

Chester County Cycling Coalition Meeting Summary January 25, 2010

The attendance for this meeting was excellent. In addition to several representatives from other Philadelphia area coalitions, 2 people from the CC Sierra Club attended as a follow-up to their meeting earlier in the month focusing on improving cycling conditions in West Chester.

Fred Rothman

Fred began by giving a brief review of the CCCC saying that he'd been Chair for 5 years and that we've accomplished some things but not as much as we would have liked. Although the turnout tonight is good, usually only 3-4 people show up.

We are loosely affiliated with PBC which has 1,400 members. CCCC does not charge dues for membership and therefore does not have a membership list.

We are still trying to find people for the Ambassador program.

Natasha Manbeck

Landscapes2

- Preparing a web based document which will go live in February. Landscapes2.org. You can sign up for e-newsletters.
- Trails and bicycle/pedestrian issues are covered in two chapters: Open Space and Greenways and Transportation
- Retooling the Vision Partnership Program (VPP) for consistency with Landscapes2 is a priority action.
 - VPP is a planning grant program funded by the County
 - While the program is being retooled, the Planning Commission is not accepting new grant applications.
 - The Planning Commission anticipates that the grant program will reopen in mid-2010 and information about the new program will be shared with municipalities and other partners.

Chester Valley Trail

- Friends of Chester Valley Trail – Ben LaGarde is mover on this. He's trying to gather names of interested people and then he'll convene a meeting.
 - **ACTION CCCC: Email WCCC and BBC to join this group.**
- Phase I Exton Park to PA 29: Construction is underway by both the County and Whiteland Village, which is a private development in West Whiteland.
- Phase II 29 – KOP: The County is working on the design. It should be under construction by late next Spring.
- Patriot's Path– Route 29
 - This route follows part of the Chester Valley Trail and runs from Chesterbrook to Cedar Hollow.
 - Section by Penn Medicine is being paved now. Gets you to Wilson Park.
 - Tredyffrin will vote on the trail width in late February. Deciding on 8-12". ASTA guidelines call for a minimum of 8'. The township is doing a survey.

SRT

- Under construction in the Spring – Right now planning gravel and there are advocates on both sides of the fence (horses/residents = gravel vs. cyclists/walkers = paved)
 - Crombie-Phoenixville Township Line Rd to close to Linfield Rd.
 - Discussed if permeable asphalt would be a solution. The con is that it must be maintained periodically by sweeping or it gets clogged.

Route 202 Section 100 (Matlack to DE State Line)

- Hans said that there is a regulation that requires that cyclists and pedestrians are considered whenever a road project is planned. Planners for Route 202 have done this but there is no money now. There definitely will not be any shoulders so there won't be any bikes on Route 202.
- Several years ago Ray Sachs submitted a plan for an alternative bike path

Route 322 Bridge South of Downingtown

- Natasha was not aware of the current status and will follow-up to find out the schedule and status of the potential bike detour.

Grated Bridges – nothing new

- **Question: are grated bridges a local vs. state issue (CCCC vs. BCP).**
- Pughtown Road Bridge - They are not putting concrete down on that bridge. They have put signs up on either side of the bridge warning that it was coming up. Studies have shown that the structure could hold concrete but PennDOT estimates it will cost \$200-300,000 to put two 4' strips on either side. Natasha will continue to try and identify potential funding sources
 - Someone raised a point that there has been a crash on the bridge and wondered if we could explore funding from a safety angle.
 - That led to a statement that we should encourage cyclists to report all accidents of this nature. If they're documented, then PennDOT has to consider them when they plan projects. If unreported, there's nothing we can do.
 - **ACTION: Email to bike clubs to report accidents – include procedures.**
- Hares Hill Bridge – Plan to add provide a concrete filled strip on the open steel grate during the rehabilitation.

Valley Tunnel

- Talked about difficulty of stripping tunnel due to curved structure. However, rolling handcart could be used.
- Lights: There is interest in providing lights in the tunnel. However, it would require funding and agreements from two railroads, PennDOT and the Township. In particular, the Township would have to agree to maintain the lighting. PennDOT has worked in the past with the railroads to clear brush between the two tunnels to provide some additional natural light.

