

Bike Friendly Kalamazoo
Route Planning Session Minutes
Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) Building
October 25, 2012

Participants

- Gregg Andres, Systems Integration Engineer, Eaton Corporation*
 - Chris Barnes, Director, Transportation and Utilities, City of Portage
 - Michelle Fakler, Sales Manager, Discover Kalamazoo*
 - Rusty Fry, Planning Commission, Ross Township*
 - Vanessa Hardy, Comstock Township Parks Director*
 - Rebecca Harvey, Planning Consultant, Ross Township*
 - Libby Heiny-Cogswell, Supervisor, Oshtemo Charter Township*
 - Karen High, Parks Administrator, Oshtemo Charter Township*
 - Jim Hoekstra, Traffic Engineer, KCRC/City of Kalamazoo*
 - Tom J. Hohm, Chief Engineer, KCRC*
 - Matt Hollander, Coordinator of Sustainability Projects, WMU
 - Frances Jewell, Director, Parks and Recreation Dept., City of Kalamazoo*
 - Joanna Johnson, Managing Director, Kalamazoo County Road Commission
 - Jim Lauderdale, Planning Commission, Ross Township
 - Steve Makuch, Office of Sustainability, WMU
 - Tom McCoy, Assistant Parks Superintendent, City of Portage*
 - Fred Nagler, City of Kalamazoo, Assistant City Engineer
 - David Rachowicz, Kalamazoo County Parks Department, Director
 - Jason Roon, Cabbage Bros. Bicycles
 - Paul Selden, Director of Road Safety, Kalamazoo Bicycle Club; Member, TriKats
 - Timothy Stewart, Principal, Hurley & Stewart
 - Bob Strader, Ride Leader, Pedalers Bicycle Group, Portage Senior Center
 - Thomas L. Swiat, Jr., Supervisor, Prairie Ronde Township*
 - Chris Tracy, Honigman, et al., Co-Chair of KRVT Campaign Cabinet
 - Sam Urban, Membership Representative, Kalamazoo Regional Chamber of Commerce*
 - Julie VanderWiere, Superintendent, Texas Township
 - Doug VanDyk, Manager, Global IT Training & Development, Stryker Corporation*
 - David Warwick, Vice President, EnviroLogic, Lead Team Member, Kalamazoo Bike Week 2013*
 - Paul Wells, Breakaway Bicycles and Fitness
 - Patrick White, Supervisor, Pavilion Township*
- *Guest

Agenda

Overview of Bike Friendly Kalamazoo/Bike Route Advisory Vote Results - Paul Selden

Guests and current participants of Bike Friendly Kalamazoo (BFK) were welcomed to the meeting.

Goals of meeting - to inform guests re. BFK, and ask for volunteers to map routes for posting on www.bikefriendlykalamazoo.org.

Main introductory topics:

- BFK's history of community meetings in 2011
- list of 600 brainstorming ideas for helping to make community even more bicycle friendly,
- current major emphases on education, awareness-building and route planning
- review of three main route planning educational presentations in 2011-2012:
 - rules of the road (main point: bikes share same rights and responsibilities as motor vehicles),
 - liability issues (main point: proper bike infrastructure is legally defensible),

- infrastructure planning (main point: many techniques exist to support bicycling, though seem unfamiliar at first)
- relative risk index of various types of bicycling facilities (main point: streets with bike lanes ranked most safe, 10 times more safe than sidewalks)
- summary of results of BFK's route mapping advisory vote (main point: mapping a variety of types of bicycle routes supported overwhelmingly; key guidelines should be communicated in writing to reduce most common missteps; routes to be named to assist communication and awareness-building)

Key Route Planning Considerations - Joanna Johnson

Overview of Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC); established in 1909. Main topics included:

- jurisdiction of local, KCRC, and MDOT re. roads
- road funding
- federal and state funding levels and sources
- KCRC participation in local non-motorized (i.e., including bicycle-related) projects

General considerations for bicycle route planning include:

- shoulder width
- fog line
- separated from vehicular traffic considerations
- traffic volumes
- commuter routes vs. recreational routes
- horizontal geometry
- topography
- grade of roadway
- part of a countywide network
- available funding

Bike route signing considerations:

- Development of Bicycle Facilities to Guidelines
 - MMUTCD –Michigan Manual Uniform Traffic Control Devices
 - AASHTO-American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
- Part of Countywide Network-Connectivity
- Engineering Judgment

There is a public process protocol that guides project selection. General steps were presented.

