

**PaTHs 4 Bethlehem**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**April 28, 2009**  
**Town Hall Room 101**

Present: Sue Kambrich, Scott Lewendon, Mark Lewis, Kathy McCarty, Henry Peyrebrune, Julie Sasso, Caleb Wistar, Dan Lewis  
Town of Bethlehem Staff: Jason Gallo, Rob Leslie

**March 24 Meeting Summary Review**

No Comments on Meeting Summary. Jason G. asked about inviting someone from the Clifton Park Trails Sub-Committee to attend a meeting and the committee thought it would be a good idea.

Some general comments not pertained to the agenda were: Scott L. thought it would be good for the committee to devote one meeting to bicycle/pedestrian safety. Dan L. inquired about the efforts the Town will take to address and promote the Rail Trail, as well as its use and linkage. Rob L. re-iterated the main focus of the committee, referring to our mission & goals. Kathy M. thought the County should take the lead in the promotion of the Rail Trail. Sue K. expressed what she felt was a priority for sidewalk investment, along Feura Bush Road towards the Glenmont Plaza. Henry P. added that the conditions of existing sidewalks should not be over looked, referring to a Sidewalk/Bikeway Feasibility Study prepared by Clough Harbour & Associates in 1998. Henry also commented that the 3 E's (Education, Engineering & Enforcement) should be employed in our goals when considering connections.

**Bicycle & Pedestrian Characteristics / Review of 2000 US Census data**

Rob L. presented facts and figures on some national characteristics regarding pedestrians & bicycling. Rob L. indicated that this presentation would be placed on the Pathways Committee website for future reference.

General comments & questions based on the presentation: Caleb W. asked if there were any crushed stone pathways in Town. Scott L. indicated that the Line Drive baseball fields along the Delmar Bypass Extension have crushed stone paths between the fields. Sue K. wanted to know if there were any laws or policies regarding student eligibility to walk or bus to school. Rob L. presentation indicated that the Bethlehem Central School District Transportation Policy provides bus transportation to all K – 6 Grades, and Grades 7 – 12 if a student resides greater than ½ mile from school. The Ravena Coeymans School District Transportation Policy provides bus transportation to all grades: students reside greater than ½ mile from school.

Henry P. noted that a survey was conducted that found that a lot of schools do not have sidewalks at all. Sue K. mentioned that some students may live within close proximity to their school, but since pedestrian facilities are not available the only safe travel option is by bus. She mentioned an analysis comparing sidewalk construction/maintenance costs to school bus costs would be informative. Kathy M. thought that some issues pertaining to why people don't walk may be societal, such as time constraints for parents who manage work and family.

Dan L. commented that values have changed since the last 2000 US Census and that maybe we should be looking at a community who has made a commitment to connectivity and pathways within the past 5 years. (Example; Madison, Wisconsin.) Sue K. echoed Dan's comments and also noted that the priority of the Town may no longer be the commuting routes. Henry P. said that there should be examples in New York State and that someone from DOT might be able to give some insight about "Best Practices" in NY for these contemporary issues.

### **CDTC Bicycle & Priority Network Characteristics**

Rob L. outlined the CDTC Bicycle & Pedestrian Priority network characteristics, which include the following:

1. They are parts of major travel routes -- they connect major activity centers with each other and are the most critical parts of connections between these activity centers and major residential areas.
2. They are the most likely facilities to contain some sort of barrier to cycling or walking
3. They have few practical alternatives nearby (as any alternative routes would add significant length to a trip)
4. They are accessible to residential areas via local (non-through), lower volume roads
5. They have potential for use as bike routes, with proper accommodations

Caleb W. wanted the Committee to be aware of the Delaware Avenue Hamlet Enhancement Study, which will provide recommendations on bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements along Delaware Avenue from Adams Street to Elsmere Ave.

### **Destination Identification Exercise**

Tabled until next meeting

### **Vision Exercise**

Committee members conducted a visioning exercise to identify the future characteristics of Bethlehem's pathways system. Comments included the following:

- Residents devote 20 minutes to bicycle and/or pedestrian trips
- Bike lanes and sidewalks in every neighborhood
- Connected network of bike paths
- Safe and contained series of connections

- Rail trail or rail right-of-way developed for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Emerald Necklace: open space assets connected through greenways
- Town has an institutionalized approach to bicycle and pedestrian planning (e.g. budget, fund sources, locations, etc.)
- Advertise the proximity and travel time to reach Town destinations by walking or bicycling

**Public Comment**

- Use CACC recreation and pathway map for reference.
- CDTC may wish to include the Albany County Rail Trail as part of their Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network.
- Hamlet Zoning Districts as destinations.
- Crushed stone could be used as an initial base before asphalt pavement.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM