

West Hartford Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission Monthly Meeting Minutes

Monday December 12, 2022, 6:30 PM

Room 24, Elmwood Community Center

1. Call to Order, Attendance: 6:35 call to order. Colin, Sandy, Ed, Paul, Jill
2. Introductions
3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes. Motion: Sandy Second: Jill – unanimous
4. Old Business
 - a. West Hartford Center Infrastructure Master Plan presentation by Stantec, followed by questions/input from the Commission and audience
 - Stantec – Jason & Eliza presented the Infrastructure master plan slide deck
 - Open for input, nothing set in stone yet. Comprehensive evaluation of existing street infrastructure, traffic lanes, sidewalks, bus stop accommodations etc. Woodrow, Brace, Burr
 - The project can go through to construction documents on LaSalle and Farmington, so it's concept to construction.
 - Key concerns: angled back in parking, wide variety of public feedback. LaSalle Road will better serve people walking, green space,
 - Design goals: facilities and infrastructure, economic development, neighborhoods and housing, open space and environment, transportation, land use, cultural and historic resources (in order of importance)
 - Facilities and infrastructure – maintain and modernize in sustainable ways to provide services harmoniously. EV charging, bioswales, information technology.
 - Economic development – promote growth while preserving and protecting character
 - Neighborhood and housing – diversity of housing types, enhanced walkability for all, support housing downtown, interactive spaces
 - Open Space and environment – Storm water management, pocket park, healthy street trees and canopy.
 - Transportation – prepare for new transportation tech, prioritize safety and walkability, bus amenities, 8-80yr old bicycle facility.
 - Land use – walkable downtown limits excessive vehicle traffic
 - Cultural and historic resources – historic character
 - What about bathroom facilities?

- Include Farmington and Trout Brook? – create a gateway to the town center there.
- Vehicle circulation – The center is dangerous for vulnerable users. It’s a problem. Pedestrian crosswalks are long to cross, and hence there are more crashes and safety concerns.
- Traffic counts: Main Street – 1,500, Farmington Avenue - 1,000, LaSalle Road – 300, Woodrow – lower
- Employee circulation patterns during those hours. Parking hunt – means that people are circulating to find on street parking. Over 5,000 parking spaces in study area. The parking supply is very proximate to the center.
- Finding a parking space on some roads is challenging: Farmington, Isham, Memorial, LaSalle, Dale. There are still 1,500 empty spaces, even at peak usage times. Only using 2/3 of parking spaces during peak hours of those areas.
- Closing LaSalle might not be the best choice according to Stantec.
- The consultants suggested closing LaSalle on weekends on a trial basis.
- Bicycle circulation
 - 68 bike parking spaces. Main and Farmington are uncomfortable, LaSalle and Brace are medium.
 - Protected bike lanes proposed on Farmington Avenue, LaSalle would be slow shared street.
 - Rank of street design – dedicated outdoor dining, widened sidewalk walking space, protected bike lanes –
 - Farmington – 9’ walk zone, 4’ furnishing zone, 5’ cycle track, 2’ buffer, 8’ parking, 11’ travel lane. They do acknowledge that there is opportunity to continue the protected bike lanes east and west of the Center. That’s not in the scope of the study.
 - Main Street is part of the design area but it’s not going into the level of detail for construction docs there in Stantec scope
- Sidewalk Activity
 - Trees –
 - LaSalle Frontage -6’3” walkway 10’ Amenity zone 9’5” furniture zone 8’, parking 8’, 10’ lane. Curbless street is a possibility. LaSalle will have parallel parking on both sides, no bike lane on the street.
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- a. League of American Bicyclists “Bicycle Friendly Community” application review - presentation by PBC committee
 - a. We reviewed the application and provided recommendations to the town. We suggest that the town share the draft
 - b. Colin – supports adding the survey into the draft plan in the evaluation section

- i. There is the 2021 survey 1,019 responses
 - ii. Then there is the league survey that had a few hundred responses.
- c. Sandy motion to endorse continued work and to keep working with town to revise: Ed Second: Sandy. Unanimous

5. New Business

a. Engineering updates

- i. New Park Avenue Complete Streets alternatives review by Engineering staff

completing review - requested working session to go over finer points. Sandy agreed and Ed as well. Working with Greg in near future. Greg to attend in January to present redesign of New Park Complete Streets.

- ii. Where should E bikes and electric scooters operate? Bike lanes or travel lanes? Trout Brook Trail?

Trout Brook Trail Phase 6 contract signed, early spring construction. Phase 7 design not complete, but work should be done next year. Phase 3 should be planned this winter and out to bid next year.

Park Road – complete streets survey this winter?

Where should e-bikes and electric scooters operate?

b. P&Z updates - none

- c. Road Safety Audit and Bike Facility Plan Revision RFP update - the draft is still in the process of being finalized

6. Announcements

7. Input for next PBC meeting on 12/12/22

8. Adjourn – 8:43 PM– Sandy, second, Ed