of Sustainability.
- Mark Deshon has sent a few emails to suggest using BikeNewark as experts in making that plan, Karen Rosenberg offered to ask Dr. Michael Chajes for a potential connection.
- Bob and Heather Dunigan discussed a previous effort to bring a bike-share program to campus. Heather said bike parking was lacking in the review, but there had been a campus survey on bicycling about ten years ago.
- Bob offered to reach out to Caitlin Olsen.
- Bob asked if we should ask for funding to conduct a parking study; Heather suggested that it should be instead rolled into the city's general bike-plan update, with BikeNewark members volunteering to do the ground work.
- Mark mentioned that we are receiving complaints about the lack of parking or the lack of convenient parking, and that we may need to update/enforce the City code on this issue. Mike Fortner said that a lot of previous parking studies/committees focus on car parking.

Project Updates

Chrysler Avenue Public Meeting

- Bob, Heather and Mark attended the recent public meeting, which was well attended by elected officials; however, Heather said it was not well attended by community members. She believes that the timing (4 p.m. on a work day) was not particularly good for most people.

- Heather said that some of the proposals were overkill, but regardless of the Chrysler Avenue project, the gate to Gravenor Lane will be open at some point going forward.
- Heather and Bob both noted that the wide width of the road is causing problematic vehicle speeds, especially when there are few cars parked on the road.
- Mark said that, while the event was advertised as a bicycle-improvement project, many people there were talking about pedestrians. He suggested that perhaps future events should have a more holistic approach in its advertising.
- Bob noted that the engineering company (JMT) did showcase a wide variety of options for the avenue and hopes that the city will have a better-timed meeting before its report comes out.

Updating the 2014 Newark Bicycle Plan

- Mike mentioned that there will be a meeting on September 5th, and welcomed people to join, as there will be discussions about BikeNewark and the city's BFC silver distinction. The next big event will be Community Day, where the city planning department will have a table.
- Heather said that her top priority is to update the facilities map and add to the bike plan potential facilities that did not make the Transportation Improvement District (TID) project list. She also suggested adding more on environmental, safety, and equity issues.
- Bob asked if there are any people from the 2014 group that are going to be on for this edition of the bicycle plan. Mike said that a few people are returning, but there are also a good number of new faces.
- Heather and Bob discussed going to the September or October meeting of the City's Conservation Advisory Commission.

South College Avenue Corridor Project

- Paul Moser and Heather said there are no updates at this time.

Newark-to-Newport Trail Third Meeting

- Bob, Karl Hassler, and Michael Smith attended the most recent Newark-to-Newport trail meeting. Michael said the meeting went very well, with a consensus decision to go with the northernmost alignment of the options presented, which runs parallel to Kirkwood Highway.
- Karl said that the most direct option—using SR4 from Christiana Hospital to Newark—was not viewed particularly favorably by the meeting attendees, as the most northern alignment takes advantage of green spaces and local neighbor connections.
- Karl also mentioned that potentially there will be two paths for the route between Newport and the hospital that may see the light of day, as the southern alignment has already been funded.
- Paul suggested that there should be a special team (including someone well versed in conservation/hydrology) to work on this project, given the proximity of some portions of the alignment to delicate natural features. Heather agreed and said that the traditional 10-foot shared-use path is impractical.
- Bob said that another public meeting will be scheduled in the future, hopefully during a more accessible time for more people.

Newark Bikeways Kiosks

- Bob asked for an update on the bikeways kiosks project. Two funding sources have been secured, but only one has arrived—a \$6,000 grant from The Newark Partnership and an additional pledge of \$5,000 in state funding from State Rep. Cyndie Romer.
- Karl mentioned that, since Rep. Romer’s funding has to go through a government agency, we need to do a pass-through with the City of Newark; however, City staffer Jeff Martindale (who was on vacation for 2 weeks) asked for documentation. Karl would like to do a call with Joe Spadafino, Jeff, and Geri Larson (from DelDOT) to work it all out.
- Karl stressed the importance of getting this project done soon, as we have to return the TNP funding if not used by the end of the year.

