

Connecticut Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board
April 15, 2010

Attending: Ray Rauth, Jason Stockmann, Tom Gutman, Charlie ~~Baristain~~Beristain, Rod Parlee, Erin Sturgis-Pascale, Alan ~~Sylvester~~Sylvestre, Deb Dauphinais, Richard Stowe

Guests: Mark Nielson, Sandy Fry, David Balzer, David Head, David Kraus, Robin Kebellis, Colleen ~~Casine~~Kissane
~~sine~~, Pamela ~~Guinen~~Guinan

Chair's opening remarks

Approval of the Agenda: Motion made: APPROVED unanimously.

Approval of the March minutes: Motion to move as written: APPROVED unanimously.

David Kraus Presentation – West Hartford City Planner

- Convert sidewalks from concrete slabs to brick pavers → less likely to injure pedestrians. Town wishes to reduce liability. Half of sidewalk in town center is owned by city, half by business owners. Liability claims against city have been greatly reduced. The bricks can float with tree roots rather than fracture.
- Adopt the use of bump-outs → distance pedestrian must cross at intersection is significantly reduced. However, cyclists have less room to maneuver in the right of way. Makes roads look narrower. Also improves sight distances at intersections. Bump-outs are 5 feet wide, leaving 3 feet of the parking space for a cyclist to use for getting around the bump-out.
- Reinstall traffic signals that include pedestrian countdown signals. Designed and built in-house.
- West Hartford has over 200 miles of sidewalks. Heavy pedestrian use. Bicycle trail is being developed along Trout Brook that runs through town. Would like to extend this trail.
- Trying to move cyclists off of the road entirely due to narrowness of the streets.
- Painted sharrows on streets that were considered conducive to bicycle use.
 - Question: could the edges of the bump-out be angled to permit cyclists to ride over them. Answer: This is possible, and the more people call attention to this, the more likely it is to be considered in future infrastructure in West Hartford.
- Some roads are being narrowed in response to citizen outcry over speeding.
- 9 speed display signs have been installed around town. They seem to be effective. Speed cameras are also being installed.
- Red Light Cameras are being considered.
 - Question: Have you had positive feedback from people about the speed cameras? Answer: Some people have written saying that they appreciate the increased awareness of their speed (or the speed of their daughter who has borrowed the car...).
 - Point of Information: This board did endorse the use of Red Light Cameras for traffic calming.

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- West Hartford has ruled out the use of speed bumps for residential side streets. But they have tried using chicanes and meandering, reshaped roadways.
 - Question: What is the lane striping policy on side streets? Answer: David Kraus prefers edge stripes over double yellow lines. Edge lines provide a space for cyclists.
- New Britain Avenue is being redesigned in Elmwood Center. Sidewalks will be widened, shoulders will be narrowed.
 - Question: Does W. Hartford have a design manual? Answer: No, they draw from many different sources. They try to address the unique needs of each street, and look at what is possible in its particular context.
 - Question: What is being done to improve visibility of islands at night, particularly at left turn lanes? Answer: Two-foot high reflectors have been installed on the leading edge of the islands. This will hopefully become a standard.
 - Question: Is there a way to make sensors at traffic lights sensitive to bikes? Answer: The video sensors should be responsive to cyclists and even pedestrians. Being in the center of the lane will improve the likelihood of being detected.
 - Question: How many roundabouts have been used to replace signalized intersections in W. Hartford? Answer: Roundabouts are very expensive and require a lot of space. Signals are often installed due to political pressure in places where they are not truly needed.

David Balzer and David Haed: Nothing to report at this time.

