



WORTHINGTON BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the Tuesday, May 29, 2018 Meeting

Members Present: The members present were Mike Bates, Ann Horton, Emma Lindholm, Jeannie Martin, Gary Schmidt, and John Stephan.

City Support Staff Darren Hurley (Parks & Recreation Director) and Celia Thornton were present. Also in attendance were residents John Canty (445 Riley Ave.) and Sarah Kuhnell (359 Pinney Dr.).

Minutes from the April 23, 2018 meeting were approved by all, with the exception of Ms. Martin, who abstained.

Visitor Comments: Mrs. Kuhnell was introduced and said she would reserve her comments until the S.R. 161 / Evening Street intersection safety discussion. Mr. Canty then introduced himself as a resident and cyclist who rides from Worthington to Westerville. He has noticed that anyone who would ride from Westerville would have difficulty figuring out how to get to the Olentangy Trail. He shared his ideas regarding signage and sign placement with the board. Mr. Canty suggested 12 signs (six locations with signs facing both directions) through residential areas for safer and easier rides. He said as riders go west on Schrock Road past Huntley and approach the railroad tracks, the bike lane ends and people wonder- what next? How do I get to the Olentangy Trail from here? He recognizes that with the new intersection going in, and future plans for a trail along East Wilson Bridge Road, the City may prefer to route people this way eventually. In the meantime, his route wouldn't take any investment other than a few signs. While he thinks sharrows would be nice on Proprietors Road, he doesn't think they're necessary on the residential streets. He suggests routing cyclists west on Schrock, over the railroad tracks, take a left onto Proprietors, and then a right on North Street. They should stay on North Street and take it across High Street (a nice small intersection) and then take a right on Evening Street. Take Evening Street to Highgate, turn left on Highgate and take that straight to the Olentangy Trail. He believes little green bikeway signs would suffice and said that he would type up a formal plan and give it to the board for further consideration. Ms. Martin invited him to participate in the upcoming community input sessions planned as part of the Bike & Pedestrian Master Planning process. Mr. Schmidt thanked Mr. Canty for coming and sharing his ideas.

Olentangy Trail Signage & Access Improvement (161 Access Road): Mr. Hurley reminded the board that at the April meeting the Old Worthington Partnership had submitted a proposal for infrastructure improvements to the 161 access road and had suggested directional signage to help trail users find their way to Old Worthington. He then gave an update on a second meeting he attended with Ms. Thornton, Mrs. Nina Parini and Mrs. Joanne Dole of the Old Worthington Partnership (OWP). Both groups had agreed on sign locations and verbiage and Ms. Thornton is working with Columbus Recreation and Parks and the Central Ohio Greenways on the signs while the OWP begins talking to neighbors and securing funding. The OWP had agreed to sharrow markings on both routes (which will be accomplished through the City Street Improvement Program). All signage will come back to the board for further input prior to posting. At the last meeting the board had a robust discussion about different routes through the neighborhoods to get visitors to Old Worthington. The recommendation this group made was Farrington to New England, but Mr. Hurley has since discussed this with Mr. Whited, the City Engineer, who preferred that the route be Farrington to Sinsbury to New England. He would like the board to consider the City Engineers suggestion to slightly change the route. Mr. Schmidt shared that Mr. Whited's route is 0.6 miles long and 77 feet of elevation. The board's route is 0.8 miles long and 101 feet of elevation (along with some descent). The board had a quick discussion and agreed to amend their previous motion in favor of Mr. Whited's suggested route that takes riders from the access road to Farrington, then Sinsbury and onto New England and up to High Street. There was also a short discussion on the removal of the bollards. Mr. Whited is not in favor, but Mr. Schmidt, and the board, still recommends their removal. If he is against their entire removal, then the board would like the City to consider replacing them with flexible plastic bollards which would pose less of a safety hazard to cyclists and which can be taken down and put back if city vehicles need access to the trails. These motions were passed with all in favor. Mr. Hurley said he would take these suggestions to the City Engineer, Mr. Whited. Since the physical improvements and funding was already approved this would constitute a change. Mr. Hurley will get feedback from the engineer and in the meantime staff will continue to move the signage aspect of the project forward.

