

City Wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Path Planning Task Force

Draft Minutes of August 23, 2022

Room 2044, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 106 Jones St., Watertown, WI 53094

4:30 pm Local Time

Members in Attendance:

Andrew Beyer
Maureen McBroom
Carol Quest
Kevin Weismann (Jefferson County)
Mary Truman (Jefferson County)
Rod L
Eric Schmid
Bob Wetzel
Pedro Galleos
Kristine B.
Jeff Doyle

Chairperson Andrew Beyer called meeting to order at 4:30 pm

Review and Approve April 12, 2022, Task Force Meeting Minutes

After reading through the minutes from the last task force drafted meeting minutes, motion was made by Carol Quest and seconded by Eric Schmid to approve and forward meeting minutes to the Public Works Commission.

Follow Ups: National Bike Month in May, Get Healthy Watertown's Weekly Walk Watertown Routes Social Media Posts, Tour Da Goose

The City had previously prepared a few nice social media posts as they pertained May to be National Bike month. The Task Force reviewed said social media posts from May during the meeting. It was brought up that National Bike to School Day was in May and Engineering was requested to find another day in October when kids could bike to school.

Get Healthy Watertown has asked that if you have not already "liked" the Get Healthy Watertown Facebook page, that you would "like" and/or sign up to get the weekly emails.

Tour Da Goose wrapped up on June 25th. There were approximately 312 riders. It was a rainy day, but there was good participation and an all-around great ride for everyone who participated. This year was our 10th year of doing the Tour Da Goose in Watertown. The fundraiser for the Rock River Community Clinic raised \$27,000. It began and ended at Riverside Park where there was music and food for bikers and supporters to listen to and enjoy. 12-22 miles of the race were on the Interurban Trail.

Visit from Jefferson County to Hear About Trails and Discuss Communities Bicycling Future

Kevin Weismann came from Jefferson County to talk about the progress and what Jefferson County has been doing to improve the on-road and off-road bicycle facilities. Discussion was started by stating that

the progress for the Interurban Trail is continuing to move forward. Maps and plans were then handed out. Items handed out included...

- Jefferson County Wisconsin Bicycle Routes Pamphlet
- Glacial River Trail Pamphlet
- Executive Summary Jefferson County Bikeway/Pedestrianway Plan
- Jefferson County Wisconsin Bicycle Plan Emphasis Summary (2010 Countywide Plan Update)

After all items were handed out, the County routes, wayfinding, and markers to communities were discussed. The Task Force then reviewed presented slides. The 2010 plan had included the Interurban Trail, which was first proposed 12 years ago.

Task Force then moved on to discuss the Glacial River Bike Trail that goes through Jefferson County. The Task Force mentioned that is a multi-use trail with 52 miles to bike, run, walk, etc. with parts of the trail in city.

Kevin Weismann brought up some interesting history of the trail stating that the Interurban Trail was an old Milwaukee electric railway line. The peak operations of the rail line were from 1920-1930. The earliest recorded date of plans to turn the rail line into an Interurban trail was in 1874 by a UW Extension Agent.

After discussing the history of the trail, the Task Force deliberated more on the progress of the Interurban Trail and the project phases. Phase One is 100 percent complete, from Watertown to River Road. Phase Two is 4.7 miles and still under construction. However, Phase Two is said to be done October of 2022. Phase Three is working on fundraising and still to come. The Task Force is currently working with the City of Oconomowoc and Waukesha County, as a grant is need for the one mile of trail in Waukesha County. Jefferson County had the \$249,000 Knowles-Nelson Grant approved which will go to help with Phase Three. Connection in next 2-3 years from the end of phase two to Oconomowoc. The Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources have voiced that they would like to fund the final phases of the Interurban Trail.

Jeff D. mentioned the Augie Tietz Bench was put in on the trail. Jefferson County mentioned that they can adjust two of the planned routes to meet with city planning.

Eric Schmid asked if flashing signs could be put in along the County Highway E and the Interurban Trail, however Jefferson County representatives felt that flashing lights would lead to a false sense of security for bikers. Eric Schmid brought up the point that when leaving the city, you lose sense of where the trail goes because of shadows. Rod L. asked why not reduce the speed. Kevin Weismann replied that the traffic study did not warrant it. Which coincides with the study the City also did. However, it was brought up that maybe the city should do another study with the Interurban Trail now in. Rod L. mentioned that starting on an incline on bike is hard. Kevin Weismann responded that petitions and be sent to the County for review. Eric Schmid also mentioned the increase in sheriff department patrols in the area. Carol Quest asked if Ben W. of Jefferson County should be looped in, and it turned out that he had already been talked to, but that any concerns should be sent to Ben. Eric Schmid asked if lights would be beneficial at this area for night. Rod L brought up motion detector lights or solar powered, either of which would provided less of a sense of security. Kevin Weismann found probability there for lights but is looking for the best options.

Andrew spoke about moving forward on Agenda. Motion was made by Carol Quest and seconded by Bob Wetzel.

Review and Take Possible Action: Add Park & Recreation/Forestry as an Official Member of Task Force

As Park and Rec oversees bike paths in the City and is look to develop a more current bike map of the trails in the city, it is appropriate that they have representation on the Task Force to oversee and

maintain bike and pedestrian paths. Motion was made by Carol Quest and seconded by Rod L. to add a Park and Recreation representative to the Task Force.

Discuss Proposed Bicycle & Pedestrian Infrastructure Project Status Worksheet

Carol Quest took lead on project and found it naturally fit to bring the Bike Plan and Parks and Open Space Plan together. Future Bike Plan will help blend these. Andrew & Maureen mentioned that it would fall under the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) and not just recreational. Carol Quest mentioned that the hospital area, at E. Main was getting a new sidewalk put in. Mary Trume, representative from Jefferson County, added that there would be more grant applications and opportunities because where the trails lead to would be important. The next steps for this project are to see it again at the next meeting after have time to digest the information as requested by Rod L.

Interurban Trailhead Facility Update

Kristine brought up that the Interurban Trail should connect to the City trails. Mary and Carol replied with the fact that the Glacial River comes in on 12th Street. Andrew & Maureen said that they'd make sure there was a connection to Interurban Trails and the City routes.

The Interurban Trailhead had it ribbon cutting on June 4th. The Stewardship Grant funded part of the trailhead project. Kevin Weismann said that there was probably three times the number of people out at the ceremony than what was expected. It was also mentioned that roadside parking is a County concern and will need land acquisition. Rod L. said that as he crossed E near the WE Energies Plant there is a gate open to the Conservation Club. It was a grassy area, but it is not open to public. After discussion it was added that people are parking along the street at Clark Street, which was the County's concern.

TAP Grant Update

The City has four Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) grant applications into the State: N. 4th Street Shared Use Plan, S. Church Street Shared Use path, City wide bike and pedestrian path network plan, and Tivoli Island Inspection and Restoration study. In May the City-wide Bike and Pedestrian master plan document was received with 80-20% and was an \$80,000 grant that was recommended. The Task Force says that a lot of work was put into that grant application. There are future TAP Grant opportunities, of which Andrew & Maureen summarized. The Task Force anticipates the first application award announcement any day and award announcements on the latter two applications by late summer.

Upcoming Agenda Items

- Strategic
- Bicycle Friendly Community: New Process and Program

Given that there was no further information to discuss a motion was made by Carol Quest to adjourn the meeting. That meeting was seconded by Eric Schmid.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.