



WORTHINGTON BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the Monday, January 23, 2023, Meeting

Members Present: The members present were Mike Bates, Danielle DavisRoe, Rebecca Green, Ann Horton, Brian Meilton, Jordan Schweller, Whitney Sullinger, and Kelly Whalen.

City staff members Darren Hurley (Parks & Recreation Director), John Moorehead (Service & Engineering Director) and Celia Thornton (Parks & Recreation Project Supervisor) were present. Also present was Gahanna High School student Genevive Ehmann to present her Global Scholars Accessibility Project idea for Worthington's section of the Olentangy Trail. Her mother also attended.

Minutes from the November 28, 2022, meeting were approved by all present.

Introduce and Swear-in new board member (Whitney Sullinger): Mr. Hurley introduced new board member Whitney Sullinger and invited her to share a little about herself. Board members then took turns introducing themselves before Whitney was officially sworn in by Mr. Hurley.

Global Scholars Project Presentation (Genevive Ehmann): Ms. Thornton introduced Gahanna High School student Genevive Ehmann. Ms. Ehmann gave a slide presentation that overviewed her Global Scholar project, which she would like to do as a trial on Worthington's section of the Olentangy Trail. Her project revolves around providing physical accessibility information regarding the trail to users and she is focusing on equity for all users.

2023 Education and Encouragement Project Prioritization: Ms. Green reviewed the 2022 list of education and encouragement projects and shared she would like to focus on walk and bike to school days, another Stroll & Roll event, and to discuss more board education topics. Ms. Horton wants to reform the Safe Routes To School (SRTS) sub-committee (to focus on school travel plans) and finding grants to fund bike and pedestrian projects. Mr. Whalen advocated for creating and implementing a trail etiquette plan for the Olentangy Trail. He also wondered if updates were needed to the Master Plan. Mr. Moorehead said he thinks it would be valuable to cross reference the master plan with the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) Active Transportation Plans to make sure that they are all listed there, which makes them eligible for future funding. The board agreed that this was a priority and asked Mr. Moorehead to come back to them with more

information at a future meeting. Mr. Bates said in his opinion the Stroll & Roll event should be a given. There was some board discussion around the best weekend to hold it and when to have a bike corral again. There was also some discussion regarding having a board education session on current laws around rentable bikes, scooters and e-bikes. Ms. Horton would like to create a formalized walk and bike audit that could be used by the community. Mr. Moorehead asked what feedback or information the audits would be trying to quantify. Mr. Bates suggested reaching out to other local bike and pedestrian boards to see what kind of training opportunities they provide. It was also suggested that some kind of opening celebration occur around the Northeast Gateway project. The final 2023 Education and Encouragement project list was as follows:

1. Plan another Stroll & Roll event
2. Community-wide Olentangy Trail Etiquette education and encouragement
3. Quarterly education sessions for the board
4. Bike racks
5. Regular community outreach
6. Cross reference the Master Plan with ODOT's Active Transportation Plan
7. SRTS sub-committee formation

Updates:

MORPC Attributable Funding Grants – This past year there was an increase in federal funds towards bike and pedestrian projects. Worthington submitted two projects in hopes of being granted funding: the Worthington Mile and the East Wilson Bridge Road trail extension. Neither of these projects was awarded funding. There were 15 projects submitted in total and nine were funded to some extent (many in smaller amounts than was requested). Worthington's East Wilson Bridge Road project placed tenth. Mr. Moorehead explained that part of the reason we were not granted funding is because Worthington is already doing very well compared to other communities; we have sidewalks, transit, sustainable neighborhoods, economic support, and social justice. He agrees with the scoring process. Worthington just doesn't have the same overall needs as other competing communities in this round. The next round of funding becomes available in 2024. The City should consider whether we have another project that would place better or to work to improve the applications for the same projects.

Burton Planning Services Potential Contract – Mr. Moorehead has had a meeting with Burton Planning Services (BPS) to see if they can assist the City and board with continuing to move bike and pedestrian projects forward. BPS offers multimodal transportation planning services. He has asked them to cross reference the next five years of Capital Improvement Projects, and the upcoming Street Improvement Project list, with the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan. He is considering engaging them as consultants to help guide future project recommendations. They would function differently from Toole Design, who is scoping projects. BPS would offer support to the Service Department to help implement bike and pedestrian projects.

Organizational Meeting (February) – Mr. Hurley reminded the board that at the next meeting there will be an opportunity to nominate new chairs for 2023.

TWHS Development Plan – The master plan calls for a multi-use trail on the north side of S.R. 161 from Evening Street west in front of Thomas Worthington High School (TWHS). The TWHS Development Plan does not include a multi-use trail. There was some discussion around whether the board should have a position or recommendation in writing to share with City Council, the Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) and the Architectural Review Board (ARB). Mr. Hurley recommended a memo sharing the board's position. Ms. Horton asked if there was enough right of way for the city to build the trail without the school's permission. Mr. Moorehead said probably

not that the school would need to cede some land, or the trail would have to go right against S.R. 161. He said there were also sewer and mature tree issues with building the trail. There was some board discussion about what their path forward should be. Mr. Bates made a motion for the board to send a written recommendation to the Architectural Review Board and Municipal Planning Commission members stating our board asks them to acknowledge and strongly consider the 2019 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, which identifies a multi-use path from the 315-entrance ramp to High Street on the north side of Dublin-Granville Road as the number one ranked active transportation project. Ms. DavisRoe seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. There was some discussion of things to add to the letter including the trail promoting health and wellness and improved connectivity for students and the community.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.