

Minutes of the Connecticut Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board

March 18, 2010

Ray Rauth, Chairman

Attending: David Balzer, Colleen Kissane, Tom Maziarz

Board members: Ray Rauth, Deb Dauphinus, Erin Sturgis-Pascale, Tom Gutman, Alan Sylvestre, Rod Purlee, Jason Stockmann

Audience: Pam Guinan

As of 1:10 pm, there was not a quorum, but Ray decided to make opening remarks and begin the goal-setting exercise, even though the minutes could not yet be approved.

Ray reports that he had a meeting with Tom Maziarz – Chief of Policy and Planning. They discussed the need for DOT to rehabilitate its image with bike/ped advocacy groups. There is a commitment from the Deputy Commissioner to achieve this. Board members are encouraged to go back to their regional organizations (i.e., Sound Cyclists) to spread the word that things are happening for cyclists and pedestrians at the DOT. One possible achievement to discuss: identifying cross-state routes, improved lane-striping procedures.

Can the DOT make the bicycle and pedestrian coordinator a full-time position? Not possible under current budgetary constraints. David Balzer is currently roughly half-time in his bicycle and pedestrian coordinating role. He currently is also responsible for the park-and-ride program.

Ray has notes of suggestions for projects.

Tom discussed some of the things West Hartford town engineer David Kraus, AFAIK, has done to promote traffic calming and Complete Streets. Improved cross-walks, traffic-calming islands, etc. Tom asked David Krause to focus on low-cost improvements for making the streets more friendly for all users: cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers. Reflection posts were recently installed on traffic-calming islands to improve visibility to motorists.

Erin arrives, creating a quorum.

Motion to approve February minutes. Minutes approved by a majority.

GOAL- SETTING EXERCISE

Ray: We want specific, measurable goals.

Involve Erin's outline in this discussion.

ACTION ITEM for ALAN: To distill Erin's mission statement into a more concise version to be proposed as an agenda item at our next meeting.

Goals: Ray suggests two goals:

- Data goals for annual report
- Monitor each town's percent of their transportation budget allocated to bicycle and pedestrian projects (as stipulated in the Complete Streets Law)
 - This could be difficult. There are 169 different entities in Connecticut.
 - More of a long-term goal

What kind of data do we want to measure? We don't need to work on the data gathering during board meetings; allocate this to a subcommittee.

The Complete Streets Law section 2H mandate → board must submit a report on the progress of state agencies over the previous year, recommendations for improvements in the coming year, specific actions that the state has taken in the previous year.

Are the recommendations for just the next year, or for longer-term programs projecting ahead multiple years?

Bedrock metrics for performance:

Mode share → see Census department. Not based on counts. Based on individual home surveys. American Community Survey is another great resource; it is more frequent than every 10 years. US Census is an excellent source for calibrating travel miles. But it does not have the fine-grained data to report on multi-modal transportation (difference between mode of access and primary mode of travel). League of American Bicyclists ranks Connecticut 42nd → improve the ranking. CT ranked a little better on legislation, but ranked dead last on enforcement and education. Deb: in light of this ranking, the Complete Streets mandate is good, since we have a lot of work to do disseminating knowledge of the law more widely among the public.

Important to count cyclists and pedestrians. We should help implement a measurement protocol. Count people at intersections?

We need to be careful not just to report the raw number of accidents → must report the *rate* of accidents.

Average Daily Traffic (ADT) for bicycles on a given road. Pick a few key commute routes that we can return to each year to demonstrate a change. Otherwise it becomes too labor intensive.

CCROG has a broader survey of cycling activity that may have been done for the Farmington Canal Trail. Check with them before we duplicate any of their efforts.

What about getting feedback from the bicycle groups throughout the state? For starters, do we have a comprehensive list of bicycle and pedestrian advocacy groups in Connecticut? Multiply the number of “eyes on the street” reporting back on bike and ped issues. Could we distribute a survey?

What about integration with CT Transit and railroad service? Getting to bus stops is really important. Recent American Communities Survey showed that more Americans are working from home rather than commuting.

Ray: Do we want to focus on policy or do we want to get involved with local hotspots? We can't address every single local problem, but if we can take specific cases and draw policy conclusions from them that can apply across the state.

