

MINUTES
WEST HARTFORD PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE COMMISSION MEETING
TUESDAY November 12 2019
WEST HARTFORD TOWN HALL, ROOM 400
Next Meeting Monday December 12th, 2019 @ 7:00PM ROOM 400

Board Members in attendance: Ken Livingston, Dan Firestone, Sandy Fry, Jill Morawski, Daniel Johnson, Colin Gillespie, Paul Hogan II, Laurie Silverman, Denisse Gutierrez

Town Staff in attendance: Helen Rubino -Turco

1. Quorum was held. Call to order 7:10 PM
2. Approval of previous meeting minutes on a motion by Dan Firestone, seconded by Sandy Fry with correction made to item 5 for the name of Rotary Club, Rotary in Motion event, the Minutes were approved with correction unanimously
3. Old Business:
 - a. 4th Grade education
 - i. Alyssa Norwood parent in Town sent an email (see attached) to several town staff and Commission chair requesting that the town implement 4th grade bike safety education. Her proposal was very detailed. Helen Rubino-Turco reported Alyssa's email was forwarded to Lisa Daly, PE Director, who has tackled this item in the past but has met resistance within the school administration.
 - ii. Some of the resistance has included: The Towns national standards-based curriculum does not include bicycle safety. To provide training equitably, all children in 11 elementary schools need to have the course, so a pilot program is out of the question. There may be an opportunity at a time other than the school day, for a pilot program. A meeting has been scheduled with Helen, Alyssa and Lisa to discuss the program further.
 - iii. Other obstacles:
 1. Funding may become an issue,
 2. To provide and store bicycle
 3. Finding a teacher to champion.
 - iv. Dan has done some outreach to school board members on this topic and it is recommended that those interested send email to boardmembers@whps.org, expressing interest in the curriculum addition. all board members will receive the communication.
 - v. It is also recommended to have a conversation with all board of education members, Dan and Daniel will do this. Note: The board of education meets the 3rd Tuesday of every month.
 - vi. The commission will write a letter supporting the stance and education proposal submitted by Alyssa Norwood. Sandy will draft and send out for comment
 - b. Ideas for sustainability grant program
 - i. Bike West Hartford will develop a grant application for an education component for the Center Streets event. All agreed that this was a good idea. The grant provides matching funds for grass roots fund raising.
 - c. Status of Roadway project
 - i. Mountain Rd/Albany Ave, Semi-final design to DOT with construction starting 2021. The road will be narrowed during construction (not shut down completely).
 - ii. North Main, they reviewed the bids and are on track to award. Construction is scheduled to start Spring 2020, with a public information meeting January 2020.

1. Sandy Fry, discussed metrics for evaluating the road diet with Duane Martin. Duane explained the WHPBC commission will be included in the conversation for metrics as the scope is developed for the road diet trial. They expect that once a consultant is hired for the road diet trial that the evaluation measures will be refined further and the Commission will be involved in that discussion also.
 1. Duane was reminded by the Commission travel time studies need to be completed for Trout Brook Road and Mountain Road.
- iii. Fern Street bridge will be in construction 2021 with completion expected in 2022.
- iv. New Park Rd., updates, The Town is waiting for comments back from DOT, and therefore the project is not moving currently.
- d. Status Trout Brook Trail
 - i. Phase 3 Park to Jackson, this is being designed in house, preliminary design is currently underway. Design will be shared with WHPBC, probably in January.
 - ii. Phase 5 & Phase 6 (Farmington to Fern, and fern to Duffield) the trail here traverses DEEP owned property so there must be an agreement between the town and DEEP to allow for construction. The holdup has been ironing out maintenance responsibilities, it appears things will be resolved soon.
- e. A question was brought up by Jill Morawski regarding bike lane design and implementation. Some concerns include parking in the bike lane on Fern and speeding on streets with bike lanes. Sandy Fry, mentioned that either Duane Martin or Greg Sommer will attend WHPBC meetings quarterly and Greg will attend the December 2019 meeting. Therefore Jill's question will be moved forward to December 2019 meeting.

