

RPC ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION SUB-COMMITTEE

March 17, 2014

MEETING NOTES

Attendees: Ira Weiss (Chair), Eric Oberg (Rails to Trails Association); Peggy Portier (Safe Routes to School); Eric McCrady (FCEO); Eric Sandine (Village of Lithopolis); Kent Huston (RPC); Carrie Woody (Lancaster Public Transit); Steve Gayfield (Lancaster Parks and Recreational Department); Scott Brown (Village of Baltimore Administrator); Paul Matthews (Liberty Union-Thurston School District); Scott Tourville (City of Pickerington Engineer); and Holly Mattei (RPC Executive Director)

Ira Weiss called the meeting to order and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

1. Approval of February 10, 2014 meeting notes.

Kent Huston made a motion to approve the February 10, 2014 meeting notes. Peggy Portier seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. Chairman's Report

Ira Weiss asked everyone to introduce themselves because we had some new faces. Mr. Weiss said thank you to all for electing him as Chair. He also thanked all of those who attended the MORPC Greenways meeting earlier that day. This meeting was held in Fairfield County so that others throughout Central Ohio could view the assets of our county.

3. Discussion on Bikeways in Baltimore

Scott Brown, Village of Baltimore Administrator, was present to continue the committee's discussion from last month. The Liberty Union Thurston Superintendent, Paul Matthews, was also in attendance to talk about connections to the schools.

Mr. Brown indicated that there are 8 major entrances into Baltimore, and they signed the four state road entrances into the Village. They also posted a sign at Canal Road, Basil Street, and Basil Western Roads at the entrances into the Village.

Mr. Brown said that Ms. Mattei and he have talked about connecting the county's recommended bikeway network through the village. He said when he met with Ms. Mattei she brought up some good points: such as do you want to the bicyclists to ride through the village or do you want to have routes to take them to certain destinations where they can stop to spend time and money in the Village.

Mr. Brown said that he has a major paving job coming up this summer and he wanted to see if he could have the striping company come in and place sharrows on some of the roads when they are completing the paving job.

Ms. Mattei said that is where she wants this Committee to provide some further discussion. At the last meeting, the Committee said the sharrows should be strategically placed and based on a holistic approach to ensure that they are leading cyclists to signed routes.

Mr. Brown talked about the safe route to school project along Main Street. It starts at the schools and goes along into downtown. On one side is a 6-foot wide asphalt bike-path and on the other side is a concrete sidewalk.

Scott Tourville said in his previous job with Westerville he had some experience with sharrows. He said the village should definitely think about where to place them. He said Westerville put them only on collector type roads and not on residential streets. He said they also struggled about where to put them on the road. They had 18-foot lanes. There was enough pavement width for 3 lanes, but striped for 2. Westerville didn't know if they wanted to place them in the middle of the lane or 4-foot off the shoulder. The Village needs to put them where they are visible to the motorists, but yet not constantly getting run over by tires, etc. He doesn't know if there is a right or wrong answer on placement, but that the village should be consistent in placement.

Eric McCrady said placement on the pavement should take into account on-street parking. The village will want to make sure they are outside of the parking lane to avoid car doors swinging open onto the cyclists. There was discussion about which streets have on-street parking.

Mr. Brown said a majority of the main streets have on-street parking.

Mr. Tourville said the village will want to place the sharrow far enough off the curb so that a parked car doesn't cover the sharrow.

Mr. Tourville said that Westerville brought a couple of the fluorescent yellow green signs. They would wait until they resurfaced a road to put the sharrow markings on the pavement. Once they resurfaced the road, then they put the signs up temporarily to put everyone on notice that these pavements markers were now in place. They just rotated the signs around as they put the sharrows on the different roads.

Mr. Tourville said Westerville also struggled with the distance between sharrows. He thinks the Ohio Uniform Manual for Traffic Control Devices indicates they should be spaced every 250 feet. This is tight. They tweaked the spacing and tried to put them after major intersections so that if you are turning from a local road onto a main street you will see the sharrow, but then you aren't seeing them every 250 feet. They aren't cheap to install.

Ira Weiss added that if you see them over and over again they tend to lose their effectiveness.

Mr. McCrady said once you put them up, they are there and you have to maintain them. The Village needs to make sure they take into account the maintenance costs looking forward.

Mr. Weiss asked what the school district had in place for its travel plan as far as additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Mr. Matthews said he would have to look into this for him.

There was discussion on potential routes and key destinations.

Mr. Tourville said that he has used heat tape for the sharrows before instead of thermo plastic. It has similar costs, but it lasts longer.

Mr. McCrady said the Village should look at the signs already posted at the Village entrances. He thinks they are placed too low to the ground. They are underneath other signs. The Village should consider raising them to conform to the height requirements in the traffic control manual.