Creating Safety Materials (Publication, Video, and Website-based)

Delaware Avenue Two-Way Protected Bikeway

- Kevin Monahan has been recording his bike rides on Delaware Avenue with his daughter, and offered to make an educational video about the cycletrack for BikeNewark.
- Helga Huntley emphasized the problem with westbound cyclists wanting to make left turns onto crossing streets (e.g., South Chapel St., Haines St., Academy St.). Heather suggested potentially adding another bike box, while Mark said there are some alternative approaches to avoid tricky turns, albeit not as direct.

Events Planning

Fall semester Bicycle-safety Checkpoints

- Bob mentioned that the next checkpoints are on Sept. 13 and 27, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., on The Green adjacent to the Delaware Avenue cycletrack.

Newark Community Day – Sept. 17, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- Given the duration of the event, Bob said that we will need multiple volunteers to rotate out.

Treasurer’s Report

Karl Hassler reported that activity over the past couple months included mostly reconciliation/clearing out accounts plus the \$6,000 grant from The Newark Partnership, plus a membership (monthly recurring donation) and a donation. The ending balance is \$9,159.31.

Beginning balance 7/21/2023		\$ 9,122.67	\$ 36.64	\$ 9,159.31
Additions:				
7/25/23	Membership W Trout		5.00	5.00
7/31/23	Interest	0.07		
8/7/23	Transfer PayPal-WSFS	36.64	(36.64)	
8/10/23	Donation R O'Dea		20.00	
8/16/23	Transfer PayPal-WSFS	23.30	(23.30)	
Total additions		60.01	(34.94)	25.07
Deductions:				
7/25/23	PayPal		0.63	
8/10/23	PayPal		1.07	1.07
Total deductions		0.00	1.70	1.70
Surplus (deficit)		60.01	(36.64)	23.37
Ending balance 8/17/2023		\$ 9,182.68	\$ -	\$ 9,182.68

Old and New Business

Upcoming East Coast Greenway Meeting

- Heather mentioned that there will be an East Coast Greenway informational meeting on August 28 at Twisted Irons Brewery between 6:00 and 7:30 p.m.

BikeNewark Engineering Committee Report

- Mark sent over the August 4 meeting minutes of the Engineering Committee, which follow on the next three pages.

Meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Minutes taken by Michael Smith

BikeNewark

Engineering Committee meeting agenda – August 4, 2023

Attending: *committee members* Mark Deshon (chair), Karl Hassler, Rodolfo Gomes, Tim Filasky (Public Works & Water Resources), Joe Spadafino (Parks & Recreation), Heather Dunigan (WILMAPCO); *guests* Bob McBride and Mike Fortner (Planning & Development)

Absent: committee members Helga Huntley, Dave Saunders, Paul Moser (DelDOT), and Stefan Rukowicz (Public Works & Water Resources)

Review status of items from May meeting

- Removal/relocation of misleading ECG signage, placement onto Southwest Bikeway

Status: *Not done yet. Necessary is the removal of 3 ECG signs/signposts (along Lehigh Road and Short Lane) and addition of ECG signs (minus arrows) to our existing Southwest Bikeway signposts (underneath our arrow signs) NB and WB at service road and Chrysler Avenue intersection (e.g., see signage at Chrysler Avenue and Bradford).*

Action: Tim Filasky said that he has asked Dan Zebley to do this. Heather Dunigan indicated that, in parallel, she's working on a plan for installation of new "9-11 route" signage along the ECG.

- Addition of "Bike Lane Ends" sign NB on South Main Street at Amstel Avenue

Status: *Bicyclists need a heads-up NB at this intersection that the bike lane abruptly ends.*

Action: A bike box is needed there long term. After discussion, the decision was to keep the diamond-shaped bike sign for motorists and add a "Bike Lane Ends" sign, to clarify continuing facility type. Tim said he will check it out and recommend a path forward.

- Completion of signage installation on Central Loop Bikeway and South Bikeway

Status: *Signage is missing or in need of addition/replacement in five (four critical) locations along the Central Loop. The initial sign location on the South Bikeway (just past the Pomeroy Trail on Delaware Avenue) still needs to be installed, and at the Delaware Avenue/Library Avenue intersection, two green "Bike Route" signs need to be removed from the NB signpost that holds South Bikeway signs, because together they are contradictory/confusing.*

Action: Mark Deshon gave Tim this specific info in paper form, and Tim indicated he would do what he is able to do to see that this is accomplished as quickly as possible, understanding that staffing is thin at the moment. Tim and Heather indicated that the DelDOT sign at Delaware Avenue/Library Avenue may have to stay, but Mark asked that this be separated from the South Bikeway signage. This may necessitate moving our signage further back from the intersection on a new signpost.

