

Bikeway Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting to discuss the Bicycle Plan

February 22nd, 2006

Members Present: Michael Hayes (representing the community at large) presiding, Bernice Cage (representing Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission), Charlie Pace (bicyclist), Gordon Renkes (bicyclist), Chuck Waterman (representing Rails to Trails Conservancy), Brad Westall (representing City of Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks)

Members Absent: Lelia Cady (representing Columbus City Council), Mike Meeks (representing Franklin County Engineer's Office), Steve Studenmund (representing Franklin County Metro Parks), 3 Vacancies (bicyclist), Vacant (representing local bicycle organizations)

Others Present: Bill Lewis, Dale Hooper (City of Columbus Transportation Division) and guests John Gideon of COBAC, Steve Hardwick, Dan Magestro, Bill McMurray, David Roseman, Barry Schumann, Jeff Stephens, Lizandra Vidal

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting began around 4:10.

Minutes of the January Meeting

The minutes of the January meeting were accepted with one change. This change is under How Does Traffic Calming Affect Bicycling. The Committee did NOT agree to send the City a letter concerning medians.

Columbus Bicycle Plan

This was a special meeting, held solely to discuss the Bicycle Plan. Its focus was Burgess & Niple's and Alta's letter commenting on the draft Bicycle Plan. This meeting had a record turnout, with 16 people attending. Hooper started the meeting with an overview of the project and an outline of the schedule.

As recommended in the consultant's letter, the City of Columbus agreed to:

- the consultants rewriting the plan (rather than staff)
- MORPC conducting the process by which the plan is presented to the public
- Involve the public in development of the new Bicycle Plan
- Rewrite portions of several City Codes, to enable bicycle and pedestrian travel.

At the City's request, the consultants had developed an expanded scope of services, with a cost of \$255,000. The City is currently reviewing the expanded scope and searching for funds. The portions of the City Codes to be rewritten included parts of: Planning & Platting, Zoning, Parking, Traffic and Subdivision.

Discussion of the many documents involved, confused the Committee. Hooper clarified these as the:

- Draft **Bicycle Plan** (which the consultants reviewed)
- Burgess & Niple and Alta's **comments** on the draft plan
- **Original Scope of Services** (instructing the consultants to review the plan)
- **Expanded Scope of Services** (the consultants proposal for rewriting the plan and conducting the public process)
- **Digested Scope of Services** (the City's instructions to the consultants, to rewrite the plan and conduct the public process) [which had not been written yet]

The City asked the Committee to review the digested scope of services (after it is developed). Hooper expected to send the digested scope to the Committee, before its 3/15 meeting. The Committee will be given one week to respond. All comments should be in writing (these can be electronic or paper documents).

Finally, Hooper reviewed the schedule for completing the Bicycle Plan. To save time, the City had decided to rewrite the plan and codes concurrently. The new codes must be presented to City Council by September 1st 2006. Then Council will have 3 months to publicize these. The rewritten Bicycle Plan must be presented to Council by December 31st 2006. Both are to be enacted in early 2007.

The Committee's Response to the Consultant's Comments

This started with Gideon registering a vehement objection. He said that the Committee was excluded from major decisions, involving the scopes and schedule. Staff countered that the Committee will review the digested scope of services. The Committee would also guide the plan's development. Members of the Committee will be on the Stakeholder Committee. The Stakeholder Committee will guide the development of the plan. It has the option to scrutinize all aspects of the plan. For instance, the stakeholders could redraw the map of Columbus Bikeway Corridors.

Gideon also objected to the schedule. He was concerned that 9 months was not enough time to develop a Good plan. He compared it to OSU's plan development process, which took over a year.

Renkes reviewed both the draft plan and the consultants comments. He noted that the consultants suggested removing the Bikeway Coordinator's "opinions" about bicycling. Hooper pointed out that his "opinions" could be subject to controversy. To reduce controversy, the Consultants suggested citing parties not involved in the plan's development. Renkes submitted written comments.

Hardwick and others expressed concern that a major presentation of crash data was not part of the plan. Hooper noted that a bicycle crash study had been done in the past. Such data was mainly useful for remedial action at specific sites (which was not the purpose of this plan).

Westall suggested creating a website, devoted to the Bicycle Plan. Someone suggested placing all the documents, cited above, on the website. Westall also challenged the members of the Committee, to help publicize the public meetings. He also challenged them to provide meaningful and timely input about the plan.

People started to debate where the public meetings should be held. They were reminded that was not the purpose of today's meeting. The stakeholders group will handle details. Others objected that many people would be unable to attend any of the public meetings. Vidal suggested conducting a survey. Cage (who would conduct the public process) outlined the process and its procedures. An Open House format will probably be used for meetings.

Roseman asked if the City will follow the plan after it's developed. Hooper noted that no organization ever follows any plan exactly. Expect some deviation. The Committee exists to point out when the City is deviating significantly from the plan?

Another citizen suggested that Columbus aim for a Portland Style Plan. Lewis noted that the plan must be tailored to Columbus, which is not Portland. Someone requested a copy of the draft plan's 5 year plan.

Another asked about the funding gap. From where would the \$255,000 to pay the consultants come? Lewis said that was being determined.

Stephens asked how the Transportation and Pedestrian Commission would be involved in development of the plan.

A Multi-pronged Bicycle Strategy

Hooper outlined the City’s long term bicycle and pedestrian strategy. Columbus Recreation and Parks will continue Greenway development. It will build bike paths in all the stream corridors (Greenways), which generally run north to south. The plan will discuss Greenways in detail. Columbus Public Service Department will follow a 2 pronged strategy. It will expand the regional bikeway system and implement Community Mobility plans. Regional east-west bikeways to connect the Greenways are needed. Regional bikeways will be discussed in detail. While construction of regional bikeways (within highway projects) will continue, Public Service’s main focus will be Community Mobility. Community Mobility facilitates bicycle and pedestrian travel, at the neighborhood level. Linden was Columbus’ first Community Mobility Plan. Since Community Mobility is a new program and many details are unresolved, the plan will only outline this topic.

Next Steps

The City will find funds and create a digested scope of services. Then the consultants can start to rewrite the bike plan and codes and launch the public process

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned about 6:00.

Future Meetings

Future meetings are tentatively scheduled for, March 15th, May 10th and July 19th. Note that the May meeting was rescheduled. Meetings are usually held at the Department of Recreation and Parks offices at 200 Greenlawn Avenue. Contact the Bikeway Coordinator at 645-8079 for confirmation.

Prepared By: _____

R. Dale Hooper, Bikeway Coordinator

Approved By: _____ Date _____

_____, Acting Executive Secretary

Transportation Division Administrator