**Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting**

CTDOT HQ, Newington, Conn.

November 18, 2010

*Attendees*

*Board members*: Rod Parlee, Tom Gutman, Charlie Beristain, Deb Dauphinais, Jason Stockmann, Ray Rauth, Richard Stowe, Alan Sylvestre (by phone)

*DOT personnel*: David Balzer, David Head, Coleen Kissane, John Carey

**1.0 Preliminaries**

1.1 Chair’s remarks

* Should the board respond to the new DOT policies as articulated by Tom Mazierz?
	+ Gov. Rell is announcing the new policy tomorrow (Nov. 19).
	+ It is not set in stone
	+ **ACTION ITEM**: Ray will put together board commentary on the new DOT policies
* What about the prohibition of bikes on Rt. 384?

1.2 Motion to approve agenda. Seconded. Approved.

1.3 Approval of October minutes. Seconded. Approved.

**2.0 Reports**

2.1 David Balzer, David Head, DOT projects of interest

* Report by John Carey
	+ Three engineering elements of the new DOT initiatives: Sidewalk policy, Design manual, and quick-fix policy
	+ Design manual
		- DOT will have a subcommittee to formalize its policies, but generally the DOT will follow the pending ASHTO draft due out in 2010. The DOT is working from this draft. They will draw dimensional information from ASHTO. Sharrow size, location, etc. Where to use bike lanes, etc.
		- DOT wants to go beyond what is in ASHTO. Tomlinson Bridge issue, for example: how to combine different modes of transportation. How to integrate bikes and peds into the thinking of DOT designers. How to meet the needs of the disabled. Does a need exist? Meet that need during construction.
			* When reconstruction occurs, it needs to become ADA-compliant. But can you accommodate the disabled during construction? Try to address this question ahead of time.
		- If someone asks “why isn’t there a crosswalk here” or “why isn’t there a sidewalk here” there will be a reason in the project documenting why the feature was not included
	+ Quick-fix policy
		- Signs, markings, signals. Things that can be done quickly. Putting in a traffic signal will take time, but adjustments can be done more quickly. Signing can be handled quickly by maintenance teams. Likewise for markings, at least 10 months of the year. Vegetation removal (if it’s a state responsibility)
		- New sidewalks are not a quick fix, so they have to be done during a project.
			* Fixing a bad slab is a quick fix, however.
	+ New sidewalk policy
		- Local municipalities used to be required to pay the state’s share of the cost of sidewalks not covered by the federal government (i.e., 80% fed, 10% state, 10% local). The DOT will now pay its share of new sidewalks, relieving municipalities of some burden.
		- Safe routes to transit are important; many people walk to Metro North train stations when there is inadequate parking. Some people wear reflective vests while walking to stations when it is dark.
	+ Questions from board members:
		- The Design Manual is only applicable to state projects?
			* Some projects on town roads are funded by the federal government and administered by the DOT. These go on a case-by-case basis. Most projects are funded through the federal aid system.
		- What about Rt. 106 in New Canaan near the rail station? The DOT is considering adding illumination and sidewalks, along with with crosswalks where necessary.
		- What about changing from a standard Level of Service metric to a Multimodal Level of Service?
			* Typically the DOT tries to meet future vehicle demand. This isn’t always possible. Lanes are being added to I-95 right now to move traffic more smoothly. Queuing is also important, if traffic is backing up into an ensuing intersection. John is not aware of a composite multimodal level of service. When you discuss signalization, you can put pedestrian and bicycle factors into the analysis. Pedestrian signalization will have an effect on capacity.
		- What about including roundabouts in the design manual? The DOT has changed its attitude toward roundabouts. The DOT has so far stuck to single-lane roundabouts. Otherwise with two lanes you would need to have a pedestrian signal, which defeats the whole purpose.
		- What about situations in CT where weeds are an issue, particularly where there is not yet a sidewalk?
		- What about accommodating bikes and pedestrians in construction zones?
		- What about formalizing the DOT-CTB&PAB relationship in the design manual? David Head is working on this.
		- In Glastonbury in which some Share the Road signs were purchased but were not installed because of a problem with the approval process.
			* The DOT doesn’t want to put signs every 200 feet. They want to put them where there is a demonstrated need.
		- John meets with traffic engineers from 6 other New England states once per year, so he will ask them about multimodal Level of Service metrics.
		- Is there a law that permits motorists to cross a solid yellow line when passing a tractor or cyclist or other slowly-moving vehicles?
* David Head is the chair of the bike and ped piece of the new Design Manual.
	+ The DOT is going to look at what other states already have
	+ He will come back in 4-6 months with a presentation on the process

