

**PaTHs 4 Bethlehem
Meeting Summary
June 23, 2009
Town Hall Room 101**

Present: Scott Lewendon, Henry Peyrebrune, Caleb Wistar, Steve Downs, Dan Lewis, John Schonberg, Mark Jordan, Mark Lewis, Kathy McCarthy
Town of Bethlehem Staff: Jason Gallo, Rob Leslie, Erik Deyoe
Guest: Ryan Kennedy

Comments on May Meeting Summary

Jason handed out a compiled list of the destinations as identified by the committee during the May meeting (Destination Identification Exercise). No comments on the meeting summary were provided and Jason indicated they would be posted on the Committee's webpage.

Ryan Kennedy's "Safe Routes to School" State Science Fair Presentation

Ryan used Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to analyze the current sidewalk facilities within a ½ mile of both the Bethlehem High School and Middle School. His conclusion was that better connections could be made for safer student travel to both the High School and Middle School.

To provide better pedestrian access to the High School, Ryan suggested sidewalks on Orchard Street, from Crestwood Lane (where the current Safe Route's to School sidewalk project will end) to Brockley Drive, and along Brockley Drive (between Orchard Street and Delaware Avenue) to the High School. He also suggested a sidewalk on the southern side of Delaware Avenue from Bennett Terrace to Elm Avenue (long term) and/or a crosswalk across Delaware Avenue at Bennett Terrace (short term).

To provide better pedestrian access to the Middle School, Ryan suggested sidewalks on Fernbank Avenue, Wellington Road and Delmar Place. Some of the supporting evidence Ryan used to justify the sidewalks included current national obesity levels in youth and adolescents, national data regarding pedestrian accidents with and without sidewalks, and local population densities surrounding the areas where proposed sidewalks would be installed.

Draft Complete Streets Resolution

Rob & Jason discussed their attendance at a recent “Complete Streets Workshop”, presented by the Cornell Local Roads Program, in Saratoga Springs, NY. They shared with the Committee some of the information provided, including the Complete Streets legislation that has been introduced in both the NYS Senate and Assembly. The sample legislation is available through the New York Bicycling Coalition website at www.nybc.net. Rob provided a copy of the “Complete Streets: Planning Safer Communities for Pedestrians and Bicyclists” guidebook for Committee members to circulate and consult for reference purposes.

Rob provided the Committee a draft copy of a Complete Streets Resolution for the Town. The Resolution addresses the importance of considering bicycle and pedestrian facilities during new Town street construction and street reconstruction projects. The intent of the resolution is to recognize bicyclists and pedestrians as equally important as motorists in the planning and design of new street construction and reconstruction. Brief comments and feedback were initially discussed with a request for committee members to review the Resolution and submit questions or comments via email. Some of the initial comments provided at the meeting included:

- Complete Streets resolution should be a tool/policy to implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority network that is to be developed by this Committee.
- Highway Superintendent should be aware of connectivity opportunities.
- Town resolution should be in compliance with the proposed Complete Streets Resolution before the NYS Senate and Assembly.
- The Town’s resolution should reflect a holistic approach so as not to burden the Town with unnecessary costs.
- Traffic calming applications can aid in enforcement (calming motor vehicle traffic behaviors) to provide a safe travel environment for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Rob indicated he would like to review the draft Resolution again at the July Committee meeting and forward to the Town Board for consideration at an August Town Board meeting.

Existing Sidewalk Inventory

Currently, the Town is in the process of mapping (via GPS/GIS) the existing location of sidewalks in the Town. Part of the data collected will include the existing condition of the sidewalks. The Committee was tasked with developing sidewalk condition attributes that could be used during the collection of this data. To prepare for developing these condition attributes, the committee conducted a brief walking audit of the sidewalks around Town Hall. Half of the Committee members traveled Roweland Avenue/Adams Place/Adams Street/Delaware Avenue, while the other

half traveled Delaware Avenue/Adams Street/Kenwood Avenue/Borthwick Avenue. Following the walking audit, the Committee suggested the collection of the following sidewalk condition attributes:

- Material (Asphalt, Concrete)
- Hazards
 - Bump
 - Obstructions
 - Upheaval
 - Interface between sidewalk and road
 - Trees (creating major problem; tree replacement?)
 - Ponding (local drainage problems, dirt rings, etc.)
 - Cracking
- Width
- Buffer
- Transitions between curb and sidewalk
- Curb
- Striping between lane and sidewalk
- Cross walks
- Stop Bars
- Site distance
- Right of Way encroachments
- ADA complaint ramps/detectable warnings
- Catch basin grate orientation
- Utilities in sidewalk
- Shoulder width
- Signage for Bikeways

Identify Gaps in the Pedestrian/Bicycle Network

Postponed to the September meeting

Public Comment

- Focus on pathways that are not along a road corridor and potentially have the Town secure, with willing landowners, the rights for access.
- Bicycle and pedestrian education should be a major task for the committee.
- The completion of the Albany County Rail Trail will result in more bicyclists on the road, thus creating the need for more connections to the Rail Trail.
- Special assessment districts could be a potential option for the financing of facilities.

Adjourn – 8:35PM