

Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Committee Meeting – **DRAFT Minutes**

TIME: 12:00pm

DATE: Tuesday, September 12, 2023

PLACE: Zoom Call

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Amy Watkins	Watch for Me CT
Bob Dickinson	Resident of Bloomfield
CJ Gandza	City of New Britain
Dave Palmberg	Town of Rocky Hill
Eric Anderson	Town of Andover
Hiram Peck	Town of Avon
Jay Stange	Transport Hartford
John DiBiasi	Town of Manchester
Kevin Sullivan	Town of Wethersfield
Mark Moriarty	City of New Britain
Martha Conneely	Riverfront Recapture
Michele Lipe	Town of South Windsor
Norm B	Member of the Public
Owen Deutsch	City of Hartford
Patrice Carson	Town of Bolton
Todd Rolland	Bike Walk New Britain / ECG
Mary Cockram	Bike Walk Connecticut

CRCOG Staff

Anaka Maher
Caitlin Palmer
Heidi Samokar
Jacob Knowlton
Lindsay Drotman
Mike Cipriano
Rob Aloise
Sotoria Montanari

Roll Call

1. **Call to Order (00:00)** Caitlin Palmer called the meeting to order. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves.
2. **Public Forum (06:44)**
Caitlin invited any comments from the public.
3. **Approval of Minutes from the Meeting on June 13 (07:00)**
Caitlin asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 2023 meeting. Motioned by Patrice Carson and seconded by Eric Anderson. Motion was approved.
4. **Updates and news (07:55)**
Caitlin gave an update on the East Coast Greenway Study which is progressing well and out of Phase 1 (existing conditions) and wrapping up Phase 2 (shortlist of routes to be considered further). She explained that each of the towns might be staggered in terms of where they are in the process, with Bloomfield and East Hartford slightly ahead compared to Hartford and with Simsbury essentially being its own little project. Caitlin explained to the group that we did a scope amendment to investigate the feasibility of portions of the Griffin Line with rail-with-trail, mostly in Hartford and southern Bloomfield.

Caitlin notified the committee of three upcoming pop-up events in Bloomfield, East Hartford and Hartford respectively.

Caitlin also mentioned to the committee that the interactive map is still available for the public to comment on, and the committee is still able to view that site if they are interested in getting more information regarding the project.

She also let the committee know that Simsbury is in the process of narrowing down alternatives, such as the old rail corridor that might serve as a potential route.

Moving on from the East Coast Greenway, Caitlin let the committee know of a Vision Zero Webinar on September 19.

She also notified the group that CRCOG is partnering with Bike Walk CT and the Department of Public Health to determine how walkable communities are.

5. Bike Ped Count Program (13:45)

Mike Cipriano gave an overview of how CRCOG has historically done bike ped counts as well as counts that we believe should be prioritized in either the Fall of 2023 or Spring of 2024 prior to construction of a project at each location. Caitlin added that we will be reaching out with Towns in coordination prior to counting those locations.

Mike described that we're also looking into Walk Audits throughout the region and working with the municipalities at selected locations that would greatly benefit from a Walk Audit. Jay Stange made the group aware of some upcoming Walk Audits in both Hartford and New Britain. John DiBiasi asked if locations that are in the Regional Safety Plan were still eligible to have Walk Audit, CRCOG staff confirmed that those were eligible. A short discussion regarding potential liability and Walk Audits was also had with the group.

6. Presentation – 4th Grade Bike Education Program, Mary Cockram (22:00)

Mary Cockram from Bike Walk Connecticut gave a presentation of the 4th Grade Bike Education Program throughout the State. She shared a survey for both bikeability and walkability and stated that within that survey, the CRCOG Region is by far the most bike ped planned region in the state.

