

**MINUTES of the MEETING of the
NORTH CAROLINA BICYCLE COMMITTEE
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

February 11, 2009

Members Present

Jennifer Smith, Chair
Hanna Cockburn
Dan Mikkelson
Dennis Rash (by phone)
Claudia Nix
Greg Loy

Members Absent

All present

Staff Present

Tom Norman

Guests

Mary Meletiou, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager, ITRE

ACTION ITEMS

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- November 12, 2008 minutes approved as corrected – motion by Mikkelson; seconded by Cockburn. Passed unanimously.
- Cockburn moved that a letter be prepared to send to Secretary Conti asking for a meeting to provide input on transportation-related public policy issues. Seconded by Rash. Passed unanimously.

DISCUSSIONS, REPORTS and PLANNING SESSION

Welcome

Committee Chair Smith called the meeting to order and welcomed the Committee members and staff.

Approval of November 12, 2008 Minutes

- Mikkelson moved to approve the minutes; Cockburn seconded. The minutes were adopted unanimously, as modified by the addition of Cockburn's activity report.

NCDOT Transition Updates

Norman provided an overview of the new NCDOT management team.

Cockburn reported on a letter from Secretary Conti to NCDOT partners asking for input on public policy issues. "Re-imagining" how multi-modal needs tie into local processes is one aspect of this effort. Cockburn noted that there is an opportunity for the Committee to have input. However, there is a February 13, 2009 deadline, so there is no time to compile recommendations. After some discussion on how to proceed, Cockburn made a motion: "The Committee will prepare a letter asking for a meeting with Secretary Conti to discuss the Committee's concerns and recommendations on bicycle-related public policy issues." Rash seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Strategies to Utilize the Findings of the Share the Road Attitude Survey

The Committee discussed some of the most relevant findings of the survey and how to develop messages for various target groups. Mikkelson noted that 35% of respondents disagree that a bicycle is a vehicle and 37% think bicyclists should ride on the sidewalk, but on the attitude questions, the responses were more favorable toward bicyclists being on the road. This indicates that people don't know the laws. The Committee developed ideas for messages as follow:

- Be predictable
- Sharing the Road is not just a good idea - it's the law
- Sharing the road is a "Two-Way Street"
- Ride like your life depends on it
- Ghost bikes
- Be focused, be friendly
- Focus on causes of injuries – being aggressive, being lackadaisical
- Note different kinds of cyclists

The Chair appointed a sub-committee to develop these ideas and report back to the Committee. Cockburn will chair; Mikkelson and Nix will serve as members. Norman suggested that the Communications Office could send out a press release during Bike Month. The Committee will consider a resolution supporting Bike Month at their April meeting.

Other States' Programs and Legislation

Nix distributed a pamphlet being used by eight people in the Asheville area, whom she trained, to instruct Driver's Education students. It is based on the Illinois program and includes a video. Meletiou reported on the Oregon "Vulnerable Road User's Law." The Committee discussed ways to make use of these programs and legislation to improve bicycle safety in NC.

Committee Vacancies

Norman reported that he is working toward filling the Committee position representing Divisions 5 and 8 which Pete Schubert has represented.

Project / Program Updates

Staff provided updates on the following projects:

- Norman was invited to make a presentation to the NC Institute of Medicine, a task force representing health agencies across the state. The focus was on the built environment as related to health issues. The group would like to develop a policy to submit to the Legislature. Norman reported on the success of the planning grant program in focusing attention on the development of bicycle and pedestrian networks.

