

West Hartford Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission Monthly Meeting Minutes

Monday March 11, 2024, 7:00 PM

Room 407, Town Hall

1. Call to Order 7:01 pm

Attendance

Commissioners: Ed Pawlak, Jill Morawski, Jen Bowman, Ed Perzanowski, Colin Gillespie, Jon Wenz, Tristan Sokol, and Andrea Belli all present and quorum achieved.

Also: Jack Dougherty from Bike West Hartford (BWH), Jay Stange and Greg Sommer, Town Engineer.

2. Introductions NA

3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes. Motion raised, seconded, and approved unanimously.

- Motion then raised to modify agenda so all engineering points can be raised in first part of meeting to accommodate Greg Sommer's attendance. Motion seconded and approved unanimously.

4. Old Business

a. Vision Zero Task Force update

<https://www.westhartfordct.gov/government-services/vision-zero>

- Vision Zero - Town Council adopted Vision Zero Action Plan. Will be online as soon as material ADA aligned.
- Will be a Vision Zero advisory committee and will be closely monitoring progress and updating quarterly on plan.
- Request to add to engineering staff was approved - Parker Sorenson (was previously Project manager for FHI) will be added to help implement the action plan (full time position and permanent hire).
- 75 action items for 2024 alone. Some examples: Safe streets plan acknowledged. Accessible pedestrian signal equipment. RFB lights. Street lighting at crosswalks. Dynamic "no turn on red" signs (auto illumination for pedestrians (Park and N Main, Asylum are on list). Retro reflective pavement markings. Daylighting sight lines at key intersections. Evaluating raised cross walks on Boulevard and Fern near Sedgwick and possibly move forward with additional locations. Traffic signal back plates that add to visibility of signals at key intersections. Road safety audit of Albany Avenue from

North Main Street to Steele Road. Electronic speed signs will be moved to the high injury network (data proven to reduce speed by 2-3 miles per hour).

- Safe Streets for All grant will again be pursued (by May 16) for more implementation(s).

b. West Hartford Center Infrastructure Master Plan update

- Finalizing concepts. Feedback from public acknowledged (1528 responses to survey).
Next action - public meeting (Date TBD) in early April (one business and one general public - both will be recorded). General conclusions: public choice would be to keep things generally the same on Farmington Avenue, but quite changed on LaSalle Road to be more accommodating to pedestrians. But town management will make final call.

c. Crosswalks recommended for improved safety countermeasures (tabled to April 1st meeting)

5. New Business

a. Engineering update

- - New Park Avenue Road Diet design shared. West side separated 2-way cycle track with options including 1) raised extruded curb, 2) precast concrete pills, or 3) concrete curb stops. Flex posts (vertical delineated) endorsed by commission on any of the three choices. Next step to finalize concept and will reengage with public to share new plan nearer to summer 2024. Intended for 2025 construction.
 - WH Bike Network Plan/Bike Plan is at a draft stage. Suggestions being considered from Commission including inter-town connections. 1000+ responses on network planning also received. Resident results reflected similar input to Commission feedback and generally the same priorities on routes.
 - Selection criteria matrix (for bike facilities) developed by State DOT through FHI and tweaked: looked at volume and speed and then assessed what appropriate bike facilities could be. Ed Pawlak questioned 85th percentile speed - why what was that used? What is the data that was used? Concern that most roads will be “provisionally acceptable.” Even terminology in matrix confusing or possible inaccurate. Could needed standard be better/safer than the matrix? Questions will be taken back and answered later by month end by Greg. In parallel Commission will review and feedback will be summarized and sent back in a letter to the town by Ed Pawlak.
 - Park Road improvement project - \$1.7 million concept plan with more coming from Vision Zero funds. Came out of Oct 2023 road safety audit. Quaker Lane to South Prospect. 3/4 of a mile. Includes road resurfacing, bicycle facilities, safety enhancements, sidewalks/cub extensions, decorative LED street lighting, plus other amenities (bike racks, benches, etc.). There will be a further public hearing and then some planned construction to begin

ideally in fall of 2024 but resurfacing to be completed in 2025. Commission input provided that green paint in bike lanes would be helpful to prioritize safety (Ed Pawlak shared photo of “zebra style” green paint in FL as a benchmark example). Ed Pawlak asked for Commission input on bike racks and green paint. Jen Bowman to record where bicycle racks currently are and report back to Commission in April meeting.

- Dept. of Environment Protection all trails grant. Application submitted March 11th for recreational trail grant program and will hear back in May. This is a planning grant for key trail connections at town lines (Newington, Hartford, etc.). Potential for \$100K for grant and 25% matching by town of WH. Tom Martin from BWH spearheaded completion of this application (bravo Tom).
- Complete Streets Annual Report. Posted and online. \$2.5 million spent on complete streets in 2023. Included vulnerable user crashes and there were the same number of vulnerable user crashes (36) as 2022. Data is basis for improvements YOY. Commission can review more in April meeting. Report may be combined with Vision Zero report in 2024.
- Road paving for 2024 - parts of Trout Brook Drive, Brunswick and Keeney, Talcott, and Boulevard (possible new bike lanes to create fully connected facility).
- Other: could protocol for bikers and runners be posted on Trout Brook Trail? Jon Wenz will bring ideas for protocol signs to next meetings.

b. P&Z update - tabled to April 1st.

c. 2023 pedestrian and bicyclist crash reports - tabled to April 1st.

d. Report from Hoboken Vision Zero - tabled to April 1st.

e. Report from University of St. Joseph - tabled to April 1st.

f. Report from Naples, FL - tabled to April 1st.

6. Around Town - tabled to April 1st.

7. From the Library - tabled to April 1st.

8. Announcements - tabled to April 1st.

9. 4/1/2024 PBC meeting - email items you would like included on the agenda to Ed Pawlak (ecosys88@gmail.com)

10. Adjourn 8:53 pm.

Motioned. Seconded. Approved unanimously.