S.R. 161 / Evening Street Safety Concerns: Mrs. Kunnell had written a letter to the City Manager and City Council regarding her concerns for the intersection crossing at S.R. 161 and Evening Street. She contends that this is a major crossing for three schools and a particular concern for children in the southwestern quadrant who are required to walk to school. While there are crossing guards during some of the elementary hours, they aren't there during middle or high school crossing times and aren't there for elementary children who stay late for school activities. She has personally witnessed several potential accidents between vehicles and pedestrians and nothing has changed since she has raised her concerns. Dublin installed a tunnel, which has also become a public art space with murals, for students in their district who had to cross a busy street and choose to bus more children for safety reasons. While she understands that a tunnel is a \$200 million project, she strongly believes that this is literally the difference between life and death and doesn't believe any of the short term solutions posed (stationing more police at the intersection or changing the crossings) will make a significant difference. Ms. Martin shared that she worked for the City of Dublin in the Engineering Department when the Dublin tunnel project was constructed. Because it was a mid-block crossing (not at an intersection) the cost was \$200 million. The one she's proposing in Worthington would likely cost significantly more and would be more complicated, if there is even the required amount of space necessary. Ms. Martin also shared that the murals were added to help the children overcome their fear of the tunnel. The board had some discussion around this topic, which included altering the traffic light pattern at this intersection. Mr. Stephan said that it would be great if engineering staff was able to attend these meetings so that they could give us real time input on some of the solutions and questions discussed. Mr. Hurley shared that Mr. Greeson (City Manager) had pulled together City staff for a safety discussion. One suggestion at that meeting was removing the western crossing, but wasn't

sure this would work due to human nature. Mr. Stephan felt that we fail as a community if we don't at least try to address these safety concerns and asked Mr. Hurley how to best navigate this concern. Mr. Hurley agreed that it was obviously a serious concern and that if the board would like to take action they can put it at the top of the Blue Zone consultants list (as part of the Master Plan process) and can also bring it to another City meeting with the City Manager, Police, etc. Ms. Martin asked Mr. Hurley to see if the City Engineer would explore the possibility of a four way stop in the sequence for just pedestrian crossing, while in the meantime the board gets Blue Zone consultants fully on board. Mr. Hurley said he'd get Mr. Whited's feedback, and didn't know if this would require a traffic study. Ms. Martin suggested he get the feedback sooner rather than later. Mrs. Kuhnell also suggested that perhaps the addition of temporary speed bumps would help in the short term. Mr. Hurley thought perhaps this could be a pilot opportunity. Mr. Schmidt then thanked Mrs. Kuhnell for sharing her concerns and attending the meeting.

Updates:

1. Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan – Mr. Hurley and Ms. Thornton have had two conference call meetings with the consultants. The first Steering Committee meeting will be held on June 13, 2018 and from there a plan will be proposed for how and when to get community input. Staff is also putting together a stakeholder list. Mr. Dan Burden will be coming to town in July or August to do heavy community engagement and Mr. Hurley is hoping that the timeline will be fine-tuned after the initial June meetings.
2. LimeBike – The trial is underway and there have been no complaints thus far. City staff is internally tracking all calls that come in to any department regarding LimeBike during the trial period. Mr. Hurley asked that if any board members have feedback or see issues, to please let him know. The City doesn't have any rider numbers or data to share yet, though over time it is likely that more bikes will be added.
3. Street Improvement Program Ride Along – Mr. Schmidt shared that he had gone on the ride along. He said that Council Member Dorothy had also participated in the ride, that they drove around in a truck discussing the roads and that he didn't have much more to add.
4. MATAG Conference – Mr. Hurley and Ms. Thornton had each attended a portion of the Mid American Trails and Greenways (MATAG) conference. Mr. Hurley shared that one of the interesting sessions he attended was on the new H.B. 250 legislation surrounding eBikes. Ms. Thornton had enjoyed a session on "Trail Towns" and how they capture and capitalize on cyclist behavior and activities.

Mrs. Horton asked for an update on the Complete Streets project. Mr. Hurley said it was still in the process of being drafted with MORPC. Ms. Thornton shared that Blue Zones is interested in reviewing it as well.

Mrs. Kuhnell then inquired about current bike helmet laws. Ms. Thornton shared that there are currently no Ohio laws that require a cyclist to wear a helmet.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.