

MINUTES SUBJECT TO CORRECTION BY THE ESSEX JUNCTION BIKE/WALK ADVISORY COMMITTEE. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE RECORDED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
BIKE/WALK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
DECEMBER 16, 2013**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Hamlin, Andrew Van Liew, Rowena Albert, Jud Lawrie, Eric Bowker, Jeff Frolick, Phoebe Spencer

ADMINISTRATION: Darby Mayville, Community Relations and Economic Development Assistant

OTHERS: Sean Folley

1. CALL TO ORDER

Rick Hamlin called the meeting to order at 6 PM.

2. MINUTES REVIEW

Rick asked to clarify that it is only the Five Corners loops that respond to light, as they are video controlled.

Jud asked to clarify that he would be sending the edited results of the Bike/Walk Traffic Sign Survey to Rick Hamlin, rather than Rick Jones. He also asked that the second repetition of the word "pavement" on the top of page three be removed.

MOTION by JUD, SECOND by PHOEBE, to accept the minutes of the November meeting with corrections. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

3. UPDATE ON TRAFFIC SIGN SURVEY PROGRESS & ADJUSTING LOOPS

Rick said that Village President George Tyler has given permission for Rick's company, Hamlin Engineering, to paint the bicycle trigger points that were identified by the committee. They will do this when the weather allows, however it will most likely not get done before the end of the year. This delay will actually give the committee more time to educate the public on what trigger points are, and how they should be used.

Jud said that he has finished editing and compiling the results of the traffic survey, and that he will be forwarding this onto Rick Hamlin, who will then notify Public Works Superintendent Rick Jones.

Eric added that he plans to measure signs that he believes might be too high, and will send the results to Rick Hamlin. He also said that he thinks that it is important for the Committee to find a way to address speeding, as he believes that it is a big impediment to biking and walking.

Rick said that he had recently attended a Planning Commission meeting where speeding was discussed. He said that the Planning Commission members seemed to understand the need to reduce speeding cars in the Village. He added that it might be good to include areas where speeding is common in a map with the Bike/Walk Master Plan. He then added that unofficial “desire” paths were also important to include in this also. This was based on feedback that he received from residents at the Way To Go! awards ceremony.

Eric said that he felt strongly that the committee needed to work towards reducing pedestrians’ fear of speeders.

Rick said that other towns map out suggested pedestrian and bike paths, which may help to guide residents to areas where speeding is minimal. Eric suggested that it would be beneficial to collaborate with the Trails Committee on this project.

Rick said that another idea that came up in his discussions with residents at the Way To Go! event was opening up Route 289 to bicycle traffic. He stated that, compared to many other streets in the community, this is a very safe area due to its wide shoulders.

Jud asked for clarification on what exactly Route 289 is.

Rick said that this road was intended to be a part of the Circ highway, which is now considered to be a dead project. This was supposed to be a highway with interstate rules that would connect towns in Chittenden County. He said that, if the committee is interested, he could add changing the rules on the Circ to allow bicycles to their task list. The committee agreed, and this was placed on the short-term priority list. Phoebe also added that other improvements to the road, such as signage and the addition of bike paths, could be considered to be medium-term priorities.

Eric expressed some concern that the entrance ramps to Route 289 would not be safe for bicyclists. Rick said that this is something to look at, but that he thinks that they actually may be safer than other roads in the community.

Jud asked what he should do with the comments from the survey that addressed issues in Essex Town?

Rick said that he should compile the list and send it to Darby, who will then ask the joint Village and Town Manager who the best person to give this information should be.

4. DISCUSSION OF BIKE FRIENDLY AMERICA BLUEPRINT

Rick asked if anyone had strong feelings about the blueprint. There were no comments. Rick added that this is a good document to refer to and shows that the committee is on the right track.

5. PRESENTATION FROM JUD LAWRIE REGARDING FOUR POTENTIAL COMMITTEE INITIATIVES

Jud said that the Bike Friendly America Blueprint contained information on the five “e”s, and he suggested that one committee member take on each and serve as the committee’s resident “expert.” They are as follows: enforcement, education, engineering, encouragement, and evaluation. The committee assignments are as follows:

- Engineering: Rick & Phoebe
- Education: Andrea & Rosalind
- Encouragement: Jeff & Eric
- Enforcement: Eric
- Evaluation: Jud & Rowena

Eric mentioned that it would be helpful to have a contact at the Essex Police Department who could assist with the enforcement element. He mentioned that he had spoken with a police officer regarding pedestrian safety in the past and that she seemed very helpful. Darby mentioned that she had been in touch with a police officer when working on the Building Healthy Communities grant. She said that she would look up his name and send it to Eric.