Route 29 Slip Ramp: Turnpike

- This project is on hold because it is linked to widening of the Turnpike from King of Prussia to PA 29 and stakeholders are concerned about the effect widening would have on storm water run-off and noise. The widening requires replacing bridges crossing the Turnpike. The Rt 252 bridge was replaced, but the Mill Rd bridge is delayed

Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway

- Winds its way up through Wilmington on Rt 52. Cuts through Chaddsford and East Bradford.
- The Scenic Byway Commission is coordinating with PennDOT and the consultant selected for the project.
- Fred will check on the status of this project and report back

- Advantages to Cyclists: Not sure. Both the Blue Route and Rt 30 Bypass are designated as Scenic Byways and they're not cycling roads. Its real meaning is that the road is kept "scenic" no billboards/ugly structures by the side of the road. Preserve historic and natural integrity.
- The Kennett portion on 52 will move ahead with on-road bike lanes. However this is only 1.5 miles long and Kennett already has nice wide shoulders so we don't see much impact.
- Chaddsford said they'd tolerate it but they would not "accept" cyclists on their roads.

Chris Sappey

Wanted to know if we could participate in a mock legislative forum to help educate kids about bike laws

Sierra Club

2 representatives attended our meeting following Richard Whiteford's presentation about Bike friendly WC. We talked about the 3 main goals of this initiative which is in its infancy. They wanted to know how they could get involved.

- bike lanes
- educating the public
- bike racks

Bike Rack Grants

WC university students wrote a grant proposal which was submitted to "Bike's Belong". We did not get the grant. Natasha said that this grant is cyclical so the proposal can be resubmitted. She asked for a copy and said she'd review it to see if it could be improved.

William Penn organization gives grants to projects that increase the quality of life in Chester County so this may be a good source for funding.

John Boyle stated that increasing the number of bike racks was important and would like to see if we could tie it into an artistic project.

Township responsibility for Bike Lane Maintenance

Hans told us that PennDot's requirement that local municipalities maintain bike lanes even though they are not responsible for the roads is one of the biggest obstacles to creating bike lanes. He's been working with PennDOT and believes they will tackle this and eliminate the requirement in the next 3-4 months. The biggest problem now is the lawyers.

BCGP

Lifesavers conference will focus only on driver safety and will not include a pedestrian/cycling component. PBC has 3 full time employees working on safe routes to school program. BCGP are re-evaluating how they are/are not serving the suburbs. They are here to support us.

Database/Website

Fred asked Ray McGlew if he would be willing to handle the CCCC website and he said yes. This would be coordinated with the BCGP site.

Paul DeRocher TMACC (guest speaker)

TMACC is a non-profit organization (tmacc.org) authorized by the Surface Transportation Authorization Act Jan 2009. Its up for funding reallocation this year.

- TMACC operates 3 public bike routes. None of the buses have bike racks.
- He thinks it would be a good idea to talk to Septa about joint purchasing racks since they have quantity discounts.
- 1% of the Federal Transportation Association Budget is for transit enhancements – Bike racks?

Paul is focusing on Bike/Pedestrian issues. He's a city planner by trade and moved here from Portland Or. He's been involved in writing grants for bike racks (Bike's Belong/William Penn).

Corporations are members of TMACC. One of the corporations organized donations of used bikes to homeless shelters. Paul proposed to organize the same thing and donate the bikes to the Coatesville Bike works. Dave Bennett said that Coatesville could probably use all the bikes they could get either as is or use them for parts. Any unneeded bikes could be used by DVBC.

Delaware Valley Planning Commission

DVRPC – Assumed responsibility for planning pedestrian and bike resources for the region: which bike routes should we have in the county for safe biking to work. They're looking at key corridors for Bikes/Pedestrians. (Route 30/Schyulkill).

Old Baltimore Pike (State St) – West Grove thru Avondale (almost to Kennett). There will be bike lanes in London Grove while other areas will only have shoulder improvements. This project is already funded and will proceed in early Spring.

- How will cyclists get around the Rt 41 intersection? 41 will have bike lanes but Avondale will have wider shoulders not bike lanes.

Misc

1. National Bike Summit March 9th
2. State is rewriting bylaws for pepac.
3. There is a new PA advocacy organization: PA Walks and Bikes. 160 members. They organized a bike summit May 4 Harrisburg. 2009 \$60K in grants.
4. Safe Bike Legislation – 3' passing rule. We still need to get it on the floor.
5. Off-road: Hopewell Furnace. (eaz: not sure what this discussion was about)