(*Alan hangs up to leave for another meeting*)

* We need to add our first annual report to our CTB&PAB website
* Colleen has secured Room 2141 for our 2011 meetings. It does not have a digital projector, but a projector can be set up if we give David & Pam a few days’ notice.

**2.2 Legislative report (Pam Sacato)**

* No report at this time.

**3.0 Goals and Mission (Deb)**

3.1 Developing plan

* Deb took our four top priority goals and connected them to our statutory mandates. The mandates in the law were simple and vague: “examine”, “promote”, and “advise”. But we’ve picked four areas on which to examine, promote, and advise.
* First step (for connections for transit, for instance) would be a ***needs******assessment***. We then make ***annual*** ***recommendations***. We can then ***measure*** ***the*** ***progress***. Finally, ***report back*** in our annual report. This is a project plan format.
* Alternatively, we may decide to advise on things as they come up.
* Is Deb’s project plan going to be redundant with our existing Google Docs Action Item list?

**4.0 Annual Governor/Transportation Committee/DOT Report**

* Our annual report is due January 15. Last year it was 3 or 4 pages, but this year we’re entitled to expand it.
* Circulate last year’s annual report to the board so we have it as a guideline.
* Topics to include in the report:
	+ Efforts toward analyzing accident data (Charlie)
	+ Rail situation (Richard & Jason)
	+ Tomlinson Bridge hazard, Ferry in Glastonbury, and other quick-fix situations (Jason & ???)
	+ Cross-state routes (Rod)
	+ 1% bike/ped expenses report from DOT and MPO’s.

**5.0 Old Business**

5.1 Tomlinson Bridge Letter update, if any

* No update at this time.

5.2 RPO letter, status & update

* Should we include a form in our letters to the MPO’s
* David Head said that someone who deals with the RPO’s/MPO’s said that if you don’t specify a format, you’re going to get the information back in 169 different formats.
* The State DOT puts in all the federal dollars spent in the state, whether it is a town or state road.
* Should we use an online form to have the RPO’s input their project information?
	+ Stick to mailed letters, which is what they are used to.
* **ACTION** **ITEM**: Jason will address the RPO’s. He will specify the types of information that we are seeking.

**6.0 New Business**

6.1 Glastonbury Ferry crossing / Putnam Bridge

* Deb asked the DOT if bike/ped access could be added to the bridge when its deck was being redone. The scope of this work was very limited; it did not permit the addition of a sidewalk. The DOT did a study on accommodating bike and peds, and the outcome was negative. The study specified the Glastonbury Ferry as an alternative means of commuting. Now that the Ferry is being decommissioned, does the result of this study need to be revisited? Would a higher fee for bicycles and cars be an appropriate solution to keeping the ferries open?
* Deb proposes writing a letter from the board in support of both ferries.
* **ACTION** **ITEM**: Deb will write the letter. MOTION APPROVED.
* Can we get some facts on the ferry ridership and fare box information?
* Should the decision to exclude bikes and peds from the bridge be revisited? Would a *lane* *diet* help free up space for a sidewalk? Problem is that the bridge was built on the cheap, and in its current configuration there is no way to add bike and ped access. Maybe in 10 years when the bridge is replaced, the design can be reconsidered. The sidewalk has to cross the whole span and interface with local roads on either side, in the wetlands area. This is a serious issue.

6.2 Route 384 prohibition on bikes

* Is there a prohibition on bicycles on the road-side of the guard rail, and could it be lifted?
* David Head:

**7.0 Next agenda, meeting time/date, adjournment.**

*December 16, 2010, Conference Room B*