KCRC has participated in many local cooperative bike related efforts. Examples: responding to pothole repair requests, support of Bike to Work Week, coordination of chip-sealing with local events, participant in Bike Friendly Kalamazoo.

Public can learn about and get involved in KCRC activities by means of its web site at www.kalamazoocountyroads.com, calling 269-381-3171, or by coming to or watching a televised board meeting.

In reply to a request for clarification by audience, it was clarified that KCRC jurisdiction extends to the right of ways of roads in its jurisdiction. Signage and similar route mapping information that is not within KCRC's right of way is under local jurisdiction. For example, a township could decide to put up an informational kiosk in its own town hall parking lot.

The Role of KATS Policy Committee "Non-Motorized" Planning – Thomas L. Swiat, Jr.

The role of the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) Policy and Technical Committees are to plan and implement key transportation elements within Kalamazoo County and certain additional areas within the defined Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The Policy Committee is composed of elected officials and/or their delegates from the jurisdictions involved. The Technical Committee is composed of key transportation engineering and planning staffs within the jurisdictions. Both committees meet regularly and are open to the public.

In general, the role of the Policy Committee is to set the overall direction of the plans, and the role of the Technical Committee is to prepare the details of their implementation. Both committees can make recommendations that alter the direction of the process.

More information can be found on the KATS web site at <http://www.katsmpo.org/>.

The following overview was received from Stephen Stepek, Senior Transportation Planner from KATS in lieu of his personal presentation. They are presented below, verbatim (after correcting minor typos) from Steve's emails. Key portions were conveyed in the meeting, as well.

“The Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the greater Kalamazoo urbanized area and is required by federal legislation to provide continuing, coordinated, and comprehensive transportation planning.

“KATS is currently working on a Complete Streets Plan for the MPO area. This plan will consist of an inventory of current infrastructure, a policy statement for the MPO, as well as a listing of infrastructure projects needed to create an interconnected system of Complete Streets.

“The purpose of this plan is to assist in the development of a more multi-modal transportation network for the MPO area. It is not meant as a recreational route system, but as a system of achievable infrastructure for all transportation users.

“In the coming months, KATS will be working with the public, local road agencies, and local governments to create this plan.

“KATS will develop the plan through our staff and technical committee, with discussion at our meetings (open to public), then adoption at our Policy Committee. On our website is our Public Participation Plan which guides our process. Generally with a larger project, we will also host a few open houses.

“Complete Streets is very contextual. In a rural area, often a "Complete Street" will have a small shoulder, or even just maintained gravel shoulder. That then changes with the built environment, as you become more urban.

“KATS will primarily be looking at Federal Aid Roads, however those roads also tend to carry the most traffic. We may expand our plan to look at including some local roads, if they are a better fit to the network (safer, easier to build, etc.)”

Participant Input / Next Steps - Paul Selden

Resources available to assist with the route planning effort include:

- 2035 Non-Motorized Facilities Plan
- SW Michigan Road & Trail Bicycle Guide**
- Backroads Bikeway Tour Maps (as inspirational model)**
- Club and shop routes
- Commuter routes: emails from community

Online: MapMyRide.com, others
Imagination! (esp. re. enduring recreational themes)
** distributed to meeting participants

Next steps for route planning:

guests completed feedback sheet at meeting, offering participation if so inclined
(15 received at meeting with 13 volunteering to participate in future pending receipt of more information; 2 received after meeting by email with both volunteering to participate in future pending receipt of more information; with very few exceptions, all comments received supported BFK's route planning goals)

BFK participants: five volunteered to plan routes received at meeting; Note: a general call for BFK volunteers will go out within a week of these minutes being released)
route planning will be done in self-organizing teams, each with own facilitator / reporter guidance from route planning committee (Note: general BFK route planning guidelines are being prepared this week)

Speakers thanked for their time and effort in presenting; all attendees again thanked for their input and participation at meeting.

Minutes prepared by Paul Selden Released October 31, 2012