- Norman also presented to the NC Board of Health, again reporting on the planning grants. They will try to get bike/ped language inserted into the recommendations of the 21st Century transportation Committee.
- Norman reported on several Complete Streets initiatives. He led a two three-hour sessions on the topic at the annual conference of the NC chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies. In addition, the Board of transportation Transit, Rail and Ferry Committee passed a resolution to form a Complete Streets Work Group that will have 45 days to develop a draft policy.
- Meletiou provided an update on the Law Enforcement Officer Training. Four training sessions have been offered with another scheduled for March 10th. More that 85 agencies have sent representatives to be trained.
- Meletiou reported on the transition of the Safe Routes to School Program to the Transportation Mobility and Safety unit. At the previous meeting the Committee had passed a resolution to request that funding be allocated to an update of the Basics of Bicycling. Meletiou explained that given the current work load, this is not a good time to pursue this idea.
- Norman reported on the 2009 Planning Grant Call for Proposals. Thirty-eight proposals were submitted: two withdrew their proposals. Norman noted that BOT member Nancy Dunn had expressed pride in the program and recognized that it is unique in the nation.
- Meletiou showed drafts of two large-area mapping projects: the Uwharrie Region project which encompasses eight counties and the Triangle Region Bike Map which includes extensive portions of Orange, Chatham, Wake, Durham and Johnston Counties.
- Norman reported on several trail construction projects.
 - The design for the Durham County portion of the ATT is 25-30% complete; the project will be bid out later this year and will be constructed in 2010.
 - Stimulus Package funds have been allocated to construct eight miles of the Neuse River/Mountains to Sea East greenway Trail. The construction plans are complete.
 - Stimulus Package funds have been allocated to a three-mile project to connect Clayton to the Raleigh greenway system.
 - Work is progressing on a three-mile trail project in Ocracoke. Staff is also working on providing wide paved shoulders to the ferry terminal at the northern end of Ocracoke Island.
 - Other stimulus projects must be ready to bid within 90 days.

Committee Activity Reports

The Bicycle Committee members send in their activities via email for inclusion in the minutes.

Jennifer Smith

- Safe Communities of Pitt County contributed over 100 helmets to accompany bicycles that were given to indigent families at Christmas.
- Three Safe Routes to School proposals were submitted from Pitt County, two infrastructure and one non- infrastructure.
- The Greenville Bicycle Friendly Task Force appointed by Greenville City Council is working in several subcommittees to include Review of the 2002 Master Plan/Bikeways, Cultural Change, and Bicycle Friendly Designation.
- There are currently two walking school buses at Ridgewood Elementary School in Greenville.
- Greenville has recently begun work on a new section of greenway that will be an increase of 3.1 miles when completed.

Hanna Cockburn

- Davidson County adopted their first Greenway Plan
- The Jamestown plan is underway
- Randolph and Rockingham Counties are establishing Safe Kids Coalitions
- Montgomery County produced a bike map.

Greg Loy

- Went “ice-biking” in neighborhood
- Reviewed 2009 Planning Grant proposals
- Met with Hatteras representatives regarding bicycle facilities

Dan Mikkelson

- Attended Carolina Thread Trail Workshop. Was a panel speaker concerning trail design, construction and maintenance.
- Attended Food Lion Health and Wellness Fair with information on the City’s comprehensive Bicycle Plan.
- Was appointed to serve on the Rowan County Board of Health. Interest in the built environment’s effect on public health (including my experience with the Bicycle Committee) was an important element of my appointment.
- Attended Carolina Thread Trail Advisory Council meeting.
- Completed review of 2nd draft of Salisbury Comprehensive Bicycle Plan.
- Reviewed 11 planning grant applications from the eastern part of the state.

Dennis Rash

- Completed service on the Task Force on the Use of Eminent Domain for Greenway Land Acquisitions. This group was appointed by the Mecklenburg County Commission and chaired by a former Commission Chairman. The group was charged with addressing a lingering objection by three Huntersville Town Commissioners over the use of condemnation authority there. Over the dissent of two Huntersville residents, our Task Force recommended continuing condemnation as the final land assembly technique after: a) the completion of all planning; b) due notice of the location(s) and the affected lands; and c) all reasonable negotiations had failed.
- Continued participation in the First Ward Urban Park planning, including strategic planning with the Charlotte - Mecklenburg Park & Recreation Commission for its overall Center City Master Planning effort. Bike and pedestrian connectivity is a key component of these urban planning efforts.
- Participated in the initial day long Lake Norman Bike Route planning effort in Mooresville. The members of this ad hoc planning committee represent both Divisions 10 & 12, and are stakeholders (including planning staff members) from the communities surrounding Lake Norman. The DBPT initiated the call for this group, and is partially funding this work. Bob Mosher of the DBPT staff also participated in this initial meeting.
- Held conferences with several stakeholders along the NC 73 corridor (primarily from Davidson), who seek more State and local funding for bike paths off road between Concord and Lincolnton.
- Continue to meet regularly with CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System) as it plans the next light rail corridor. Among the issues in these meetings is the opportunity for connections into adjoining neighborhoods along the corridor. Several neighborhoods already have a relatively large number of bicycle commuters, who seek better defined routes and paths and easier access to future light rail stations.