- Kiosk locations

Status: *Locations have been preliminarily sited, but we have no approval yet from UD on location at the Orchard Road/Delaware Avenue intersection. The precise location of a kiosk at the Delaware Avenue/Pomeroy Trail intersection is contingent on avoidance of utilities.*

Action: Joe Spadafino will contact UD's Caitlin Olsen about use of the northwest corner of the Orchard Road intersection. Joe says the City has to reach out to the state to help determine an exact location of the one at the Pomeroy Trail.

- Improvements to Library Avenue off-road path (South Bikeway) at UD farm road



Status: *No decision on project or funding source yet. Removal of guardrail, installation of an ADA-compliant curb cut, and an improved trail surface are needed at the intersection.*

Action: There was much discussion about this. Mark shared photos (above) that highlighted the issue. Tim will consult with DelDOT about what needs to be done and try to come up with a plan forward, understanding that this is part of the signed South Bikeway.

Review of Chrysler Avenue project public meeting on August 1

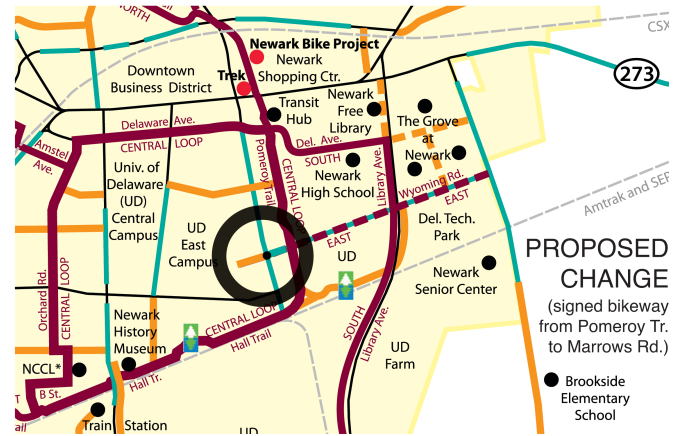
Tim reported that the Mayor and two City Council members attended the JMT-led public meeting, the purpose of which was to introduce design possibilities for the Chrysler Avenue portion of the ECG (Southwest Bikeway) and to walk the project length. This was a follow on from the Delaware Bicycle Council grant the City received for a feasibility study on how to improve this section of the ultra-wide Chrysler Avenue for bicyclists. Alternatives presented to and suggested by attendees will be considered. There was talk of not only an improvement on Chrysler Avenue but an opening of the gate at Gravenor Lane, which would be accessible to bicyclists from Devon Drive then Cornwall Drive. Tim said it was a successful initial meeting.

Discussion of specific needs (tasks and personnel) for updating of 2014 Newark Bicycle Plan

This effort will be under Mike Fortner and Heather Dunigan's coordination (WILMAPCO project with City). Heather said she feels an advisory committee should be an extension of this committee and that this update will be more of an additive process, not a wholesale replacement of the existing document. Emphasis will be to expand on the equity aspect of bicycling in Newark. Heather mentioned that new parking data is needed and that we should involve a few members of the public. Mark said that BikeNewark volunteers are ready if we want them to help with data collection. He showed a volunteer listing that he said he would share with both Mike and Heather. Mike said that a "Vision Zero" policy is something that the City will also be considering, which will tie into the plan.

Proposal for shortening planned East Bikeway route along Wyoming Road

Mark explained that, in light of a planned TID roundabout project at the South Chapel Street intersection and the higher stress that may create for cyclists, he feels that the official East Bikeway should run along Wyoming Road from the Pomeroy Trail to Marrows Road. This proposal is also meant to maintain the consistency of the Central Loop as an unbroken “hub” into which other bikeways feed.



Action: Attendees approved this proposed change to the Newark Bikeways plan.

Other item(s) not on original agenda

Mark mentioned that he has made repeated calls to Newark Parking Authority about the presence of vehicles in the buffered bike lane on Casho Mill Road, particularly at 107 Casho Mill Road, over the past few months.