

PaTHs 4 Bethlehem
Meeting Summary
February 28, 2012

Present: Henry Peyrebrune, Scott Lewendon, Oliver Holmes, Dan Lewis, Alan Via, Caleb Wistar
Town of Bethlehem Staff: Supervisor John Clarkson, Rob Leslie, Jason Gallo, Brian Kise
VHB Staff: Kim Lundgren
School District Staff: None

Comments on January Meeting Summary

Caleb – Name was left off list of present committee members for January meeting.
Anne – Under new business Anne’s comment regarding the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, the word “service” should be “surface”.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Goal Setting Exercise

Facilitated by Kim Lundgren, the group started off by getting a first look at the new Sustainable Bethlehem logo and answering some bicycle and pedestrian related questions using key pad polling devices. These questions served as a lead-in to a group discussion about redefining our committee’s goals and establishing a Vision and Mission statement. The 5 E approach was used to structure the mission and goals where as the vision statement linked the term “sustainable community” with having a diversity of traveling options.



The committee was predominantly in agreement on most of the wording developed for the Vision, Mission and Goals and agreed to edit specific language via email.

Final Vision, Mission & Goals

Vision

Residents and visitors in Bethlehem live and work in a sustainable community that has a diversity of transportation options, and they routinely choose bicycling and walking for safe and efficient transportation and as a healthy option for recreation.

Mission

The PaTHs 4 Bethlehem Committee is a resource that effectively uses a 5E approach (*Engineering, Education & Enforcement, and Engagement & Encouragement*) to advise the Town, educate the community, and advocate for opportunities to improve mobility and connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Goals

Engineering

Bethlehem offers safe and efficient infrastructure to ensure accessibility, connectivity, and mobility for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Education & Enforcement

The Bethlehem community is aware of and actively exhibits safe bicycling, walking, and driving behavior. A share the road approach is respected among all travel modes and reinforced through enforcement of traffic laws.

Engagement & Encouragement

The Bethlehem community is utilizing its bicycle and pedestrian network to the full extent and is empowered to drive new programs in the town .

Review of Bicycle and Pedestrian Maintenance Manual (VHB Task 6.b.v)

A hand out was provided for the committee to review which outlined descriptions with pictures and ratings of various sidewalk defects on a 1-5 scale.

Rob- The goal was to develop a sidewalk rating system similar to the Town's existing evaluating method of the roadways, which uses the PASER method. It utilizes pictures with different types of defects and descriptions with ratings, 1-10 scale. The next step is for the Highway Dept. to comment on the manual.

Henry – Is the implication that highway would do an evaluation?

Rob – Yes.

Henry- This fits in with a performance matrix by having a database that you can check performance on.

Scott – I would suggest cross-referencing accessibility with this document. Based on the information provided, a sidewalk with a good rating is actually not accessible, if you have a 1 inch raised section sidewalk. I wouldn't change the ratings but the maybe consideration of treatment. Maybe add some comments about if a section is not accessible or categorize noncompliance and barrier free, a sidewalk with a big lip is not compliant but a curb without a ramp is a barrier to wheelchairs. This would be in the best interest of the Town.

Caleb – Degree of vegetation may be an issue that the Town has no enforcement or control of. For example picture #3 has leaves on the sidewalk.

Jason – That picture should be changed to reflect vegetation growth from shrubs encroaching on the sidewalk, not debris that can be swept off the sidewalk.

Rob - This is one chapter, chapter 4 will be the pavement markings and signs and all will be incorporated into the manual.

Kim – Page 3 is designed for the guys to take out with them in the field, probably ripping this single page off to use.

Scott –This is just a rating system, is there any other part?

Rob – This part is just the rating system to get a sense of existing conditions, the next step is deciding if 3 or less is what we tackle for maintenance. Then the Town has to make a decision on the funding they have and what sidewalks they want to improve.

Henry – Is there a solution to improve a 3 to a 1? At what point do we tear it up and rebuild. Is there separate step to create some sort of solutions guide.

Rob – There should be, after we get the existing conditions what we want to do is determine those thresholds for what types of maintenance.

Scott – Will there be anything that provides guidance for accessible features like curb ramps?

Rob – Just the sidewalk surface would be assessed.

Kim – We can look into adding the general comments you suggested, the big focus was that this was integrated into the highways current process as possible, serving the audience of the highway field staff.

Scott – Then you probably don't want to include anything about accessibility in this document. Put that in a follow up document outlining treatments. If there is a way to work in an evaluation of a simple handicap ramp, as simple as like is it level or if there is a 6 inch curb that serves as a barrier. This get backs to the Towns Transition Plan, and if you can revise it to say there is a process in place to assess accessibility barriers this would be in the Town's favor if ever reviewed Department of Justice. I would be willing to help with any revisions.

Dan – Do we know how the repairs will be done and consistent with what we want and factored in or will it just be up to the Town's best practices.

Rob – It is not factored into this document, and will probably be consistent with the Town's best practices. But this should warrant a discussion with the Highway dept., which would be the next step after this.

Alan – With the lack of snow and plowing time spent on labor is there any extra money available in the Highway fund that could be allocated for anything that we discussed?

Jason – We have no authority regarding that matter.

Oliver – You have pictures of rumble strips, implying that they are acceptable. Rumble strips are unacceptable, period. Not a good example.

Rob – So get rid of it completely from the manual?

Oliver – Yes.

Jason – Do we put in rumble strips are not acceptable?

Oliver – I would rather have you say that, that they are not acceptable.

Rob – So keep the picture but change the text.

Review of PaTHs 4 Bethlehem Events/Schedule (VHB Task 6.b.ii)

Tabled until next meeting.

Discuss March 12, 2012 Public Meeting – Sustainable Bethlehem and Bicycle/Pedestrian Initiative (VHB Task 6.b.iv)

Kim – As part of this task to engage community partners VHB is prepared to host one public meeting. We want to identify and invite some of the core partners that we believe would be engaged to help drive the goals of the committee. VHB will present an overview of linkages between bicycle and pedestrian efforts and being a sustainable community. We will present the work that the PATHs committee has completed to date and share what projects and initiatives VHB has been working on with the committee. We will also do some general keypad polling to capture info and demographics of those who attend, followed by breaking into smaller groups targeting more specific conversations and sharing the committee's new goals. These smaller groups would be lead by facilitators.

Rob- I see us having success in inviting organizations but may have a harder time in getting individual businesses to attend. At the very least we can get our work out there to the public in a forum for all to see, other than a Town Board meeting.

Alan – We should try to invite representatives from the police department and rescue squads.

Dan – Some of committee members also represent other constituencies and if you have a prepared flyer we can distribute to our groups.

New Business

Scott – The day after the public meeting on March 13, FORT will be hosting a workshop to develop a theme and a communication plan for the trail. I will send an email and if you could distribute that would help.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

8:25