

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE FAIRFIELD  
BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING, JULY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2012**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Andrew Graceffa, Alyssa Israel, Katina Wolfe, Meg Capodanno.  
**ALTERNATES PRESENT:** Lawrence Ogren. **ABSENT:** John Franzen, Betsy Gardner, Kirstin Etela, Clif Meyers. **ADVISORS PRESENT:** Cristin McCarthy Vahey, Selectman, Sarah Levy, Public Health Educator/Fairfield Health Department, Matt Snow, Manager/Trek Bicycle Store.

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 5:10 p.m. by Andrew Graceffa, Chair.

**II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** Katina Wolfe *moved* to accept and Meg Capodanno *seconded* the approval of the minutes with the following corrections: the paragraph about the Conservation Commission (from the model meeting minutes) should be deleted and Katina and Meg should be listed as making the motion to accept the officers. *Motion to approve the minutes with corrections passed unanimously.*

**III. REVISED MEETING SCHEDULE:** Suggested changes to the proposed meeting schedule that were previously circulated via email are as follows:

Wednesday, July 11th (Education - Katina, Sarah, Meg, Betsy)  
Wednesday, July 25th (Planning - Andy, Cristin)  
Wednesday, August 8th (Enforcement - Clif, Alyssa)  
Wednesday August 22nd (Infrastructure - Jack, Matt, Larry)  
September 12th (Infrastructure)  
September 26th  
October 10rd  
October 24th  
November 14th  
November 28th  
December 12th  
December 26th

Katina Wolfe *moved* to accept and Meg Capodanno *seconded* the approval of the revised meeting schedule. *The motion passed unanimously.*

**IV. PLAN COMMENT PROTOCOL:** Committee commentary on the various sections (Education, Planning, Enforcement, Infrastructure) will be discussed at meetings and attached to the meeting minutes. Andrew Graceffa volunteered to pool everyone's comments and questions into one document for submission to Mark Nielsen at the Greater Bridgeport Regional Council.

**V. PLAN COMMENTARY ON EDUCATION:** See attached commentary on Education from Katina Wolfe, Betsy Gardner, Sarah Levy and Meg Capodanno. Sarah Levy also submitted Mark Fenton's notes following his presentation "Engineering Physical Activity Back into Our Community" on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 at the Fairfield Senior Center.

**VI. OTHER BUSINESS:**

- The Committee discussed identifying all the town departments and stakeholders in the community (such as Pequot Runners Club, the Board of Education's Wellness Committee, and the PTA Council's Health, Fitness and Safety Committee) and possibly assigning different responsibilities from the Plan to each town department and stakeholder group. A matrix could be developed to easily depict this concept.
- Andy suggested developing evaluation measures and conducting an annual audit. These activities would help us to eventually obtain "Bike and Walk Friendly Town" designations.
- Alyssa suggested asking our Advisors the following questions in order to inventory what has already been done and to solicit their input:
  - What has your department done in the past 5 years to promote biking and walking?
  - What would you like to do in the next 5 years to promote biking and walking?
- Matt Snow will look into Trek's bike share program.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Katina Wolfe *moved* and Meg Capodanno *seconded* to adjourn at 6:55 p.m. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Alyssa Israel, Secretary

5 Attachments

**Bike/Walk Plan: Education Overview-2**  
**Submitted by Sarah Levy, Public Health Educator, Fairfield Health Dept.**  
[slevy@town.fairfield.ct.us](mailto:slevy@town.fairfield.ct.us)  
Bike/Walk Advisory Committee  
July 11, 2012

“The guiding principles of the proposed bicycle and pedestrian plan are to improve quality of life in Fairfield and make walking and bicycling in and around town safer and more enjoyable.”  
(Bike/Walk Plan)

Education Strategies: See Chapter 5, **Findings and Recommendations** PG. 42, Draft 3-  
Bike/Walk Plan (Right Column, Middle)

The entire village will require education in order for cars, trucks, buses, bicycles and walkers to safely and peacefully share busy roads!