Alan: If we use our leverage to greatly improve an urgent local problem, we could gain public goodwill and bring credibility to the Board. We look good using our leverage to get things fixed.

Deb: Focus on policies. But prioritize the policies, and then watch the policy play out in a specific improvement. Make suggestions for a place to begin implementing the policy, i.e., the Tomlinson Bridge.

Tom: At CCROG meetings, there is discussion of all projects that are underway. How would know that there is a project, and how would we know who to contact to get involved and weigh in with an opinion?

Erin: The Tomlinson Bridge should be folded into the larger Q-bridge project.

Ray: Can't just roll in a new improvement into a project that has been many years in the planning.

David Balzer: Some meetings have taken place with DOT to research the Tomlinson Bridge. A representative from District 3 construction is aware of the issue. They would be willing to come and address the board at a future meeting to educate us on the problem.

Tom Maziarz: There is a DOT policy to install sidewalks on new bridges and during repairs of old bridges. Q bridge was planned before this new policy went into place. There are hundreds of projects going on throughout the state, and we can't address them all. But we could get briefed on the major ones and provide feedback.

Erin: Promote the revision of CDOT's highway design manual. We need to institutionalize the implementation of Complete Streets. Redefine the status quo. The CDOT design manual is essentially a highway manual.

Tom: Is this manual mandatory for the towns?

Erin: My understanding is that the manual functions as a guide. Cities can layer on more features in addition. If we can make the state design manual context-sensitive, it will trickle down to cities.

Jason: Who writes this manual and how do we access them?

It is written by the engineering department at CDOT.

Jason: Can someone from engineering come and educate the Board on the design guidelines?

Tom Maziarz: Make DOT engineers more aware of bike and ped issues. Explain the main features of the manual. Have them talk about one or two projects as examples of why they did or didn't improve bike and ped features. STC refers developers back to the DOT design manual.

ACTION ITEM: Invite a DOT engineer to present to us.

Ray: It would be nice to see what New Haven is doing with its design manual.

Tom Maziarz: What will take the longest to change is culture. Particularly the culture of drivers, and their expectations. Moving forward, when repaving, the DOT maintenance districts will reduce vehicle lanes to 11 feet where possible, and widen the shoulder where possible.

Deb: What about improving roads when restriping takes place? This is a frequent opportunity for improvements.

Tom Maziarz: Resurfacing is an opportunity for engineers to sit down and review a road's design, and possibly make changes. During restriping they are not going to have an opportunity to implement changes. When you want to move a stripe, there is an extra step involved.

Erin: **MOTION** to add a presentation by Erin about the New Haven Complete Streets manual to the next CBPAB meeting. She can discuss the internal checks that the New Haven traffic engineers go through each time there is a repaving (Widen sidewalk? Narrow lanes? Add bike lane?). Documents will outlast the tenure of each individual engineer. There are liability issues involved in road paving. Engineers need to reference documents in the event that there is an accident.

Erin: Please send me language changes for her mission statement. Add the things you care about! Add metrics for the state's bike and ped performance.

ACTION ITEM for everyone: Send Erin suggested changes to the mission statement.

What about looking at the bicycle and pedestrian design guidelines from other states?

Erin: We should add these items to our suggestions for changing the highway design manual.

Rod: Maybe we should make this list an addendum to the minutes. And put it on the CCBA website so the public can see what's going on with the board.

Ray: Mr. Secretary, remind me to provide you with The List for inclusion in an email with the minutes.

AGENDA: Send the board a link to the CCBA website.

OUTREACH TO OTHER AGENCIES: to whom do we wish to speak, and how are we going to carry on those conversations.

Tom: Regionalized MPO's such as CCROG would be a good start.

ACTION ITEM: compile a list of bicycle and pedestrian groups in the state. Assign to Charlie, who is cycling in Spain at the moment?

Should we talk to the Department of Environmental Protection? They seem to be involved in bike path funding.

Erin: Economic and Community Development

Bicycle shops should be part of the conversation.

AGENDA ITEM: Rod is asking for approval for his 3 letters in support of greenway funding.

MOTION TO ADJOURN