Ken Livingston joined the meeting at 7:48PM

- f. Planning Department Matters, the 2020 Town Conservation and Development Plan will be shared with WHPBC, probably in December.
- g. Bike Share Update – CRCOG Policy Board (including West Hartford) approved the execution of an agreement between Zagster/Pace and CRCOG on October 30. The CRCOG master agreement will then allow the participating communities (including West Hartford), to negotiate their own agreements with the bike share provider.
4. New Business
 - a. Johannes announced Hartford Cranksgiving Saturday November 23, 2019 to benefit a food pantry. For more information find them at bikereg.com/44773 , the event starts at Trinity College.
 - b. Ed Pawlak raised a question where the optimal placement for Radar speed detection speed signs, and how the decision is made, especially close to an intersection. What determines the placement of speed radars?
 - i. Sandy Fry recapped meeting minutes from Duane Martin at a prior WHPBC meeting. Regarding speed radar signs; they need solar, they place them near schools when possible, sometimes property owners complain, they need to be in the public right of way, like to put in locations where people turn on to road so people are notified.
5. Reports
 - a. Town Staff – Helen Rubino-Turco, all items were covered previously
 - b. Subcommittee: bike parking, update to be given at December 2019 meeting
 - c. Cycling Without Age: The rickshaw has been garaged for the remainder of the year
 - d. Update from Bike West Hartford Inc

- i. Planning Center Streets 2020 with discussion to extend the route southward to include Ellsworth. It was noted that this is not a town sponsored event. If it were town sponsored, costs would be much lower.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Johnson, Secretary and Board Member
West Hartford Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission

Hello, everyone!

My name is Alyssa Norwood, mom of Eliot (grade 6), Clara (grade 3), and Amy (kindergarten), students at Whiting Lane Elementary School. I'm also a biking enthusiast and a Program Manager at Sustainable CT, a voluntary certification program for Connecticut municipalities (West Hartford was among the very first municipalities certified in the state!).

I'm e-mailing with an exciting idea, and I'm e-mailing you all to explore making it a reality. The outline below is meant as a starting point for conservation, and I look forward to seeing it evolve and improve with your feedback!

The idea: Implement a 4th grade bicycle safety education program at Whiting Lane and other partnering West Hartford elementary schools.

Background:

- Almost 10 years ago, the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) received a grant to develop a bicycle safety education program. West Hartford's own Sandy Fry (here on this e-mail, and Chair of the Pedestrian & Bicycle Commission) was one of its developers.
- Bike Walk CT (a member-supported non-profit organization that works to make Connecticut a better place to bike and walk) looked for a school in which to pilot the program. Eli Terry Elementary School in South Windsor was chosen.
- The program has grown significantly since its inception and provides a model for other schools/communities in the state to implement 4th grade bicycle education.

What Students Learn

- 4th grade students:
 - Take a pretest on bike safety knowledge
 - View videos on Helmit Fit, ABC Quick Check and Proper Bike Fit
 - Helmets are fitted and labeled
 - Review parts of the bike
 - Review traffic signs
 - Are sized for the appropriate bike
 - Participate in a culminating off-campus ride (permission slips are sent out)

- The curriculum includes on-bike and off-bike portions and takes place over 3 different school days (90 minutes per day; 45 minutes on-bike and 45 minutes off-bike).

Potential Roles for Different Partners

- *West Hartford Public Schools administration.* Implements bike education program into 4th grade PE curriculum; provides copies of Bike Walk CT's Bicycle Safety Education PE Teacher Training manual; provides certificates of completion to students; support schools in obtaining substitutes to enable P.E. teacher participation.
- *Whiting Lane and other partnering elementary schools.* Purchases helmets (kept by the students) and funds substitutes to enable P.E. teachers to participate in bicycle education training and lead the bicycle education program.
- *P.E. teachers.* Attend an 8-hour bicycle education workshop for K-12 P.E. teachers; collaborate across schools, so that each program is attended by 3 P.E. teachers; arrange for school-supported substitutes to cover classes.
- *West Hartford Parks & Recreation Department and/or Department of Public Works.* Purchase bicycles, trailer for bicycles, and racks in trailer for hanging bicycles; coordinate design for trailer; transport bike trailer to each school and transport bikes annually to and from a local bicycle shop for tune-ups; store trailer; provide traffic signs; supply tent, tarps and first aid kit.
- *A local bicycle shop* (I could reach out to all of those in the area that might be interested in the visibility associated with this project): Supplies bikes and equipment at a discount; tunes up bikes annually; ideally fixes minor bike problems at no charge
- *Bike Walk CT.* Provides counsel on bicycle and trailer specifications.
- *Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission.* Determine indicators for program effectiveness and track over time.
- *Bike West Hartford.* Provide volunteers to support the elementary school program at each session and each school and recommend and pilot the off-campus riding routes.
- *Sustainable CT.* Provide Match Funding to this project through its Community Match Fund.

