

NYSAMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Working Group Meeting

Thursday September 10, 2015 – 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Ulster County Area Transit Conference Room, Kingston NY

MEETING NOTES

1. Introductions / Roll Call

MPOS:

A/GFTC – Kate Mance

BMTS - Scott Reigle (chair)

CDTC – Jen Ceponis

ECTC – Scott Shaw

GTC – Bob Torzynski

HOCTS – Ethan Brennan

OCTC – Ashlee Long

PDCTC - Emily Dozier

SMTC – Danielle Krol

UCTC – David Staas, Brian Slack

NYSDOT:

NYSDOT Main Office – Cathy Kuzsman, Tom Benware

Region 1 – Valerie Deane

Region 2 – Joe Kaczor

Region 4 – Bruce Cunningham, Jon Harman, Steve Beauvais

Region 8 – Jim Rapoli

Region 10 – Lenny Wexler

NYBC: Paul Winkeller, Justin Smith

PTNY: James Meerdink, Project Director

Kingston Land Trust – Tim Weideman

NYSAMPO Staff: Corey Mack, RSG

2. 10:15AM – SPECIAL PRESENTATION – Jamie Meerdink (Parks & Trails NY) to present its report titled, *The Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail.*

J. Meerdink, a project manager with Parks and Trails New York (PTNY) introduced him and the PTNY organization, presented a brief background to the Erie Canalway Trail, and discussed the methodology, scope, and results of the Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail report, completed in July 2014.

The full report can be downloaded here:

https://ptnyenews.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/economic_impact_of_the_erie_canalway_trail_full_document.pdf

The executive summary of the report can be downloaded here:

https://ptnyenews.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/economic_impact_of_the_erie_canalway_trail_exec_summary.pdf

The presentation is included as an attachment to these notes; notes not included in the presentation:

- The Canalway will be celebrating the bicentennial of canal construction – construction began July 4, 1817 and was completed October 27, 1825.
- The Canal Recreationway Plan, originally prepared in 1995, created the framework for the recreational boating and multi-use path opportunities along the canal; plan is being updated.
- An “end-to-enders” recognition program has been developed, similar to the ADK 46’ers, or the Appalachian Trail end-to-enders.
- The current Erie Canalway Trail is mostly off-road, but several gaps exist. The gaps are filled with on-road facilities.
- The most recent annual bike tour included the highest number of through bikers at 600 participants.
- The purpose of the Economic Impact Report was to document the benefit of the path, provide justification to legislators and decision makers on continued spending for the canal path, and provide benchmarks for growth.
- Data collected primarily from surveys along the route; in general, visitors were willing to take a break and fill out the form, and free cold water didn’t hurt.
- The Economic Model used to establish the impact was the MGM2 model, developed for the National Park Service.
- Similar long-distance bike trails around the country include the Katy Trail in Missouri (240 miles) and the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) and C&O Canal Towpath (335 miles).
- End-to-End travelers can find free camping at approximately 40-mile intervals along the path.
- Automated counts are performed every year along the route by the NYS Canal Corporation, using Eco-Counter Pyro Boxes (passive infrared technology).

Key findings of the study:

- Used primarily by people who live nearby
- Nearby visitors (Zone 1) do not generally stay the night
- Overnight users spend the most
- Zone 2 visitors (more than 1 county away) account for 2% of visitors, but they account for 20% of the money spent by all visitors.
- Vacationers choose the ECT, and appreciate the sense of place and trail history.

3. 11:15AM – NYBC (P. Winkeller, Acting ED NYBC; J. Smith, Director of Communications NYBC)

a. NYBC Update

The New York Bicycling Coalition is entering their 25th year of education, advocacy, promotion and tourism of bicycling. Paul was the first Executive Director of NYBC 15 years ago and has resumed the role of Acting Executive Director as the direction of the organization is evaluated.

Primary goals in the near term:

- i) Update to the “IMPROVING BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY GUIDELINE”

The NYBC is updating and overhauling the previous document. Comments and suggestions on layout, content and any information to include or not include is welcome. **Working**

Group members to review and send comments to Paul W at paul@nybc.net. The original document can be found here: <http://nybc.net/nybc-safety-manual/>

ii) Continue Supporting the Efforts of NY4AT

New Yorkers for Active Transportation (NY4AT) is a grassroots coalition co-led by New York Bicycling Coalition, Tri State Transportation Campaign, and Parks and Trails New York. NY4AT works with many stakeholders to advocate for consistent state policies, planning and funding for bicycle, pedestrian and trail infrastructure projects, and supports legislation to improve the safety of bicyclists, pedestrians and other road users.

iii) Support the Passage of E-Bike Legislation

New York Bicycling Coalition has launched a statewide campaign to win passage of legislation that would clarify the legal status of certain electric-assist bicycles under the state's vehicle and traffic law. Nationwide organizations have targeted NY and CA to make precedent forming legislation to make e-bikes legal in these states.

