**Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting**

**Connecticut DOT Headquarters**

**Thursday, June 16, 2011**

*Attendees*:

*Board members*: Tom Harned, Al Sylvestre, Rod Parlee, Neil Pade, Tom Gutman, Ray Rauth, Jason Stockmann, Deb Dauphinais, Richard Stowe

David Head (DOT Engineering)

Kate Rattan (DOT Non-motorized Transportation Coordinator)

Drew Goldsman (Tri-state Transportation Campaign)

Francis Pickering (lastname?)

**Chairman’s remarks**

Letters have been submitted by Ray on behalf of board members whose terms are expiring.

Elections are coming up. Ray is not seeking reelection as Chair.

**Agenda Approved.**

New trial part of meeting agenda:

Run through old Action Items. Jason read a bunch of old open

Approval of April minutes. Minutes Approved.

Approval of May minutes. Minutes Approved.

**DOT Staff reports**

Kate Rattan report.

Andover bridge. Work is ongoing.

RecTrails program grant deadline due date is September 1.

No sidewalk at the new YMCA facility in Westport.

The Board requested that STC come down and present to us. This will probably happen next month. It will focus on bike and ped issues during STC approval. They will also orient us on the overall approval process. How can the STC respond to the Complete Streets Law? If the board brainstorms some questions, David will forward them to the STC. There should be people from both the STC and from the DOT Traffic Department.

Tom H. and Neil will take on the task of preparing questions for the STC.

What about moving or eliminating bicycle prohibition signs?

**Ferry Update (Deb)**

Ferry is only open on weekdays, around 10:30-5:00 pm. This tends to eliminate the commuting option for many cyclists. This somewhat eliminates the purpose of the ferry.

David says that the DOT probably doesn’t have the staff to run the Ferry during additional hours. They can only staff the Ferry for one 8 hour shift per day.

Deb says that the DOT used the Ferry to justify not having a bike or ped path on the Putnam bridge.

Rocky Hill Ferry has a deficit of about $200,000 per year. There is also a Ferry in Chester. What about raising the fares on the Ferries?

Putnam Bridge is getting a $30,000,000 emergency repair, so there is no time for bicycle and pedestrian provisions to be included.

Should we draft a letter requesting permission for cyclists to use the bridge lanes? It is presently a limited access road.

Neil suggests doing a state-wide survey of river crossings to find out where they are, and where new crossings are needed.

**Bolton Gap (Rod)**

Move “End Prohibition” sign 200 yards west on Route 44 near the I-384 interchange. This will allow bicycle commutation to Hartford.

One of Gov. Rell’s last acts was to appropriate funding to fill the “Bolton Gap” in the East Coast Greenway.

Might be a question for the STC?

**Freiburg Presentation (Jason)**

Civility? Rules are enforced more strictly. Germans are rule-followers.

**Need for additional information on board members**

Google Document.

**Legislative Update**

* legislative session is over

**Complete Streets Law**

* Asked Governor for a meeting
* Have not received a response yet
* Local compliance with the Complete Streets Law
* Bike/Ped Assessment Checklist for DOT
  + This is now distributed among all DOT designers in the scoping portion of a project. It makes them do inventory and outreach to local stakeholders, including BikeWalkCT. The Checklist is attached to other documents to be distributed at 30% reviews. Helps determine scope of the Bike/Ped accommodation.
  + How do we distinguish between routine changes that are being made, and special provisions being made under the auspices of the Complete Streets Law. For instance, a shoulder widening. Law says 1% requirement is a floor, not a ceiling. And the law also says that bike/ped accommodations must be made.
  + Are local planners incorporating bike/ped amenities, and are they aware of the Complete Streets Bill? Are they complying? Are they aware of the requirements?
  + New Haven spent two-years writing a Complete Streets Manual, sitting down with city staff from Traffic & Parking, Engineering, and Public Works. This gets staff familiar with bike/ped design.
  + Maybe Tri-state Transportation Campaign could give a presentation on this topic.
  + But the STC puts out very specific regulations on street markings and signage.
  + US1, US5, and US7 are big state routes that should be turned into Complete Streets. These would have a big impact.
  + Some RPO’s are already looking for Complete Streets provisions in projects.
  + Sometimes a Complete Street is actually a street with less infrastructure and less expense. Different communities have different needs.
  + What about accountability and tracking of bike/ped improvements?
  + History of the law: Finally version is a watered-down version of the original legislation. Some people wondered if we should just let it die in its current form, rather than pass a weak bill that would be hard to ratify in the future.
  + It’s crucial to make sure the town engineers are aware of Complete Streets design practices, but other priorities often still take precedence.
  + We should challenge the clause that permits municipalities to deny requests for bike and ped improvements on the grounds that they don’t comply with the municipality’s pre-existing plan. This was added to the original bill when it was going through a committee (Finance committee, possibly?)
  + We need a few outstanding examples of Complete Streets as showcases to inspire future work. We need to spend our energy where we can get the best results. We should spend our energies educating cities and towns rather than trying to enforce the teeth of the bill, which could have the effect of towns digging in their heels. Coercion will be difficult and unproductive.
  + A culture of cycling and walking would drive these bike/ped improvements. The biggest obstacle Deb hears is that people are scared.
  + DOT can tell municipalities and say, hey, if you want fast-track access to funds, make sure it’s Complete Streets.
  + Changing Conservation and Development Plans is a long process, and this is a time when our Board could reach out to municipalities to influence their planning process. Should be invite a member of the state department of conservation and development?

**St. Francis Hospital (Tom G.)**

* Tom lives in the West End of Hartford, an area with a high rate of pedestrian usage.
* The sidewalks are terribly deteriorated. Many of these sidewalks are maintained by institutions.
* Tom received statistics from St. Francis indicating 69 falls on sidewalks and streets resulting in trauma injuries.
* Should collect the location of these accidents to motivate institutions to improve their sidewalks.

Move to adjourn. Seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm.