

HISTORIC TRIANGLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

JAMES CITY COUNTY 🚲 CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG 🚲 YORK COUNTY

Regular Meeting
Monday January 26, 2009
York Hall, Yorktown
East Room

MEETING NOTES

Members Present: Rich Thompson, John Laben, Nancy Carter, Don Cherry, Jim Wirkner, Bill Beatovich, Mary Turnbull (representing Allen Turnbull), Scott Bartram, David Wilson

Non-voting: Stephanie Smith (BikeWalk Virginia), Todd Halacy (VDOT)

Members Absent: Dorothy Geyer, Kitty Preston, Tim Sutphin

Staff Present: Amy Parker (York County), Luke Vinciguerra (James City County), Rod Rhodes (City of Williamsburg)

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Kevin Moran introduced himself as a local resident and addressed the group with a recommendation to establish a safety patrol for the Capital Trail. He has had experience as a patrol member for the Washington and Old Dominion Trail in Northern Virginia. Challenges have included potential conflicts between racing teams and casual riders and conflicts with vehicles. He noted that patrol members were volunteers under sponsorship of the Friends of the W&OD Trail. Patrol members provide information to trail users, offer assistance when needed, and promote safe use of the trail.

Committee members recommended contacting local bike clubs such as the Williamsburg Area Bicyclists and Capital Trail staff regarding establishment of a safety patrol in this area.

2009 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Following nominations and voting, Bill Beatovich was elected Chair and Scott Bartram was elected Vice Chair of the Committee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the October 20, 2008 meeting were adopted with revisions.

VDOT MATTERS

Todd Halacy noted that the VDOT FY 2009 – 2014 and 2010 – 2015 Six-Year Plans will be subject to budget cuts. Many contracts are currently on hold pending Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) budget reviews. The #1 priority for projects remains public safety and emergency response. There is a hiring freeze in effect, and staff cuts and residency office consolidation have been discussed.

Ms. Smith inquired if the Federal stimulus package would result in additional funding. Mr. Halacy responded that Congress and the President have not yet approved the stimulus package, therefore funding amounts nor requirements/ regulations surrounding the funds were not yet known. The Longhill Road Study has been put on hold pending priority reviews of projects by the CTB.

Ms. Turnbull presented several pictures of problematical bike lanes in the area.

Ironbound Road - Bike lane striping has been erroneously obliterated on Ironbound Road between Carriage Road and Magazine Road in Williamsburg (James City County). She noted that Marvin Sowers had previously advised that the problem would be fixed by Spring 2008, but the bike lanes were never restriped.

New Town – A section of cobblestone surface has been installed on Casey Lane between Discovery Park Boulevard and Monticello Avenue that is difficult and unsafe to ride over on a bike. Mr. Halacy noted that such a road surface did not meet VDOT standards, and could not be accepted into the state road system. There also has been a light pole installed in the middle of one of the multi-use paths in the development. Mr. Halacy noted that he would look into the issues.

Mooretown Road at Clark Lane (York County) – The bike lane has been striped incorrectly. The striping is such that it appears to turn into Clark Lane rather than proceed straight across the intersection (on Mooretown Road). The bike lane has been installed to the outside of the turn lane rather than between the turn lane and the through lane.

The group discussed the general problem of incorrect installation of bike facilities that are not in conformance with construction drawings approved by the localities and/or VDOT standards. Problems/oversight can occur both during plan review and site inspection processes. Surety funds posted by developers should be used to correct the problems when the developer is responsible for errors. Staff responsible for reviewing construction plans and conducting site inspections need to be cognizant of correct standards for installation of bike facilities. Mr. Halacy, Mr Vinciguerra, and Ms. Parker indicated that they will follow up with VDOT, James City County and York County staff to ensure that they were reviewing plans and in the field to ensure appropriate striping.

Ms. Turnbull raised the issue of striping for the crosswalk at the intersection of Jamestown Road and Route 199. The crosswalk across Jamestown Road, installed with double parallel lines, was to be changed to a ladder type striping. Ms. Turnbull noted correspondence dated March 2006 from Reed Nester and Steve Martin at the City of Williamsburg to VDOT requesting the revised striping. The previous VDOT Residency Administrator had indicated that the additional striping

would be added to the crosswalk; however, the striping was never installed. Mr. Halacy indicated that he would follow up on the issue. He also noted that double-bar crosswalk striping is standard for intersections having pedestrian signals.

PABAC MEETING

No PABAC meeting was held since the last HTBAC meeting.