NYBC is helping define e-bikes, how they are powered, helmets and age, size, speed, and ability to be pedaled. E-Bikes are on the streets and NYBC intends to assist in formalizing the rules.

b. Bike Depots (J. Smith)

Justin Smith described the proposed pilot program NYBC is seeking to initiate for Bike Depots. Bike Depots are secure, weather-protected long term bike parking facilities. Bike Depots can be an indoor, key card accessed building or room. NYBC is hoping the local members can help identify locations and secure support from local officials to construct these facilities near train, bus, transit, and other intermodal facilities. Preferably, the facility would be located on Town or locally owned property. NYBC will get the funding and be responsible for managing and long term maintenance.

Key decisions for locating a Bike Depot Facility:

- Is the existing bike parking well utilized?
- Is there a problem with theft?
- Is it near transit?
- Is it locally owned property?
- Are the local officials friendly to the concept?

Bike Depots are not Bike Lockers. The bike refuge program is intended to be modeled on a similar program in New Jersey – more information on the NJ program is here:

<http://www.njbwc.org/bikedepot/>

Questions:

i) What is the minimum bike capacity?

In NJ, the minimum developed Bike Depot capacity was 24 spaces.

ii) What is the grant program funded through?

The grant program does not exist yet. NYBC is trying to develop interest to create a grant program. Only with several possible sites will funding for the facility be available.

If any MPOs know of any municipalities or transit stops that may be a good site for development of Bike Depots in NY, please contact Justin at Justin@nybc.net. **Working Group members to consider possible locations for Bike Depots.**

c. General Discussion

The Working Group expressed a desire for NYBC to continue to support improvements in statewide driver education, including updates to the Driver's Manual. It was noted that Jen Hogan was leaving GTSC, and GTSC involvement would be critical in updating the driver's manual. **S. Reigle to contact Jen Hogan and Jim Allen at GTSC about working group contacts at GTSC.** The group also noted that the Education Department may be able to inform the discussion on updating the driver's manual.

J. Rapoli noted that bicycle education should be a component of the education system, similar to driver education. It was noted that even driver's education is no longer a mandatory element of the curriculum, and bicycle education curriculum would need to be mandated by the Education Department.

- C. Mack noted that some school districts in the Glens Falls area hold bicycle rodeos, which students receive training and after successful completion are allowed to bicycle to the school grounds.
- S. Shaw noted that during the summer months, the Summer Meals and Summer Cohesion Sites have been used to reach children and offer bicycle safety education.

LUNCH BREAK

4. Review of Pressing Issues / Significant Items from MPO – Region Written Summaries

UCTC: Building a Better Broadway (B. Slackett)

Broadway is the spine of Kingston, connecting the three largest neighborhoods in the city and intersecting with the ends of several multiuse trails. A complete street study identified a protected bike lane as the preferred treatment to support bicycle infrastructure along Broadway in Kingston. The protected bike lane has encountered some resistance, mainly due to the likely loss of parking in front of businesses and the high school. The project is intended to improve vehicle travel time through improved signal timing.

Due to the opposition, half of the protected bike lanes along the corridor may not be built in favor of on-road facility that allows parking to remain. The TEP funding expires in 2016; the preferred alternative needs to be finalized so Region 8 can begin final design, with construction expected next summer.

OCTC (A. Long):

The Planning Department in Orange County will be receiving \$250k / yr from NYSDOH for five years to address Complete Streets and Healthy Food Access. The grant will target specific areas in the county, with Port Jervis identified as a primary focus. One hire is expected at the beginning of the year.

Region 10 (L. Wexler):

Long Island Car Free Day is Tuesday, September 22. More information can be found here:

<http://carfreedayli.com/>

The Region is helping to distribute bicycle lockers to interested municipalities. By redistributing the lockers to where they are more needed, locker occupancy has improved from 30-40% to around 80%.

A standardized State Parks trail user's survey is being conducted in the region. The survey was distributed around the room for the Working Group to review.

BMTS (S. Reigle):

E. Dozier asked if the MPO's Complete Streets Policy applies to MPO projects only, or all municipalities?

S. Reigle noted that the policy is based on a model policy template from Indiana. **Scott Reigle to share with group.** Policy template is here: <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/changing-policy/complete-streets-atlas>

CDTC (J. Ceponis):

E. Dozier asked about the development of the materials from Complete Streets workshops, and if they are available for review? J. Ceponis noted that the materials were developed for the specific community, based on their needs. When the material is developed, she will share. Sam Schwartz Engineering was the consultant selected to assist in the preparation of the Complete Street Workshop materials.

5. Work Plan Implementation**a. Survey of Past Funding Recipients****i. Report from Subcommittee (D. Krol)**

Four more responses have been received for a total of 12 responses total. The results will be recompiled and distributed for review and discussion.

b. Pedestrian & Bicycle Counts**i. MPO Bike/Ped Counting Programs (All)**

B. Torzynski: Identified 8 or 9 sites for long term automated counts. After three or four counts have been conducted, the data will be extrapolated to inform a pedestrian volume model.

J. Rapoli: Question on National Bike Ped Count Data. By counting three peak weekdays and one peak weekend day, the National Park Service has formulas to develop annual count data. A variety of adjustment factors are available for trail type, time of year, etc.

