

Bikeway Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting to discuss the Bicycle Plan

March 15th, 2006

Members Present: Michael Hayes (representing the community at large) presiding, Gordon Renkes (bicyclist), Brad Westall (representing City of Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks)

Members Absent: Lelia Cady (representing Columbus City Council), Bernice Cage (representing Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission) excused, Charlie Pace (bicyclist), Mike Meeks (representing Franklin County Engineer's Office), Steve Studenmund (representing Franklin County Metro Parks), Chuck Waterman (representing Rails to Trails Conservancy 3 Vacancies (bicyclist), Vacant (representing local bicycle organizations)

Others Present: Joshua Cox (City Attorney's Office) and Dale Hooper (City of Columbus Transportation Division) and guests John Gideon of COBAC, Steve Hardwick and Lizandra Vidal

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting began around 4:05.

Minutes of the February Meeting

The minutes of the meeting were accepted.

Public Records

Joshua Cox of the City Attorney's office made a presentation on public records. He summarized the law, governing when records should be made available to the public. Since the Bikeway Advisory Committee is a public body, created by City Council, public records laws apply to it. These laws also apply to the Transportation Division. According to the public records law, the public may request to see any document of either body. Citizens may request to see documents or may request copies. The City is allowed to charge citizens 5 cents per page for copies. If a citizen does not wish to pay for a copy, they may view the documents at City offices. The City must respond to requests within a "reasonable time". What is considered "reasonable" depends upon the circumstances. Normally 1 or 2 days is considered reasonable. Citizen requests do not have to be made in writing. The fact that a document is a "draft" is irrelevant. Once a city employee shares a document with consultants or other staff, it is subject to public records law.

Renkes requested a copy of the signal timing sheets for the Sawmill SPUI. Hardwick and others, requested copies of the Digested Scope of Services (for the Bike Plan), once it is created. Cox proposed to approach the Public Service Director about Public Records Law.

Columbus Bicycle Plan

Hooper gave a status report on the effort to create a Bike Plan. While several people have requested copies of the Digested Scope, it does not yet exist. Staff is seeking funds for the effort. Recently a number of City projects have been bid under budget. The Bike Plan effort may be funded from the "loose change" left over from low bids.

Next Hooper read aloud portions of the consultant letter. These described the Technical Advisory Committee and Stakeholders Group. Hooper asked the Committee for recommendations on who should be a member of the Stakeholders Group. Numerous recommendations were made. The consultants letter implied that COBAC should be a member. Hooper asked for suggestions and Vidal, Renkes and Hardwick requested membership. A number of bicycle clubs were also suggested. Someone suggested Chuck Hootman to represent bicycle couriers. Others thought that neighborhoods, suburbs and OSU should have representatives. People agreed to email lists of recommended representatives to Hooper. Hooper was concerned about the group becoming unwieldy. Maybe it should be limited to 12 to 15 members.

ODOT Downtown Split Project

On 2/15 the Ohio Department of Transportation held a public meeting. This concerned the project to reconstruct Interstates 70 and 71, through downtown. Hooper attended to examine the projects pedestrian and bicycle accommodations.

Hooper reported that significant accommodation had been made. All the intersections, except one, were of a right angle type. Hooper had been concerned about extensive use of slip ramps. He also noted that the design appeared to use 30 foot corner radii. This is a vast improvement on ODOT's typical radii at interstates. Hooper did not claim that the project would be heaven to bicyclists and pedestrians. However, his worst concerns had been alleviated.

Gideon cited one way streets as a problem for bicyclists and pedestrians. He asked Hooper about this. Hooper did not claim to be an expert on the fine points of one way versus two way streets. Hooper saw pluses and minuses for pedestrians and bicyclists, in either case.

It appears that ODOT is concerned about lawsuits over this project. ODOT will hire an outside consultant to examine its bicycle and pedestrian features.

Creating east-west Signed Shared Routes across Columbus

The Columbus Comprehensive Plan made recommendations to the Recreation and Parks (RP) and Public Service (PS) Departments. RP has built paths in greenways (river corridors), as requested. The greenways generally run north-south. To complement the north-south paths, PS was asked to create east-west bikeways.

PS is close to completing two such bikeways. These would connect the Alum Creek, Olentangy and Scioto Paths using Paths and signed Shared Routes(SSR). One SSR would meet the I-670 path at St. Clair Avenue and generally follow Second and First Avenues to the Olentangy Path. The other would extend from Fort Hayes, following Mt Vernon and Naughten Avenues and Nationwide Boulevard to the Neil Avenue Path. It would link to the Lower Scioto Path in North Bank Park. The Committee asked when maps of the new routes would be available.

Downtown Bikeway Connector

Discussion of east-west SSRs raised questions about the Downtown Bikeway Connector(DBC). The Committee wanted work on this to resume.

Harrison West Medians

Gideon reopened discussion of the proposed medians for King, Fifth and Third Avenues. He recalled that the Committee agreed to send a letter in opposition. Hayes indicated that the Committee had not agreed (in January) to this. However, Hayes had no objection to discussing a letter. Some present supported the letter opposing the medians. Others consider this a tired issue; they wanted to move on to other subjects.

It was decided that the Committee would send a letter. This would express the Committee's concern that it was not involved, early in the project development process. The letter would focus on involving the Committee in future projects, rather than opposing this project.

Other Topics

Someone mentioned ODOT's project to expand the I-270 interchange at High Street. Was a Pedestrian Bridge

included? Hooper indicated that Worthington had requested this bridge. This was to cross I-270, east of High Street. It would probably extend from Wilson Bridge Road to Hutchinson Avenue.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned about 6:00.

Future Meetings

Future meetings are tentatively scheduled for, May 10th, July 19th and September 20th. Note that the May meeting was rescheduled. Meetings are usually held at the Department of Recreation and Parks offices at 200 Greenlawn Avenue. Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month (in the odd months). 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