

Town of Mansfield Transportation Advisory Committee
Minutes of the Meeting – June 24, 2014

Present: Hultgren, Marcellino, Millman, Ryan, Gupta, Hall, Carrington (Director of Public Works), Painter (Director of Planning and Development), Rawn (PZC infrastructure committee), Hart (Town Manager), Ghassem-Zadeh (Acting Transportation Coordinator), Hilding (Guest – Southwood Road)

The meeting was convened shortly after 7:00 PM. Introductions were made. Hultgren was elected chairman following the nomination by Marcellino/Millman. He said his priorities were promoting alternate (non-car) modes of transportation with an emphasis on bicycle transportation and having Mansfield become a bicycle friendly community.

The minutes of the March 18, 2014 meeting were approved on a motion by Marcellino/Ryan, with Millman abstaining.

Painter summarized the 2013 recommendations by the PZC's subcommittee on infrastructure for priorities for bikeways and walkways in Town along with the subcommittee's latest modifications to the recommendations. The potential usage of a walkway could be included in the evaluation, but data to back up this assertion would need to be included as well. A criteria for constructability would be added to account for walkways that could be easily constructed. Safety as a separate criteria was no considered to be necessary, as the subcommittee thought that safety should be considered as important in all potential projects. Lower priority projects could be constructed ahead of higher priority projects if targeted funding was available for any project on the priority list. Staff will now update the rating sheet, and recompile the priority listing per the new, now agreed-upon criteria. The result will be included in the new Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), and eventually in the Town's biking and walking master plans.

Ghassem-Zadeh updated committee members on the final progress in completing the Transportation Center. The bicycle commuting facilities are nearly complete and will soon be available for use by the public. Bike sharing was also discussed – Hultgren reported on the progress of the CROG Bike Sharing Study, and said that as the program is implemented in the Hartford area, the technology may be available to the greater Mansfield area, noting that the initial costs are high, but may be significantly lower as “Smart Bike” technology becomes available (smart bikes work as shared bikes using their U-locks to determine their rental status and location rather than using traditional bike rack docking ports).

Mansfield's need to have a bike advocacy group in order to become a Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) as designated by the League of American Bicyclists was discussed. Hultgren and Ghassem-Zadeh have begun a listing of potential group members and will begin setting up this group this summer. It was not clear at this point in time if this group should be a subcommittee of the TAC or not. A bicycle master planning effort will also be required to receive the BFC designation. Millman asked what would be contained in a bicycle master plan, and Hultgren said he would try to bring in an example to the next meeting.

Hart and Marcellino (now Mansfield's representatives to the WRTD) updated committee members on the continuing fare-free Storrs to Willimantic bus service and some of the issues relating to WRTD's performance. Hultgren offered TAC support for their efforts to improve WRTD.

Carrington reported that the Sustainability Committee was interested in getting a walkway/bikeway constructed on Route 195 leading into the UConn campus while the new water and/or sewer line

construction was being completed. He said that efforts are underway to determine if this is possible and that he was meeting with the Sustainability Committee tomorrow night to further discuss this issue, noting that the construction was being privately funded, so any additional costs would have to be funded by other sources.

Hilding requested that the new walkway being constructed on North Eagleville Road be extended west to Southwood Road noting that a request for this walkway (all the way to Southwood) had been made at least 20 years ago. She cited a number of reasons for this including the changes in UConn's Northwood Apartment residents, connections to the Silver Falls Pathway and increasing traffic on North Eagleville Road. This extension was voted to be added to the priority listing for the POCD on a motion by Ryan/Hall.

Hart reported that the sidewalk ordinance was under review by the new Town Attorney. He also said that the Town was considering a request for a bus shelter at the stop on Route 275 closest to the Community Center. He also reported that CROG will be conducting a DOT-funded major corridor study on the pathways to UConn both from a public transit and livability perspective.

The next meeting will be held in September. The Central Corridor RR study will be placed on the agenda to update committee members. Suggested dates will be emailed to members and those interested in attending.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lon Hultgren
Chair