

Ellsworth Bicycle Pedestrian Committee
March 13, 2007
Minutes

Attending:

Jim Fisher, Hancock County Planning Commission (HCPC)
Heather Albert-Knopp, working with HCPC on Ellsworth Bike/Ped Plan
Maryann Locke, Ellsworth Recreation Commission
Michelle Gagnon, Ellsworth City Planner
Tom Stipe, Union River Healthy Communities
Sarah Hammitt, area resident
Cathy Kozaryn, Ellsworth resident, Union River Healthy Communities
Candy Gammelin, Ellsworth Recreation Commission

Coming Events/Announcements

Maine Safe Routes to School Conference, Tuesday, March 27 in Augusta

March 28-29 State Scenic Byways conference including one day of focus on scenic viewsheds. www.acadiabyway.org

Ellsworth Bike-Pedestrian Committee March 29th 5:30 PM Ellsworth City Hall

Recap Last Meeting's Origins and Destinations Exercise

HCPC has digitized the origins and destinations areas. Jim presented the map to the committee.

Comments:

- "Sidewalk problems" – re-word to denote improvements
- Replace the word "route" in "walking routes" – this is mis-leading, sounds like an official route
- "Origins" and "Destinations" – call them "potential" destinations
- Michelle: Committee should be aware of how project ideas are packaged so that they will be agreeable to City Council.

Other Projects and Plans

(Note: This part of the meeting took longer than we anticipated. Our meeting on 3/29/07 will resume where we left off.)

As follow-up to last meeting's presentations on current projects that impact bicycle and pedestrian planning for Ellsworth, Michelle presented on additional projects that the committee should be aware of

State & Oak/Fork in the Road Project – DOT project

- Intersection of State Street and 1A. Planned improvements: reconfiguring intersection to make it more of a right angle; traffic light well-coordinated with

other lights. Complete the sidewalks connecting to State Street. There could be a crosswalk across State Street.

- Committee could recommend that the new traffic lights at State Street/Oak St. include the capacity to later add pedestrian crossing light, once sidewalks are completed in this area.
- Discussion of possibility for sidewalks/shoulders on Oak Street: Oak Street is an arterial, so the state should cover the cost. Paved shoulders on both sides, sidewalk on one side could be recommendation – i.e. “complete the street” on Oak Street.

Bridge Hill – DOT project

- Planned improvements: Direct Blue Hill-bound traffic along Court Street; add sidewalk on North side of street heading up Bridge Hill; add island in middle of road to separate traffic heading out of town from traffic heading in town; signage for traffic at intersection with State Street/Main Street
- Discussion on crosswalks where Main/State/Water Street intersect. Crosswalks don't work – there's always traffic turning, even when the pedestrian light tells people to go. This is very dangerous, and parents with children often complain about it – when there's a green pedestrian light, pedestrians think they are safe. Committee could recommend that there is a time when the lights are green only for pedestrians.
- Is there room for bicycles going up Bridge Hill?
- Is a crosswalk to the Black House possible?
- Could have signage to direct bicyclists and walkers on back roads to get up Bridge Hill and around potentially dangerous intersections here.

High Street Beckwith Hill

- Planned improvements include: moving one traffic light on High Street, adding a new signal near where KFC currently is; make parking lots safer; continue sidewalks south from Shaws on both sides of the street; crosswalk at Key Bank; car traffic will be one-way up Beckwith Hill headed south toward Bar Harbor; sidewalk on East side of road; north-bound traffic coming from MDI will take Myrick Street, where there will be six lanes of traffic at one new major traffic light by the turn into Home Depot; a new big-box store will go in across the road from Home Depot at this traffic light.
- Bike pedestrian committee could recommend shoulders and sidewalks on Myrick Street.
- Michelle tried pushing for a pedestrian crossing on Myrick Street, but was told it was not possible. Anything on Myrick will be a hard sell.
- There should be paved shoulders on Myrick, since there will be state-financed road construction and it will become classified as an arterial now that it will be the route for traffic coming from MDI
- Michelle suggested that the committee could work on getting sidewalk up to the Birdsacre sanctuary, then work with the sanctuary to do a path through the woods in that area to make a pedestrian route up the hill

Other Projects/Ideas

- Bayside road – could have off-road trail in this area, a dedicated path
- Beechland/Bayside Road will be improved with a dedicated left off Beechland, and a dedicated left on Bayside.
- Committee could recommend paved shoulders for Beechland Rd.
- Committee may want to consider some very general policy language in the plan – providing a mechanism for considering bicycle and pedestrian options with every road improvement made and every development that's constructed

Review of Mission/Vision/Objectives Document

Jim distributed a copy of the revised mission/vision/objectives/strategies for the committee and the Bicycle Pedestrian Plan.

- The objectives in the document still need to be refined; some of the strategies currently read like objectives. The objectives/strategies will be revised to discuss specific projects
- For prioritizing projects, some prioritization criteria have been included on page 3
- At the end of the document, Jim included graphics represented how different bicycle improvements might be made. This was included in the Brunswick Plan, and we can include these illustrations in the Ellsworth plan as well.
- In the plan we may want to separate the bicycle priority improvements from pedestrian priority improvements – the plan would then include a prioritized list of bicycle improvements and a prioritized list of pedestrian improvements, so that we can compare apples to apples.
- Michelle would like to come out of this process with policy recommendations for every zoning situation, policies for dealing with developers, etc.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, March 29, 5:30PM at Ellsworth City Hall Auditorium