Mary stated that approximately 10-12 years ago, Bike Walk Connecticut and South Windsor began a pilot program to teach 4th graders how to ride and has been doing it ever since. 3 years ago, Bike Walk Connecticut and CRCOG developed a curriculum to promote this training throughout the State. Over the past 3 years, they've been able to go into 7 schools, however Mary stated that it's been difficult to get into schools and a professional development calendar for schools is completed approximately a year in advance, which adds to the complexities of the program. Mary stated that physical education teachers, community volunteers and league certified bike instructors participate in these trainings. In addition to the challenges with scheduling, the actual bikes, helmets and storage trailers cost a sizeable amount of money. Mary said that having enthusiastic superintendents is far and away the most helpful, followed by principals and teachers, but emphasized that support is needed by the administrators to make this program truly work.

Lon Hultgren said that Mansfield is all set to get started in the spring of 2024, Lon stated the storage trailer costs over \$11,500 and their first-year budget is about \$30,000. He also mentioned to be careful when purchasing helmets for kids, and to make sure they were truly safe as a lot of helmets they received for free can be of poor quality. Mary offered to come out to Mansfield and actually train staff on the program itself.

A general discussion on this program was held with the group with towns reiterating that it's great to have support from advocacy groups, volunteers and school support in general.

Jay Stange informed the group that there is a lot of fear that exists between the school administration from a liability concern, and from parents with regards to the current physical infrastructure with regards to safety. Martha Conneely agreed that there is a fear among parents to have their kids riding on streets. Mark Moriarty also

mentioned that competing financial interests also makes it difficult to progress bike safety and training initiatives throughout the state.

7. What's New in My Town (01:00:30)

- **Patrice Carson, Bolton:** She said they are continuing the bike path through the center of town, which is approximately 65% complete. It will connect the firehouse to the town hall. In addition, they have a LOTCIP project that connects the town hall to the high school. She said this will create nice connectivity through the center of town.
- **Eric Anderson, Andover:** Eric notified the group that they recently got a congressional appropriation to do a connectivity study which would begin at the town hall and elementary school complex and connect down Route 316 and linking with the East Coast Greenway. Andover's goal is to hopefully get a LOTCIP project for that particular project.
- **John DiBiasi, Manchester:** He let the group know that they have pavement markings done and have their first formal green bike lanes up near Buckland Street. He also showed an image of Buckland Street and Redstone Road. Said it was 2 years in the making but is happy that it's coming along. John also mentioned that Manchester will continue to look into other green bike lanes throughout town. He also notified the group that he has a couple LOTCIP projects that he's looking to get finalized.
- **Mark Moriarty, New Britain:** Mark said that New Britain finished their bike friendly community application and said that overall while positive, the application might be prohibitive for smaller communities because it could potentially be just too much work. Mark notified the group that they are finishing the Stanley Loop Trail and that the Beeline Trail is in planning and moving along as well as various multi-use trails continuing to progress. Mark also mentioned that sometimes it takes a little time after completion of bike ped infrastructure to have the community really come out and utilize it. John DiBiasi also agreed that the applications are daunting regardless of municipal size. Mark also notified the group that there is a demonstration project with CRCOG on the 27th and 28th of September on Arch Street for a street plan/tactical urbanization that is a prelude to a LOTCIP project.
- **Amy Watkins, Watch for Me CT:** Amy mentioned to the group that the World Day of Remembrance is on November 19th at Bushnell Park. She also told the group that they would be at the next two Domingos with some helmets and bike lights while working with the City to teach people how to ride.
- **Owen Deutsch, Hartford:** Hartford is waiting to hear back on SS4A application for a red-light camera project. Hartford also received a Raise Grant for \$19M for bike ped improvements along North Main Street and going out to bid for the Farmington Ave streetscape project soon. Also, he let the committee know that they are accepting separate grants for bike ped improvements along Keeney Park to the riverfront. He also stated that they've been meeting with CTDOT regarding a mobility study and sub projects at various locations throughout the City.
- Caitlin Palmer, CRCOG: Asked the committee for any photos they might be willing to share for inclusion in our POCD or Regional Transportation Safety Plan.

8. Other Business (1:25:10)

Caitlin reminded the committee to let us know if they have any additional topics for discussion, or presenters that they might be interested in hearing from in future meetings to let us know.

9. Adjournment (1:26:05)