*Actions:*

1. Install road markings (sharrows) and “ share the road “ signs to build awareness and serve as constant reminders that bicycles and walkers are traveling on roads and have a right to be there as well as motorized vehicles.
2. Consider an over-arching campaign of “Mutual Respect “or “Respect Multiplies”. This could have wider implications than safe walking and bicycling.
3. Plan a series of simulated field experiences in areas of concern (such as crossing the Post Road downtown) with mixed teams of older adults, students, drivers, parents, bicycle riders to observe challenges and develop concrete recommendations for improvement. Engage the community in identifying these areas of concern as well as in developing indicators for evaluating progress/change.(i.e. experiential learning: what is it like to push a wheelchair or a stroller across this intersection?)
4. Consider asking the Historical Society and/or the Library to do an exhibit on use of roads in the past, where horseback riders, horse-drawn carriages, foot travelers, carts, all shared the roadways. These exhibits would be a good place to include pamphlets and posters on rules of the road for everyone.
5. Educational campaigns must emphasize the benefits of more people walking and riding bicycles to commute, to do errands, to get to desired destinations, etc. Benefits include:
  - Cleaner air through reduced idling and cars starting and stopping; saving money on gasoline (short trips = poor gas mileage).
  - Increased parking availability for those who need to drive and park in town.
  - Reduced traffic congestion.

- Increased safety for everyone as people on foot or on bicycles pay attention to detail around them and are likely to notice something out of the ordinary.
  - Building a more connected, less urban feeling community.
  - Beneficial for business in town as people walking or biking are more likely to notice and to explore new restaurants and businesses.
  - Improved physical and mental health as adults and children who walk or ride bicycles as part of their daily lives spend more minutes per day being physically active.
  - Improved quality of life for older adults as they are more likely to be out in the community if they feel safe walking and crossing streets.
  - Reduced risk of falls for older adults on safe and maintained sidewalks around town. Regular daily walking is a great form of exercise and helps maintain muscle mass and balance.
6. Educate the decision makers such as Town Department Heads and Staff; RTM members, Zoning Dept's about Bike/Walk issues. Increase communication between Departments about projects that provide a natural opening for education such as road repaving or new developments, new businesses.
- Education must be ongoing, creative and innovative and include outreach to everyone in the community. Seek ideas and suggestions from everyone on creating change and enhancing safety and celebrate those contributions.
  - Educational strategies could include presentations, design contests, publicizing both positive and negative events in the community, use of social media, photography, field trips to communities similar to Fairfield that have implemented creative strategies. These strategies by themselves are unlikely to create substantial change. Other strategies must include changes in zoning, design, creating complete streets; enforcing laws and creating a cultural norm where the majority of the population demonstrates safe practices and consideration for each other. Changes include people riding and walking on the correct side of the street; wearing bike helmets (adults as well as children); drivers stopping for walkers at cross-walks; slowing down and driving and biking at safe speeds; wearing reflective clothing and/or bright colors while biking and walking to increase visibility; taking bicycle skills training courses to enhance skills and safety. People pay attention while on streets, sidewalks and parking lots. (Some towns have laws against bike riding with headphones on.) Adults and adolescents do not ride bicycles on sidewalks. Work toward achieving Biking and Walking Safe Community status.

## **EDUCATION COMMENTS by Katina Wolfe**

### Community Safe Driving Awareness and Education Program

- Need to educate walkers/bikers/runners of “rules of the road”. Not being followed now. (most accidents due to failed granted right of way)
- Highlight benefits of biking/walking for health and environmental reasons.
- Get existing printed materials to distribute to the public.
- Work with local driving schools to incorporate driving rules in their sessions.
- Enforce speed regulations for bikers/walkers to feel more secure.

### Safe Routes to Schools

- Only Osborn and Ludlowe developed?
- Why hasn't Osborn been implemented? Plans need to be “housed” with a town department so it can get implemented.
- Should do similar plan for other schools. Make as an action item.
- Create an audit to be conducted each year to make sure Safe Routes plans are being implemented.
- Promote more bike/walk to school days. Work with school PTA's. Approach PTA council/Wellness committee.

### Safety Materials

- Should cover “rules of the road” for biker/walkers/runners and for drivers.
- Get local papers involved to do write-ups.
- Posters at schools and public places (libraries).
- Flyers available at all local establishments (coffee shops, delis, Doctors offices)

### Education Activities

- Develop a short safety program for schools to introduce in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Who develops and pays?
- Work with PE curriculum director to incorporate safe biking.