Sustainable CT Community Match Fund

- The Sustainable CT Community Match funds provides fast, flexible funding to support projects just like this one. Funding is available to any municipality registered with Sustainable CT.
- Sustainable CT has partnered with ioby to provide a crowdfunding platform (similar to what Whiting Lane uses for the Rock n' Run) for fundraising campaigns for eligible projects and matches contributions dollar-for-dollar. Here's an example: <https://ioby.org/project/building-community-garden>.
- The match funds are instantaneous to accelerate the campaign. For example, if I go online to donate \$10 to a campaign to support a 4th grade bicycle education program in West Hartford, Sustainable CT instantaneously matches that contribution, which then appears as \$20 on the fundraising platform.

- Implementing a 4th grade bicycle education program will help the Town of West Hartford earn additional points in its pursuit of Silver Certification (the Town is currently at Bronze) in 2020.

Potential Budget

One-Time Costs

- 25 bicycles, equipment and tools: \$9,521
- Hallmark 16' x 8.5' box trailer, dual axle, white: \$6,766
- 3-side full decal advertising wrap: \$4,250
- Racks for hanging bikes: \$450
- **TOTAL: \$20,987**

Annual Costs (On-Going)

- Annual bike tune-ups: \$50/bike, or \$1,250
- Cost of substitutes: \$85/day x 3 people x 3 days = \$765/school, or \$2,295 for 3 schools
- Helmets (www.helmetsrus.net): \$7.45/helmet (includes shipping) x 50 students = ~\$372.50 per school, or \$1,017.50 for 3 schools
- 3 League Certified Instructors: \$1,500/school or \$4,500 for 3 schools
- **TOTAL for 3 participating schools: \$9,062.50**

TOTAL initial budget for year 1: \$30,049.50

Potential Fundraising Strategy and Timeline

- November-early December 2019: Assess project feasibility, allocate roles, and determine at least 2 West Hartford elementary schools in addition to Whiting Lane for inaugural project year
- January 2020: Apply to Sustainable CT Community Match Fund
- February 2020 (so as not to interfere with spring fundraising): Launch Sustainable CT-supported crowdfunding, fundraising campaign for \$15,025 across all participating schools (other \$15,025 to potentially be matched by Sustainable CT).
- March to June 2020: Writing of bike education with model guides into curriculum; P.E. participation in training; community engagement process re trailer design
- July to August 2020: Purchase trailer, bicycles, etc.
- Fall 2020: Launch program (Personal motivation: One of my children is a 3rd grader this year... making them eligible to participate as a 4th grader this fall!)

Potential Timeline/Next Steps

- E-mail me (alyssa.norwood@gmail.com) with the names/contact information of folks/potential partners who may be interested in helping spearhead or support this effort who aren't already on the e-mail distribution list above (e.g., other principals, P.E. teachers at other schools, etc.).
- Provide feedback to this group electronically! What are your initial reactions? Questions? Things that excite you? Things that concern you?
- Is there a possibility of holding an in-person meeting to discuss, ideally this month before Thanksgiving? Perhaps after school on a Wednesday? Please provide suggestions on how/when we could best come together.

South Windsor has been a leader in this regard. Attached please find slides that summarize their efforts with some photos as well to give you a sense of what this all could look like (literally!).

Looking forward to hearing from all of you!

Cheers,

Alyssa Norwood