Claudia Nix

- Participated in the Activate Asheville events organized by the National YMCA with walking/biking activist, Mark Fenton. Objectives listed from the strategic planning session involve promoting Safe Routes to Schools for two 5 & 6 grade new schools in Buncombe County, developing a Complete Streets Initiative and completing road & sidewalk assessments with the use of UNC-A's College for Seniors.
- Held a Bicycle Summit of bicycle community organizations in WNC to help develop communication between the groups, and work on unifying efforts to improve the needs of all cyclists.
- The city of Asheville is developing their Transit Master Plan and I am sitting on the steering committee. They have had a similar turnout of citizen participation that the bicycle plan had.
- I am on the newly formed Buncombe County Greenway Commission. The group has determined that working to develop a greenway connecting Ridgecrest and the Point Lookout Trail to the proposed Asheville greenway is their first issue of business.
- A group of local bicyclist who regularly ride to Marshall, NC along the French Broad River expressed a desire to work toward putting a multi modal facility on this area of the French Broad River. They have been meeting and have determined the section from Broadway to the old landfill to be the first most feasible section to start talking to landowners. The Town is Woodfin is very supportive and willing to help contact landowners.
- Liberty Bicycles has been asked to be involved in a pilot program for the NBDA & LAB for an educational program of teaching bicycle safety to kids and adults and promoting safe bicycle commuting. Eight people were trained in early Dec. to assist in these programs and we have 4 kid's programs scheduled for this coming spring. I also got recertified as a League Bicycling Instructor and will be heading up many of these programs. I have 21 individuals who have signed up for training for the kids program.
- We have begun our planning for Strive Not to Drive which is our local bike month event. We will be concentrating on transit, however hope to continue the Mayor's Ride.
- The Bike/Pedestrian Task Force plans to begin a media safety campaign with a tag line "Be Predictable Be Seen".
- Asheville Parks & Recreation has chosen a contractor to begin working on the extension of the French Broad River greenway to connect Carrier Park to Hominy Creek Park. Last Tuesday the city council voted 6 to 1 to approve the plan. We had a letter writing campaign to help insure it passed.
- City council also voted to keep an old road bed for a future inner city greenway.
- The city has received an easement for the front of Karen Cragolin Park to connect Carrier Park to the confluence park. Reed Creek Greenway is ready for construction of its next section south to Magnolia Street

Other Business

Meletiou reported on the development of the AASHTO US bicycle Routes project to develop a system of Interstate bicycle routes.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm. Cockburn moved; Nix seconded.

Committee goals are attached to every set of minutes and are listed below.

2009 Bicycle Committee Goals

Goal 1: Improve bicycle planning and encourage multi-modal planning across the state

1. Expand and evaluate the Planning Grant Program
2. Develop a process to meet the planning needs of small communities
3. Support planning resources development by advocating for additional future funds
4. Mainstream bicycle planning through coordination and integration into all transportation planning processes

Goal 2: Improve Committee communication with constituents, Board of Transportation and DOT management

1. Engage advocacy groups and local and regional government agencies
2. Foster working relationship with Division Engineers, MPOs and RPOs
3. Advocate with Board of Transportation members and members of the NCDOT Transformation team
4. Develop presentation materials and seek opportunities to present at conferences and workshops
5. Develop interface with health community and economic development community; support and interface with Healthy Environment Community Initiative

Goal 3: Initiate a comprehensive bicycle/motor vehicle (“Share the Road”) awareness and education campaign

1. Conduct attitude survey
2. Develop a multi-year business plan and secure funding
3. Engage partners and resources to implement plan
4. Measure effectiveness