Eric Oberg said that in the bike community a lot of cyclists consider the sharrows as the place they are supposed to ride. So he would recommend placing it dead center in the middle of the traffic lane. He thinks most cars could straddle the sharrow and then it will put the cyclist in the center of the lane.

There was discussion about signal detection.

Ms. Mattei asked what roads the Village is considering for sharrows.

Mr. Brown said that Washington Street runs parallel to Market Street (main east/west road through town). Washington Street goes by the high school and then would bring you out to almost Canal Street to connect to the county's proposed routes. This would also get them up to Alt park and up to Cherry Lane.

Mr. Weiss said it sounds like there are almost two different routes. One would take cyclists directly through town on 256 (Market Street) and the other (Washington Street) would allow them to go through town and visit key destinations. He said the Village needs signage where the two routes split to help cyclists navigate.

Mr. Weiss also said they need to get in touch with the local businesses in town to help identify the places where cyclists can stop to eat, go to the bathroom, rest, to see museums etc.

Mr. Oberg said there needs to be a defined east/west (SR 256) and north/south (SR158) route with sharrows but then there needs to be stopping area with a kiosk, with a rest stop, and have information. Maybe some of the cyclists who were riding through decide they want to stop.

Mr. Tourville said the stopping place should have a trail head, bike racks, restrooms, etc.

Peggy Portier said something needs to put signs or something on Basil Road to get to Smeck Farm.

There was discussion about the number of kids bussed to school and walk to school.

There was continued discussion on the school's travel plan. There was discussion about a potential path through land adjacent to the school that leads to the park with the pool (Johnson Park). There is a developer anticipating the development of this property. If it develops, then they want to work with the developer to obtain some kind of connection.

Mr. Brown said the Village has incorporated some green space/bikeway requirements into their subdivision regulations. So the village can require a bikepath connection when this land develops. He said the only problem with connecting to Johnson park is there is one sliver of land between this proposed development and the park. Currently, the village doesn't think they will be able to get through this sliver of land to make the final connection.

There was discussion that this needs to be placed on a long term plan so that it the connection could possibly be made in the future.

Mr. Tourville suggested maybe having a park and ride somewhere in the village.

Mr. Brown said the police station is centered in town and may be a possible location for something along these lines.

There was discussion on ODOT's plans for resurfacing the routes through the village.

Mr. Brown said he would have to look into this item.

There was discussion about mountain biking and the parks. Mr. Gayfield said he has connections to the group that would be able to help him. He will get the contact information to Mr. Brown.

Mr. Brown said Alt Park may be a good location for this activity.

Mr. Tourville said Alt Park may be another good location for a trail head/park and ride.

Ms. Mattei asked what else Mr. Brown needed from us. He said he would follow up with Ms. Mattei.

Mr. Weiss thanked Mr. Brown and Mr. Matthews for attending the meeting.

4. Continued Discussion on Refugee Road Corridor

Ms. Mattei gave an update on the progress made on the cost estimate for this potential MUP and sidewalk. The cost estimate has now been broken down into phases.

The Committee reviewed the estimates.

Eric McCrady said he didn't understand why the bridges were in phase 1. After discussion, the Committee suggested that the cost estimates should be revised to include the bridges/culverts in their applicable phases.

Mr. Tourville said he thinks the pavement sections are overdesigned. He thought 6" of concrete for sidewalk was too thick and 10" of stone and 4.5" of asphalt for the MUP were more of a roadway design. After discussion, the Committee decided that 4" of concrete for sidewalk and 6" of stone and 3" of asphalt for the MUP is sufficient. The exception would be at the driveways.

Mr. Tourville asked the location of the MUP in relationship to the road and the need for future widening. Eric McCrady said a 2009 study did not show this road needing to be widened for the next 20 years, assuming the current speed limit is maintained.

Mr. Tourville said he wanted to eventually see the details for the lump sum costs such as earthwork.

There was discussion about funding.

Ms. Mattei reported that Greg Butcher called her last week and said the Safe Route to School 2014 application went toward Columbus Street. So if we were to apply for a Safe Route to Schools grant then it would be in 2015.

Ms. Mattei said she would meet with MORPC to talk about an application for TA funds this June.

Ms. Mattei reviewed the comments the Committee had on the cost estimates to ensure she was accurately reporting back to the Historical Park District.

5. Other Business

Peggy Portier announced a public meeting in Violet Township regarding a development at the southeast corner of Refugee and Milnor Roads.

Ms. Mattei announced that the Commissioners have put together a small working group to review the future of the Clearance E. Miller building. She said the Commissioners will be holding public meetings on April 8th and be posting a survey on line for residents to complete.

Mr. Weiss thanked all of those who attended both the MORPC meeting and today's Active Transportation Committee.

There being no further business, Scott Tourville made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Peggy Portier seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting will be April 21st at 2:30 p.m.

DRAFT