New Haven Complete Streets Design Manual presentation by Erin Sturgis-Pascale & CT Livable Streets Campaign

- City seemed incapable of fixing speeding problem on Erin's streets. Grassroots campaign for traffic calming and Complete Streets emerged. Relationship between citizens and engineers is changing as citizens grow more active in the design of their streets.
- Complete Streets Committee was tasked with designing a Complete Streets Design Manual. Includes 3 city staff, 3 aldermen, and 3 community members.
- Five tasks: Policy, process, education, enforcement, and engineering.
- *Policy*: Prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable users. If streets are safe for these users, then they will be safe for everyone. Vision Zero: there should be no fatalities in the transportation system. Reject the assumption that traffic injuries are an inevitable part of the traffic system.
- *Education*: 1% of traffic funding is spent on bicycles and pedestrians, but 13% of traffic injuries involve cyclists and pedestrians.
- *Enforcement*: NH Policy created a Traffic Safety Hotline. Significant increase in traffic violation citations in 2009 → also a record number of gun seizures due to police searching cars.
- It is schizophrenic to build a road where it is comfortable to drive 50 mph and then put up a sign that tells me to drive 25 mph.
- *Engineering*: Design Manual.
 - Define street typologies → general streets, boulevards, slow streets, pedestrian only streets.

- Created toolbox of traffic calming measures →
- Need to have a set of guidelines for engineers to reference so that they have a legal defense if someone is injured.
- *Measurement*: Both objective and subjective data has to be collected. Right now only cars are counted. Why doesn't anyone count bicycles, pedestrians, and transit users?
- Operating Documents: Highway Design Manual → very little in the manual that points engineers toward specific traffic calming measures and facilities for bicycles and pedestrians. Shift the institutional bias of the DOT.
- Transportation Fast Facts 2008 → document about the Connecticut Transportation System. Almost no mention of bicycles and pedestrians. Needs more context-sensitivity, particularly in urban areas.
- Massachusetts Design Guide → 4 key features → Flexibility, Community Context, Multi-Modal Accommodation, Transparent and Clear Project Development Guidelines.
 - This is a great model for how to change ConnDOT's Highway Design Guide

ConnDOT comments on the presentation

- Context-sensitive design is now a part of the way ConnDOT does business.
- Bike and Ped plan has been completed with a design toolbox. This is being circulated to the engineers. It has been made available to the CBPAB.
 - Erin's response: This needs to be added to the Highway Design Manual. It should be business as usual.
- Is this presentation available online?
 - It will be circulated to the board and any interested DOT members.

Questions from the board:

- What about "mundane" measures like road painting and renewal? What place do these sort of procedures have in a Complete Streets Design Guide?
 - Answer: These elements should all be combined in the form of a new Dot Highway Design Manual.

Richard: When is the Highway Design Manual due for a revision?

David Balzer: Not sure what the exact update cycle is, but will investigate and report back to the board. Office of Engineering and Highway Operations is in charge of the document.

Tom: Are State Traffic Commission (STC) Lane Markings guidelines part of the Highway Design Manual? The STC guidelines somewhat reflects the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

David Balzer: STC addresses issues such as suitability of roads to new development. They advise if changes must be made to a road when something is built along it.

Goals discussion → motion to appoint Erin, Alan, and Gary to be custodians of the Goals Statement.

ACTION ITEM: They are charged with bringing a draft of the Goals Statement before the board for discussion and approval.

Alan reads a mission system: achieve the full integration of walking and cycling into the state's transportation system.

Old Business

4.1. Outreach to other agencies → Ray: Set up connections to other agencies that are relevant to our mission. First example: Connecticut Forest and Parks Association. Meetings may happen outside of board meetings, but invitations will be extended to all board members.

Motion to permit outreach to other agencies: UNANIMOUSLY passed.

4.2. Cross-state routes → Tom Harley is working on cross-state routes. ConnDOT is still working on an online map.

3:00 pm: Deb Dauphinais leave meeting.

4.3. We voted to fill the gap in the East Coast Greenway. The letter went out after Ray signed it.

David Balzer: The letter was sent on behalf of the CBPAB.

Rod: Funding for Manchester-Bolton ECG gap was cut from roughly \$750,000 to roughly \$500,000.

Richard: Suggested using pervious concrete.

Rod: Letter to Governor needs to be written ASAP. Can Ray fax his signature to the DOT so the letter can be completed?

David Head: Letters to the Governor are usually sent electronically.

Rod: Propose to Table the Merritt Parkway letter until next meeting; Richard has some concerns about it that need to be addressed.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion approved!