

West Hartford Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission Monthly Meeting Minutes
Monday September 12, 2022, 7 PM
Room 24, Elmwood Community Center

1. Call to Order, Attendance

Quorum achieved.

2. Introductions

Commission members, 5 residents and a guest (Transport Hartford Academy representative).

3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Motion 1st and 2nd. Minutes approved.

4. Old Business

a. Umbrella Sustainability Commission update

Reflecting on idea of higher level commission over 3 commissions: Ed and Sandy still supported some elements of this idea but not ready yet with current proposal. Jill described pushing for other ways to create connections with Town Council.

Greater group asked us to weigh in on 3 choices:

1. Create umbrella commission we would join.
2. We would remain independent as a commission. Other two commissions would join together.
3. 3 commissions remain intact but there would be liaisons to meet together.

Motion: PBC would stay intact and independent...but not dictate how the how the other two commissions are organized. Motion 2nd. Ed, Colin, Dan, Ken, Sandy, and Jill voted in favor, while Paul abstained.

b. New Community Center Committee update (Sandy Fry)

Confirmed location is decided. Pushing simply for good bike access.

c. New Park Avenue Complete Streets alternatives analysis update

Discussed August 26 special meeting (authorized) in which PBC was represented.

Reviewed 35% plans and letter created with 4 recommendations and resulting town reactions.

1. Town to study extending road diet south to New Britain Ave. Town will not support extending RD going north past Talcott Road.
2. Regarding off-road multi use path from Trout Brook trail all the way up to Home Depot, the idea was changed by the Town to an on-road cycle track (separated by bollards) and indicated that a study will be conducted on this.
3. Town agreed to explore making connection between Home Depot up to connect with Oakwood and Flatbush (not part of existing study)
4. Design project was proposed to connect to nearby municipalities. Town will consider that as well in this project.

d. New Park Avenue “Walk Audit” presentation (Transport Hartford Academy)

“Quarters of transit” walk around CT fast track

- Meeting around transit oriented development - sidewalks and bike paths designed around mass transit (CT fast track)
- Showed map of the “loop.” New Park Ave area.
- Identified intersection/crosswalk near Colt Factory as hazardous (broken pedestrian signal, poorly designed signals, need more shade and better aesthetics)
- Bike lanes do not exist
- Sidewalks generally poor (broken badly for most part) and sometimes blocked by construction
- Industrial use area and a lot of unused space

Recommendations:

Bike paths need bollards, Trees should be planted, bus stops should be covered and need benches, road diet for calming measures, zoning should allow for mixed use, crosswalks should be maintained, bike walks need to be installed where business is conducted.

- Also stated one should avoid making an area a “Stroad” ... neither a road nor a street. New park could become a “street.”
- Also reviewed benefits of a fast track (especially where rail is not available)

Conclusion:

See and execute recommendations above. **KEY:** the changed zoning and build homes/residential use and Fast Track will be even more optimized.

5. New Business

a. Engineering updates

Engineering updates tabled until next meeting.

b. P&Z updates tabled until next meeting

c. Woodrow Street traffic calming request

Awareness: Residents are asking for tracking calming and do not feel heard at this point. Tom Martin resident of Woodrow came to give resident view. Traffic volumes shared on Woodrow vs other streets that have received traffic calming. Woodrow has significantly more traffic and has clocked cars at 63 MPH. Meeting minutes shared on possible solutions. Jill stated that certain traffic calming should allow safe passage of peds and bicycles.

Jill Motion: PBC to draft a letter to Rick Ledwith in support of taking measures to do traffic calming on Woodrow. Any measures should be bike and pedestrian friendly. Dan seconded and motion passed on vote.

d. West Hartford Center Infrastructure Master Plan Workshops on 9/21/22 Ed noted this workshop 11-3 and 5-7. Brainstorming and workshops. Open to public. Pass the word.

6. Announcements

a. Connecticut Transportation Institute Road Safety Assessment Workshop 9/27/22 Noted and Ed attending.

7. Input for next PBC meeting on 10/11/22

8. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 pm