### General Notes

- How are runners classified? Work with Pequot Runners Club.
- Who enforces the rules of the road? Consequences/fines?
- Who oversees implementation of recommendations? Action item: Design matrix to outline who is responsible for implementing and maintaining the plan.

**Some thoughts on "Education" for 7/11/12 meeting**  
**Betsy Gardner**

When I heard “Education” I thought it meant Marketing. **Marketing the whole concept is key!** Stop & Shop in West Haven has a big, framed picture saying "Thank you for supporting the new train station committee" or something like that; perhaps we could get the Fairfield Stop & Shops to put up similar large pictures. **LOGO!** We could put a logo on the town website, on flags hanging from light poles, in stores and restaurants. Have contests to create the logo! Have poster contests for kids in schools! Bumper stickers! Marketing the concept of the good effects of walking and bicycling might take place at all levels, from preschools to senior citizens. Free radio spots, perhaps on WVOF; articles in The Minuteman, etc. Maybe also have contests or rewards for accumulated walking/biking distance – e.g., (virtual) Walk to Atlantic City; Bike to Boston. The article about “pedestrians” having negative connotations was good and might give us some ideas. A group called "Green Drinks" could become allies. We might usefully devote serious effort on how to market the concepts.

1. Education – “These actions aim to inform everyone about the rules of the road for walking and bicycling, as well as the laws that motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists need to adhere to ...”
  - What ARE the rules of the road for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists? Are the rules for bicycles the same as for vehicles? Are these adequate? [http://www.besafe.org/css\\_com/bicycle/rules.html](http://www.besafe.org/css_com/bicycle/rules.html)
  - These seem valuable as well <http://www.bikeleague.org/resources/better/roadrules.php>
  - For pedestrians, are these adequate?  
<http://walking.about.com/od/beginners/a/safewalkingrule.htm>
2. “...require nor do they provide bicyclists with the required clearance as they pass:” Is a particular clearance specified somewhere? Action 4 would seem to be of great importance:
  - Action 4: Conduct a community safe driving awareness and education program, especially as it relates to negotiating and avoiding conflicts with bicyclists and pedestrians. This would include a share-the-road effort using various media to reach out to the driving public to stress the rights of pedestrians and bicyclists.
  - The 'Bicycles do not have fender benders" sign on p. 21 is excellent and could be displayed widely. [sharetheroadct.org](http://sharetheroadct.org)
  - Action 1, continue implementing Safe Routes to School programs, also seems very

important. Get bicycling guidelines and skills into phys ed curricula?

**Thoughts on how to educate motorists:**

- Get newly-revised guidelines into the CT manual people study to obtain a driver's license. (When will the manual be revised? Is it online?)
- Get guidelines into the curriculum of the AAA defensive driving course which is widely taken by senior citizens (talk with someone at AAA).
- Get guidelines into the curriculum of all the driving schools.

**Endnote:** We would be well-advised to keep coming back to the idea that the only person who can make things happen is the First Selectman.

**Education Strategies, pages 42- 43 of Bike/Walk Plan**  
**By Meg Capodanno**

1. Action 1: "Continue implementing Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs at all elementary schools in Fairfield" implies that the Safe Routes to School program has been adopted by and is being used in our schools. This is not the case. Only 2 or 3 schools (of our 16 public schools) have accomplished the first step of Safe Routes ("Walk Audit") and none are currently using the Safe Routes program. It is not familiar to our PTAs. Every school would need to have a representative apply for the Safe Routes To School assessment and then, based on recommendations made in the walk audit, the document would need to be shared with other town bodies that might oversee those recommendations (DPW, Police Commission, BOE). A cumbersome process but many shared goals would be met by utilizing the SRTS resource. Here is where I would advise working together with PTA Council and the Health, Fitness and Safety Committee.
  
2. Action 2: "various organizations" meaning schools? pediatric offices? driving schools? sports shops? fitness centers? libraries?
  
