

MINUTES St. Croix Bike Pedestrian Trail Coalition

Town of Somerset Town Hall, 748 HWY 35, Somerset, Wisconsin - May 13, 2015, 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER - Tim Witzmann, Vice-Chairperson, called the meeting to order at ~ 6:30 p.m.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC NOTICE – Witzmann indicated the agenda had been posted at the Town of Somerset Town Hall and on the Trail Coalition web site.

ROLL CALL – Trail Coalition Board of Directors present were Rich Baillargeon, Mark Gherty, Susan Heuiser, Andre Johnson, Andrew Lamers, Mark Vanasse, Marian Webber and Tim Witzmann. Dave Mandel, board chairperson, was absent. There were ~ 15 others present in addition to the board members.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – A **motion** (Gherty, Lamers) to adopt the agenda. **Carried** with no opposition.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Webber reported on a bike rodeo taking place at Westfield Hospital in New Richmond on Saturday, May 16th.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES – March 11, 2015 – A **motion** (Vanasse, Baillargeon) to approve the March 11, 2015, minutes as presented. **Carried** with no opposition.

REPORTS - from subcommittees and/or individuals about information gathered for the coalition

Communication Committee – Witzmann reported on three outreach efforts the Communications Committee will be participating in – Somerset's *Pea Soup Days*, Hudson's *RiverFest* celebration and the *Cycle St. Croix Bike Tour* in conjunction with New Richmond's Corn Fest celebration.

St. Croix County TAP Grant – Heuiser reported that Toole Design Group in partnership with West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has accepted St. Croix County's invitation to be the consultant for the TAP grant funded update to the county bike/ped plan. Negotiations are ongoing regarding the details of the process the update will utilize. More information will likely follow mid to late summer into the early fall.

Finance – Vanasse discussed the income and disbursements the Coalition has received and paid out since opening a bank account. A fall fund raiser may be planned with more details to follow.

Others that may be available – There were no other reports.

ITEMS for discussion and/or action – Jim Heebink introduced Steve Clark.

PRESENTATION by Stephen Clark

Bicycle Community Friendly Specialist for the League of American Bicyclists,
Discussion about *Bicycle Friendly Communities*

Clark discussed details of becoming a *Bicycle Friendly Community* around 12 strategies that can be employed by various organizations to implement this kind of atmosphere in a region. He provided both positive and negative examples that communities around the world have utilized to make biking safer and more usable by the general public. He also answered questions from those in attendance. The 12 strategies follow.

1. Bringing People Together – People decide about public spaces through the legislative process so discussion among and between organizations about what cycling will look like in a particular community or region will define the bicycling amenities of the area.
2. Pass Policies That Put People First – Possible action items to encourage cycling discussed were the Complete Streets program used nationwide, parking policies that include bicycle parking, zoning ordinances that include trails as new development occurs and older development is updated, mixed use zoning options, safe passing laws and education of both motorists and cyclists about same, and funding dedicated to make policies possible.

MINUTES St. Croix Bike Pedestrian Trail Coalition

Town of Somerset Town Hall, 748 HWY 35, Somerset, Wisconsin - May 13, 2015, 6:30 p.m.

3. Provide Welcoming Spaces – Examples of how to define welcoming spaces included a “gateway” into a bicycle trail, patio dining establishments with bicycle racks for parking, buffered zones between vehicular traffic and bike lanes, painting bike lanes to distinguish them from vehicle lanes, and changing a 4 lane street to a 3 lane street with a bike lane.
4. Build a Safe Connected Network – Clark noted that, in bicycle friendly communities, the biking commute time is often less than the driving commute time. He also observed that “arterials” in a bicycle friendly community should not necessarily be avoided. In addition, he indicated the interconnected feature of these communities that placed the “frequent” destinations on the bicycle routes is a necessary ingredient for an effective trail network. Several examples of “road diets” – a transportation planning tool that either reduces the number of vehicular lanes to add bicycle lanes or reduces the widths of the vehicular lanes to better accommodate bicycles followed. Clark particularly noted that 10 – 11 foot vehicular lanes are safer for bicyclists traveling alongside them than 13 – 14 foot vehicular lanes. Other tools discussed as possible lane alterations were cycle tracks, advisory lanes, marked buffer zones for trail traffic, and center turn lanes. Finally, Clark noted that bicycle lanes should never be less than half the width of a vehicular lane.
5. Provide Safe Crossings – Starting with the fundamental that trails are only as safe as their crossings, Clark also indicated that barriers to crossings will only encourage unsafe crossings and are not a tool that should be utilized.
6. Lower Speeds – There is strong statistical evidence that, as speed increases, so do pedestrian fatalities.
7. Educate, Enforce, Empower – Clark indicated that bike centers/co-ops that provide training by certified instructors about a variety of bicycling topics (including traffic laws, bicycle repair & maintenance, safety, etc.) help empower all ages of riders to spend more time cycling. He noted that having informational booths at public gatherings often draws more participation in these kinds of events than scheduled classes. Signage can also be used as an educational tool.
8. Provide Ample Bike Parking – Bike corrals (bicycle locking places in a car parking space) were illustrated as an example of assisting cyclists to get off their bicycles to pursue their interests or business. In addition numerous examples of bicycle parking facilities were sprinkled throughout Clark’s presentation.
9. Encourage Cycling – Events featuring cycling as well as businesses that offer incentives to bike to work were discussed.
10. Optimize Public Transportation and Multi-Modal Options – Including bicycles in public transportation planning as well as providing bicycle rental options at designated locations were issues discussed.
11. Make Cycling Advantageous – Optimization techniques discussed were increasing connectivity as well as traffic calming techniques including bicycle boulevards, one way streets EXCEPT for bicycle traffic, and timing street light to the speed of bicycles.
12. Plan, Evaluate, and Celebrate – Planning is the first step to create a bicycle friendly region but returning to the plan on a regular basis for evaluation and plan adjustment is essential. Clark emphatically encourages celebrating milestones with, not surprisingly, bicycle rides.

Other Information

1. There are 332 bicycle friendly communities in the United State - 12 in Wisconsin. Sheboygan County is a certified bike friendly county in Wisconsin.
2. The number of people commuting to work on a bicycle has risen dramatically since 2000.

MINUTES St. Croix Bike Pedestrian Trail Coalition

Town of Somerset Town Hall, 748 HWY 35, Somerset, Wisconsin - May 13, 2015, 6:30 p.m.

3. Nationwide 0.6% of people commute both ways to work. In St. Croix County 0.25% commute both ways.
 4. Communities that rank high on various quality of life and healthiest cities studies are, by a large percentage, bicycle friendly communities.
 5. Copenhagen experiences a \$357 million per year savings in health care costs because 80% of residents ride bicycles.
 6. Multi-lane roundabouts are less safe for bicyclists than single lane roundabouts.
1. Set next meeting date – June 10, 2015 OR September 9 2015 The next membership meeting was set for **June 10th** with Chris Straight from West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission speaking on the planning tool, *Place Making*. The summer months will have no further membership meetings.

ITEMS FOR NEXT COALITION AGENDA – No items were identified.

ADJOURNMENT – A **motion** (Vanasse, Baillargeon) to adjourn. **Carried** at ~ 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Heuser, Secretary