BIKEWAY PROJECTS STATUS REPORT

York County

Cooke Road Bikeway - Ms. Parker noted that Daniel Smith, Colonial National Historical Park Administrator, has indicated that the National Park Service would not support the project unless speed limits on Cooke Road (currently 45 and 55 mph) are reduced to 35 mph in the area of the proposed bikeway. VDOT conducted a traffic warrant analysis to determine if the amount of bike, pedestrian, and vehicular traffic on the roadway justifies the speed limit reduction. Traffic counts taken in the Autumn of 2008 did not indicate that the speed limit reduction was warranted; however, a new count will be done during the summer when pedestrian and bike traffic is at seasonally higher levels.

Mr. Laben noted that he addressed the York County Board of Supervisors at their January 20, 2009 meeting regarding the need for a bikeway connection to the Langley AFB via Cary's Chapel Road. He recommended that HTBAC members regularly attend Board of Supervisor and City Council meetings to speak on bikeway issues during public comment period agenda times.

James City County

Mr. Vinciguerra updated the group on the Ironbound Road (between Mid-County Park and Jamestown Road) widening project. CMAQ matching funds are to be utilized to fund the project. The County's 20% share of the project cost is estimated at \$700,000. The Board of Supervisors will consider the project in the next week, and the project may go forward if the expenditure is approved.

Ms. Smith inquired regarding the status of the greenways bond funding that was approved by the County in 2005. Of specific interest was the availability of funds for the Greensprings Trail spur to Mainland Farm. Mr. Vinciguerra will follow up with a status report.

City of Williamsburg

Mr. Rhodes noted that the city is working on a new bicycle map delineating a bike route to bypass the Colonial Parkway tunnel. Bicycles are not permitted in the tunnel. Directional signs that would include a map of the streets around the tunnel are under consideration for the mapping project.

CHAIR'S REPORT

No report

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Laben passed out a draft letter to Virginia Dominion Power expressing concern that utility vehicles have been driving on the Virginia Capital Trail in James City County when servicing utility lines. The vehicular traffic is damaging the trail, and the letter requested that utility crews cease driving on the trail. The consensus of the group was to have the letter as drafted sent to the power company.

Mr. Cherry raised a concern regarding bike access across Route 199 from Kingsmill to the Quarterpath at Williamsburg development under construction. Mr. Cherry noted that the developer's engineers indicated that bike access at the access point would be provided during their presentation at the October 2008 HTBAC meeting, but bike access is not shown on the site plans.

Mr. Rhodes indicated that it was determined that there was no safe way to design the intersection for bike passage across Route 199, so bike lanes were not included on final plans.

Mr. Cherry inquired if there would be bike access at the Route 60 entrance to the development. Mr. Vinciguerra will follow up on the inquiry.

NEW BUSINESS

Status of the road closing across the Jolly Pond dam was discussed. Ms. Carter noted that the issue had been discussed at Williamsburg Area Bicyclists meetings.

Mr. Halacy indicated that VDOT has a permissive easement for the road across the dam, but the dam itself is private property. The dam is seeping in some areas, and does not meet minimum maintenance and safety requirements of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The Timmons Group conducted a study of the dam, which included recommendations for needed improvements. The DCR operation and maintenance certification for the structure will expire on January 31, 2009. Mr. Halacy noted that if the certification is not renewed, VDOT will have no choice but to close the road to all traffic. The property owner, DCR, and James City County staff are trying to work together to resolve the problem. Funding the repairs to the structure is an issue – public funds are not available to finance the repairs. The possibility of repairing the structure sufficient for bike and pedestrian traffic only was also discussed.

Ms. Smith encouraged the group to support restoration of funds for bike projects that may be eliminated from the six-year plan. She will work with Mr. Laben on a support letter to be sent to the Virginia Secretary of Transportation's office.

Ms. Smith updated the group on several legislative bills containing provisions for bike and pedestrian access and safety. HB 2008 provides that the CTB can prohibit bikes on any highway they so designate. She recommended that the bill be pulled as written. SB 1239 and HB 2386 would strengthen the requirement for vehicles to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks by requiring that vehicles come to a stop.

Mr. Bartram inquired about the lack of bike lane striping at several recently improved intersections – Cary's Chapel Road at Victory Boulevard, Goodwin Neck Road at Route 17, and Grafton Drive at Amory Lane. Ms. Parker will follow up on the inquiry.

Ms Parker noted that new bikeway signs directing bike traffic on to Surrender Road at the north end of Cooke Road have been installed by VDOT at the request of York County Planning staff and as reviewed and recommended by HTBAC.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.