Jud asked about the Village’s ability to set laws and ordinances?

Rick said that the Village can write ordinances, but that they needed to follow VTrans specifications for roads. The Village is permitted to regulate parking, speed limits, and road use (i.e. weight restrictions) on local roads.

Andrea asked if the Village could install speed tables.

Rick said that residents can petition the Trustees to have a speed study done to determine if they are needed on a specific neighborhood street.

Andrea asked if the committee should publicize this process?

Rick said that he did not think that this was necessary, due to the fact that many speed tables have been installed in recent years, which shows that the public is aware of the process.

Jud added that he thought that it would be helpful for the committee to adopt the goal of being a bronze level or higher Bike Friendly Community. Darby said that the Village did apply and receive Honorable Mention about two years ago. She said that she would send Jud information about the process.

The committee decided that they would set attaining bronze level or higher status as a Bike Friendly Community as an official goal to be completed by 2015.

Phoebe said that communities must prove that they are continually improving their facilities in order to gain or keep recognition, and that she believed that Essex Junction would be successful with this.

Rick mentioned that the Planning Commission was still working on redeveloping the Comprehensive Plan, and has not yet reviewed the section on transportation. He said that sidewalks had previously been seen as linear parks, but that he has discussed with the Planning Commission about changing this definition.

It was then suggested that the group work on developing a committee vision statement to give to the Planning Commission. Rick asked the group to let the others know if they find a good, comprehensive mission statement when they are reviewing materials from other communities.

Andrea said that she thought that the writing of a mission statement would happen best in a group, and this was added to the agenda for the next meeting.

6. REPORT FROM JUD LAWREI ON THE BIKE/WALK CODITIONS IN CHAPLE HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

Jud said that Davidson is a college town in North Carolina. They won a bronze level award from Bike Friendly Communities recently. He chose to study Davidson because of the similarities between this community and Essex Junction; both have roughly the same populations and are located near colleges. He said that he mainly focused on learning about their Transportation Plan, which was completed in 2008. The completion of this was a 10 month process that included three public meetings and an online survey.

Jeff asked if this committee is authorized to hold public meetings, and Rick informed him that all of the committee's meetings are public. Rick stated that all of the meetings that have been held so far have had at least one member of the public present, and he thinks that if we make more of an effort to publicize the meetings even more residents will attend. However, he also thinks that it is important for the committee to do a bit more work before doing this, so that they do not get overwhelmed with ideas.

Jud stated that a good time to really engage the community would be when the Bike/Walk Master Plan has been drafted.

Eric will be presenting at the next meeting on Chapel Hill, NC.

7. UPDATED RULES OF THE ROAD

Phoebe presented the Rules of the Road with the revisions that were discussed at the last meeting. Andrea suggested that the committee work to gradually release the information to the public. Darby said that she could post the information on Front Porch Forum, Facebook, the Village website, and the Village newsletter. She also suggested that individual committee members publicize this through their own social networks. Andrea also stated that she would be contacting Rosalind to determine the best way to publicize this information in the schools.

Phoebe stated that she spoke with Local Motion and that they do not mind the committee using ideas from their document.

8. PUBLIC INPUT

Sean Folley attended the meeting to inform the group that he had been interested in serving on the Bike/Walk Committee; however a family illness prevented him from doing such. He currently serves on the Trails Committee and wanted to state that he would love for the two committees to collaborate.

Jeff mentioned that the committee had just been discussing collaborations with the Trails Committee earlier in the meeting. He believes that a good opportunity for this would be in allowing bikes on Route 289.

Sean said that he will try to attend meetings as time permits.

9. MEETING SCHEDULE

Next meeting

- January 13th, at 6 PM.

Agenda Items

- Minutes Review;
- Creation of Bike/Walk Vision Statement for Village;
- Project Updates from Committee members;
- Presentation from Eric Regarding Chapel Hill NC;
- Public Input.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by JUD, SECOND by ROWENA, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 PM.