J. Rapoli: Can the NYSDOT data collection contract be used for bicycle and pedestrian counts? C. Kuzsman: Yes, discussed at previous meetings. (Past meeting notes are located here: http://nysmpos.org/wordpress/?page_id=940) C. Kuzsman recommended talking to Mike Fay, Tony Torre, or Andrew ____.

National Bike Ped Documentation Project: The national counts are September 14-20. Forms are available to upload your data to them, and the organization creates adjustment factors. E. Dozier recommends sharing data.

<http://bikepeddocumentation.org/>

J. Meerdink: The PTNY contract with Canal Corp includes updating the adjustment factors. PTNY counts are conducted using an automated passive infrared counter (brand: ECO Counter).

c. Updating NYS Driver's Manual (S. Reigle/J. Hogan)

S. Reigle noted that he will contact Jim Allen at the GTSC to discuss driver and bicycle education programs. The discussion will include the process for changes to the Driver's Manual to include updates identifying sharrows, the safe passing laws, newer technologies such as HAWK beacons, and explanations of what all of these traffic control devices mean.

J. Rapoli suggested that driver education is lacking and should be more stringent, and there should be greater controls on mobile devices in moving vehicles.

d. FHWA Non-Motorized Safety Performance Measures – September 30, 2015

S. Reigle noted that the performance measures will become available at the end of the month and when they do, he will update the group. Initial observations from a variety of sources indicate that total bicycle crashes have increased, but the crash rate is down due to the overall increase in the number of bicyclists.

i. Surface Transportation Reauthorization / DRIVE Act (S. Reigle)

S. Reigle noted that the Working Group should be aware of the upcoming legislation. The TIGER and Transportation Alternatives program is still included, and the Safe Streets Act of 2015 would require all MPOs to have Complete Streets policies in place. The House is scheduled to vote in a week.

J. Ceponis has registered general support in principle for local Complete Streets Policies, but noted some towns were wary of all projects being evaluated for complete streets. S. Reigle noted that it's important to stress context of land use and applicability of NACTO and AASHTO guidelines

E. Dozier noted that PDCTC doesn't have a complete streets policy, but does have a county checklist. Public Works has been using the checklist for any project the county is working on. The checklist does not require any specific features, but the intention of the checklist is to raise awareness and hopefully highlight opportunities.

Action Item: E. Dozier to share county checklist with the working group.

e. Walk-Bike NY 2016 – Sept. 13-14, 2016 at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Syracuse (S. Reigle)

The conference is still a year away and in the planning stages, with a planning committee meeting later this month. These are the same dates as the Pro Walk-Pro Bike conference, but that conference is to be held in Vancouver BC. Working Group members are encouraged to keep this on their calendars.

There may be an opportunity to coordinate the Working Group meeting during, before, or after the conference.

f. Complete Streets – MPO/Region Initiatives (All)

The Working Group is interested in experiences in implementation of the Complete Streets Checklist. T. Benware noted that the effective date was 9/1, and he has not yet heard much feedback. Some regions are discussing how to best complete the checklist, and there have been some questions with respect to the applicability of the checklist on small resurfacing projects. Site visits are planned to the Regions to discuss how the administration of the checklist is working.

C. Kuzsman noted that it was the intention that regions should manage their administration based on a framework developed by the NYSDOT Main Office. After a couple months of the checklist in effect, the Main Office will revisit its use.

Pushback from municipalities generally comes from additional cost per project, and then fewer projects can be completed.

E. Dozier requested that the next iteration or draft of the checklist include questions on signal timing to ensure bicyclists can make it through wide intersections, and that bicycle detection occurs at sensors. C. Kuzsman noted revisions may come, but not for another year – we’re going to see how it is received. Was developed over the course of a couple years with substantial comment periods, now we’ll wait for feedback.

L. Wexler noted that there remains a need for education for both designers and planners on what “complete streets” actually mean.

6. NYSDOT Initiatives

a. Complete Streets (T. Benware/P. Coulthart)

- i. Checklist Implementation – see previous discussion (5.f)

b. Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (T. Benware/J. Ercolano/R. Doyle)

The PSAP is intended to be rolled out in the coming weeks. The development of the document was guided by workshops, and a review for substantial fatal flaw comments will be in the next couple weeks. Substantial public review is not anticipated.

The document was developed as a group effort with NYSDOT, GTSC and NYSDOH.

c. NYSDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Program - Office of Traffic Safety and Mobility (OTSM)

- i. General Update (T. Benware)

The primary focus of the Bike Ped Program OTSM has been the development of the PSAP, which is almost complete.

- ii. Q & A (All)

7. Upcoming Events

- a. Walk to School Day – Wednesday, October 7th

<http://walkbiketoschool.org/ready/about-the-events/walk-to-school-day>

- b. NY Highway Safety Annual Fall Symposium: Partnering for a Safer NY – October 18-21 in Binghamton, NY

<https://www.itsmr.org/NY%20Highway%20Safety%20Conference.htm>

- c. Others?
8. Schedule of Upcoming Meetings (S. Reigle)
- a. Conference Call: Thursday, December 10 (10am-12pm)
 - b. In-person Meeting: Thursday, March 10 (10am-4pm) – CDTC to host