

TRAILS & SIDEWALKS COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes, December 9, 2015

Members Present:

Ken Comer (at-large); Peter Christensen (Mt. Vernon); Jeff Anderson (Hunter Mill); Liz Cronauer (Park Authority); Tom Kennedy (Braddock); Robert Mitchie (Lee); Alan Young (Springfield); Wade Smith (Dranesville); Jean Voss (Clifton Horse Society)

Fairfax County Staff Present:

Adam Lind, Bicycle Program Coordinator;

Guests:

Liz Payne, Public Schools; Sally Smallwood, Safe Routes to School Program Coordinator; John Medeiros, resident in vicinity of Burke Road

Call to Order:

Peter Christensen called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm. Liz Cronauer agreed to take minutes for the meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes for November's meeting were approved without corrections

Staff Reports: Adam Lind

- Adam has been promoted to Charlie Strunk's position and will be hiring a transportation planner to help him. Adam and Chris Wells will be reporting to a new TP4 team leader in a position that has not been filled yet.
- The Bike-Share program is coming to Reston
- Adam has a draft list of bike lane striping candidates for the 2016 re-paving program although the budget for re-paving is affected by the snow removal needs for the season so the list may change.
- Staff is conducting a mid-cycle update of the 6 Year Transportation Priorities plan (handout provided) for projects out to the 2021 – 2023 time frame. There have been lots of requests from the public for sidewalks. Funding amounts are not yet determined but may be approximately \$5 million per district for bike/ped projects. Detailed planning will start in the 2016 time-frame.

General:

Safe Routes to School Program:

Liz Payne reported that a VDOT grant was used to fund a part time position as a Safe Routes to School Coordinator. Sally Smallwood has held that position since January of 2014. Two mini-grants were awarded in fall of 2015 to help purchase prizes and incentives to get kids to walk to school. Sally talked about some of the many things that she has done to promote walking/biking to school:

- Get kids to fill out activity logs
- Build walking paths at several schools (Kent Gardens ES and Clear View ES)
- Find grants for sidewalks and road crossings
- Hold special events at the school such as dropping the kids off ½ mile away and letting them walk the rest of the way
- Provide public bus passes
- Teach bicycle riding and safety programs (reported need for additional bikes, bike transportation and storage)

Sally fills out a biannual report on how many children have been affected by the program. The Committee members wondered about the economic impacts of the program and if school bus routes could actually be eliminated if people were more willing to have their children walk to school.

Budget Recommendations to BOS for Trail/Sidewalk Maintenance:

Some Committee members had attended a meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee, which is proposing a joint meeting with County Facilities Maintenance Division and VDOT to discuss the concerns over the lack of maintenance funds for bike/ped facilities. The following points were raised:

- Walkable / bike-able communities are important to the future of economic development in the County as this lifestyle is attractive to millennials and to the Fortune 500 companies who hire them.
- The County needs to prioritize maintenance of existing facilities.
- Now is the time to begin requesting funding as the budget process starts in February with hearings in March and April.
- Since funds are scarce, it would be worthwhile to prioritize the maintenance needs based upon the importance of the facility.

Ken Comer proposed a motion to approve appointment of a subcommittee to issue a letter to the BOS asking for more funding for trail and sidewalk maintenance. The motion passed unanimously.

Liberty Bell Trail Extension:

John Medeiros attended the meeting to give the Committee a presentation on his ideas for extending the Liberty Bell Trail in Pohick Stream Valley Park along Burke Road to facilitate safer access to the Rolling Road VRE station. Even though the road has recently been striped with bike lanes, Mr. Medeiros showed that there is enough width in the 68' right-of-way for a trail that would be separated from the traffic and therefore more attractive to people who are not comfortable sharing the road with vehicles.

Keith Comer proposed a motion stating that the sense of the Committee was that the trail along Burke Road was an excellent idea. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm.

Submitted by: Liz Cronauer