

West Hartford Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission Monthly Meeting Minutes

Monday January 9, 2023, 7:00 PM

Room 400, Town Hall

1. Call to Order 7:03 pm

Attendance: Colin G., Jill M., Ken L., Sandy F., Ed P., Paul H. - Quorum Achieved

2. Introductions

Attendees included PBC Commissioners, community members, Town Manager (Rick Ledwith), Director of Community Development (Duane Martin), Bike West Hartford, and BiCi Co. - total of 7+ new attendees

3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Motion Sandy F., 2nd Jill M. - Approved

4. Who will volunteer to take meeting minutes?

Colin G.

5. Old Business

a. West Hartford Center Infrastructure Master Plan update

Duane Martin commented:

1. Info online on WH Town website to input comments.

2. Workshops to come - focused meeting on Feb 2nd in Town Hall Auditorium (actual hour time TBD)

3. Cycle tracks being investigated - Walden Street to Main Street on North side of Farmington Avenue but what happens beyond is a question. Also investigating extending to Trout Brook Drive. Advocacy by community shared to make all four corners of Trout Brook Drive and Farmington Avenue intersection safer and more intelligently designed.

4. South Main Street included in master plan but not a full restructuring

b. League of American Bicyclists "Bicycle Friendly Community" application update

1. A subcommittee consisting of two members each from PBC and Bike West Hartford has provided input to Duane Martin to improve application.

2. Sandy F. discussed update and said G5 and G6 were still in discussions.

3. Revised application document after this meeting will be shared with Duane.

4. Sandy indicated that this input also was an opportunity to express PBC and Bike WH concerns and suggestions even beyond the application.

5. Colin asked to add survey in "measurement" as well as PBC meetings as opportunity for community input.

6. Duane stated as much as 95% of input has been incorporated into revised application.

c. Road Safety Audit and Bike Facility Plan Revision RFP update

1. Comment made how PBC originated idea for this study and provided input to RFP finalization. Very collaborative work between town (Duane) and this commission.

2. Hot spots will be studied and bike map will be updated.

- 3. Feb 1st RFP responses due. Town staff will decide how many consultants to interview. Town staff will decide who to hire. Not just cost is considered but capabilities will be assessed as well.**
- 4. It is expected that a consultant will be hired by March, and the study will take six months to complete. Study will be shared with Commission and community members.**
- 5. The town decided that the RFP would include both a Road Safety Audit AND a Bike Facility Plan Revision. This a normal joint mandate for this type of consultant.**
- 6. Community member question on looking at pedestrian safety more in this study. Town reps said this is an ongoing concern/evaluation and will be covered in Vision Zero initiative.**
- 7. Question asked about SS4A Grant Application. Duane answered positively about progress on WH SS4A Grant Application.**
- 8. Community member asked if Walk Audit could come a part of safety study. Duane said this could be considered for safety study or to task-forces.**
- 9. A member of the public suggested interviewing crossing guards to learn their observations on road safety.**

d. New Park Avenue Complete Streets update

- 1. Commissioners Sandy and Ed held a working session with WH Town Engineering recently.**
- 2. Engineering Division considered three different options for the New Park Avenue Complete Streets design. Option 2 (recommended by the town) with cycle tracks on west side of New Park Avenue from New Britain Avenue to Talcott Road...then transition to off-road side path to BJs and Home Depot driveway. Engineering Division is endorsing Option 2. There are 3 challenging areas: 1. New Britain Ave, 2. Gastro Park driveway and 3. bus stop on west side of New Park Avenue. Sandy shared links for bus stop designs with Engineering Division.**
- 3. Engineering Division will be meeting with CPED subcommittee of Town Council. CPED required because there is a cost associated with a cycle track...for example mini-plows and mini-sweepers are needed for cleaning, etc.**
- 4. Question asked about a possible train station on New Park Avenue - Town Manager indicated this is 5 years out.**
- 5. Of note: February 18th is next CPED meeting.**

6. New Business

a. Road Safety Task Force

- 1. Public safety crisis based on recent events.**
- 2. Town Manager addressed group to introduce VISION ZERO. Reviewed WH road fatalities and accidents in 2022/2023.**
- 3. On Jan 10 the Town Council will vote on a task force to address the road safety emergency. Task force will have representatives from WH police, fire, public works, PR, engineering, and equity advancement. Looking for 8-10 residents for task force with each of these leveraging individual community member talents/expertise.**
- 4. Idea is to change behavior in a 60K person town. Idea to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries within a specified time period.**
- 5. Will ask for state help (Stamford was first in this initiative in CT).**

6. Action plan will be created over 12 months. Long term, mid term, and short term (eg 2023) goals and plans. And Town will hold themselves accountable.

7. Community member commented on how behavioral change is absolutely required. Another commented that only street design will truly reduce speeds.

8. Question on state roads through WH. State DOT has a VISION ZERO council. Unclear on local effects.

9. Comment that differences on traffic-calmed areas and non-traffic calmed on the same street (e.g. Steele Road) are apparent, and the differences in driving speed. Slower drivers are more apt to stop before getting into an accident.

10. Opportunity brought up regarding traffic cameras with tickets issued for infractions.

11. Public comment that laws are not enforced adequately. Also is there enough awareness.

12. January 18 - Jennifer Boyd documentary "Street Project" at Noah Webster Library 5:30 to 6:30. Sign up on BikeWH.com to sign up.

b. P&Z updates - None

7. Announcements

8. 2/13/23 PBC meeting

a. Need a PBC Commissioner to chair the meeting

Ed will ask via email to commission on having meeting

b. Agenda input

Pending.

9. Adjourn

8:50 p.m. meeting adjourned.