

## **West Hartford Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission Monthly Meeting Minutes**

**Monday March 13, 2023, 7:00 PM**

**Room 400, Town Hall**

### **1. Call to Order at 7:01 pm, Attendance**

Present: Ed Pawlak, Colin Gillespie, Jen Bowman, Ed Perzanowski, Ken Livingston, Paul Hogan, Jill Morawski, Tristen Sokol

Quorum achieved

Representatives attended from Bike West Hartford, WH Town Engineering (Greg Sommer, Jim Brennan), Ben Wenograd (Town Council), and from general WH residents

A. PBC Secretary Nomination/motion from Jill M. and 2nd from Paul H. ... Colin G. approved

B. PBC Vice Chair interest from commissioners Jill M. and Ed Perzanowski. Action: vote on this in April meeting.

### **2. Introductions, including new commissioners**

#### **3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes**

Motion Jill M. and Second Ken L. ... Minutes approved

#### **4. Who will volunteer to take meeting minutes?**

New Secretary Colin Gillespie

### **5. Old Business**

#### **a. Trout Brook Trail update**

- Phase 6 funding approved last fall and work to start 2nd week April and complete by end of July 2023
- Phase 7 wrap up by end 2023 or early 2024
- Phase 8 through UConn parcel - trail to come but start date undecided. Ed Pawlak asked when can PBC provide input to the developer on this Phase 8 trail...and received confirmation that input can come soon on this phase. Ed will follow up on how this input can happen.
- Phase 3 between Jackson Ave and Park Rd - construction ideally will begin in 2024.

#### **b. New Park Avenue Complete Streets update**

Summary of current state given. PBC and Bike WH input being taken into account. Will build protected two way cycle track (with vertical separation - 1st time in WH) from New Britain Ave to Tolcott Road. In January 2023, met to discuss how to design the track especially focused on intersections. Looking to wrap up design in 2023 and construction in 2024. Also, snow maintenance equipment considered as a purchase for this cycle track (long term budget item and considering how it could be used on future tracks). Also future plans discussed for more usable and safe crosswalks. Conversation also on the bridge to be replaced but final touches a few years out...with temporary pedestrian facilities until permanent bridge re-construction. Question asked on mechanism for bike parking but Greg S. indicated private property (like Home Depot) is not required to provide bike parking. Town rep said PBC could advocate for this for current and new businesses. Bike parking could be shown on new bicycle network map that will be soon revised.

**c. Road Safety Audit/Bike Facility Plan Revision RFP update**

RFP sent out and consultant approved - FHI Studios. Starting to kick off holistic study project and contract should be signed in March. Will study vehicle crash hotspots and update bicycle network map. Synergistic with Vision Zero. Ed Pawlak asked commission to share input to be included that can be given to consultant. Jill M. suggested inviting the consultants to an upcoming meeting (earlier than later), and Ed Pawlak said we can aggregate recommended bicycle facility improvements. Suggestion also that we use traffic and congestion “heat maps” to make the list. Also, commissioner suggested other bike facilities (parking, “fix-it” stations, etc.) to be added. Paul H. suggested that we take advantage of fact that 2 PBC representatives are designated to be included in stakeholder meetings (in section 3.4 of actual bid document). ACTION: Tristen S. volunteered to take suggestions via email of changes/improvements to particular roads (designated sections where to where).

**d. League of American Bicyclists “Bicycle Friendly Community” application update**

Application re-submitted with a tremendous amount of input from PBC and Bike WH. Learning that more meetings on actual document could have helped to ensure alignment. A few inputs were missed, but application has gone out. ACTION: Ed Pawlak asked all in attendance to take the LAB survey that he shared.

**6. New Business**

**a. Road resurfacing projects**

- Clifton, Brunswick and Garfield to be resurfaced.
- Trout Brook Drive from Asylum to Albany to be resurfaced as well but will not include bicycle facilities as the Northern section of the Trout Brook Trail will soon be completed - comment made that this will be tough for pedestrians and bicycles. Request to repave sidewalk north of Asylum Avenue. Question asked: are traffic volume on Trout Brook Drive suitable for a road diet? Actually, road diet could be considered as ~19K cars a day estimated (sub ~20K makes it feasible).
- Boulevard to be resurfaced in 2023 as well from Mountain to Riggs. Proposed two way cycle track (2 ft buffer and two 5 ft bike lanes) as improvement on south side and parking on north side. Intersections taken into account around bump outs with 3.5 ft wide bike lanes. Bike WH asked if input taken by Town Management - serious concerns shared. Ed Pawlak asked if vertical separation will be provided for the cycle track. Town indicated that residential nature of this area makes it different than New Park Avenue plan...still receiving resident input on plan. Ed Pawlak questioned respectfully if resident input over a public right of way is potentially overvalued. Ben W. stated all voices need to be heard both informally and formally. Another resident made a comment about being pinched into the travel lane on Boulevard at the bump outs. Suggested use of “armadillos” to protect lane without visual clutter. Statement made again about issues of 2 way cycle track without buffers ... can be dangerous. Conversation about improving crosswalks on Boulevard ... Greg S. open to installing raised cross walks. Comment made that Vision Zero is resulting in more broad opinions supporting that slowing traffic down is actually good. ACTION: Ed Pawlak asked that this issue be tabled until the April meeting.

**b. Complete Streets Annual Report**

The report will be posted online once it is finalized. Jim B. shared some specifics which will be in report. Bike lanes, sidewalk replacements, repaving, phases of Trout Brook Trail, improved crosswalks including signals and buttons, traffic calming, speed humps, road diet and more all were worked on in 2023. Shared crash report (as requested by PBC) of vulnerable user crashes, which declined in 2022 ... but there were 3 motor vehicle pedestrian fatal crashes last year.

**c. Vision Zero Task Force update**

Feb 13 was 1st meeting and next meeting March 20th - focused on education, enforcement, and infrastructure ... goal to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero by 2032.

Task Force would like to show visible progress in 2023. So “quick build” projects are being recommended. Ed Pawlak will keep PBC updated each month. ACTION: Ed Pawlak asked commission if quick build ideas can be recommended by PBC. Ed Perzanowski will take these via email and aggregate them.

d. P&Z updates - none

7. Announcements

None

8. 4/10/23 PBC meeting

Noted

a. Agenda input

None except actions above.

9. Adjourn at 9 pm

Tristen S. motioned to adjourn the meeting and Ed Perzanowski 2nd.