3. Action 4: should include use of street signs and road markings as a significant way to heighten awareness and stay a visual presence; social media, newspaper space, banners, poster contest for local students/artists or contest to create logo design for Bike/Walk Committee efforts (in an effort of becoming a recognizable logo that people immediately associate with our mission).
  
4. Further public involvement in "International Walk to School Day" (held in early October) and encourage schools to expand on this by claiming a certain day of the month (i.e. first Thursday) as a Walk/Bike to School Day.
  
5. "Outreach can also be provided to schools to educate younger people on proper riding practices and how to cross streets properly and safely" ...needs to specify who would provide this service.

**Mark Fenton's Notes**  
**Engineering Physical Activity Back Into Our Community, Fairfield, CT**  
**June 22, 2012**

### **Trails**

- Utilize the bike plan as guide for action steps; focus on a few low cost, high impact, highly visible projects that provide lots of connections, to get things started. E.g. Mill Plain Road and another with beach access.
- Real concern with I-95 interchanges; must look at engineering for motor vehicles as well as pedestrian and bike safety!!
- Foot path between recreation on Old Dam and Reef road, near the ball fields, across the dump. Could be good for increased access and transportation, not just recreation. Is more signage and promotion of this route needed? (Good example of growing what you already have)
- Farmington Canal Greenway is a great example and connects to community centers, destinations, and even some lower cost options with short links.

### **Safe Routes to School**

- Do a simulated field experience in an area with mixed teams (students, drivers, parents) to observe challenges and develop concrete recommendations.
- Do a series of such workshops and with different sponsors and locations. Each one could be “sponsored” and led by a different stakeholder: schools, seniors, businesses in downtown or retail districts, town staff.
- Currently assessing transportation mode split with show of hands surveys at schools. See [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org) for info, tally sheets, etc. Should be done at each school with consistent methods. Plan to do at least three times next year--before and after Walk to School Day, and again in the spring.
- Build into PE curriculum safe pedestrian and bicycle knowledge and skills (K-2: pedestrian; grades 3+ bicycle skills and safety).
- Note: Light being redesigned near a school; could it have a leading pedestrian interval?
- Sacred Heart - Pedestrian bridge over Park Ave., connecting student housing and university. Have explored it previously--find those plans. How about spending same amount (~\$1 million) on a series of improved at-grade crossings that are more likely to be used and would improve vehicle safety as well by slowing and calming traffic?
- New building on campus, needed better pedestrian access; very much in process. People must show up for public meetings to support pedestrian, bike and transit improvements.

## Zoning and Development

- Town really lacking a long-term plan and vision statement as a community. Need to engage town department heads and designees. Can't just be the bike/walk coalition, but ultimately it has to be staff, supported by elected and appointed officials.
- Develop a 10 and 20 year plan for where this community wants to be. Then every mundane decision along the way has to lead to those outcomes--even routine stuff like the paving and painting program!
- Spend the money that is already being spent; build the things you're already building. Just do it with an eye toward ped, bike, transit access and efficiency.
- Controversial: Maximum vs. minimum parking requirements, setting bike parking requirements; waive parking requirements to divert dollars for sidewalks, trails.
- Look at complexion of Planning and Zoning committee, and where they are philosophically. **Goal is to separate planning and zoning into two entities.** This is a very high priority, for work load.

## Complete Streets

- Shop Rite shopping area is losing business because senior center busses can't pull into the parking lot. And too dangerous to simply drop seniors at the street and make them walk across parking lot. Engage business/mall owners in developing solutions that will be good for business!
- Ordinance change--all new construction and redevelopment must account for all four user groups; required in permitting process. Multi-modal transportation (not just traffic) impact analysis.
- Reach out to state DOT to have a public forum on Blackrock Turnpike; think about how you can help DOT solve the problems they face.
- Engage developers and store owners to do shared access; currently required in by-laws and it is being waived. This means you **MUST** do community outreach, education, and recruitment to populate hearing rooms with thoughtful people.
- As a start, have RTM consider a Complete Streets resolution. Need not be an ordinance to start, but a statement of intent (*whereas . . . be it resolved . . .*). This is a very high priority, and necessary to start a public discussion. **BE ADAMANT:** It is **NOT** about the money. Even what you are doing now can be done more completely.