

**Bike Friendly Kalamazoo  
Planning Meeting Minutes**  
KRESA Main Offices  
March 26, 2018; 4-5pm

**Attendees**

Thom Brennan, Director, Kalamazoo Bicycle Club  
Deb Carpenter, Bronson Health Group, Childhood Injury Prevention Coordinator  
Erin Denay, Executive Director, Open Roads Bike Program  
Hayden Guild, Tax Staff, Seber Tans  
Paul Guthrie, Laboratory Manager, Bronson Healthcare Group  
Michelle Karpinski, Community Relations Manager, Portage Public Schools  
Tim Krone, Owner, Pedal Bicycle  
Nicolette Leigh, Trustee, Kalamazoo Charter Township  
Robert Loftus, CPA, Senior Manager, Seber Tans  
Dan McGlenn, Attorney, Kreis Enderle  
Mark Miller, Clerk, Kalamazoo Charter Township  
Brendan Molony, Sustainability Coordinator, Bronson Healthcare Group  
Margaret O'Brien, MI State Senator, District 20  
Brian Persky, Sports Event Development Manager, Discover Kalamazoo  
Paul Runnels, Director Open Roads; Member, Chain Gang & KBC  
Paul Selden, Member, Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, TriKats, Chain Gang  
Larry Shaffer, City Manager, City of Portage  
Jack Urban, Kalamazoo City Commissioner  
Paul Wells, Education Chair, Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

**Minutes**

Welcome and Introductions

Paul Selden welcomed the participants, who then introduced themselves to each other. He reviewed Bike Friendly Kalamazoo's initial history as series of meetings in 2011 and described how the 600+ ideas offered by participants for making the greater community even more bicycle friendly were distilled into a set of 10 goals and three main areas of focus: awareness-building, education and infrastructure. Selden reminded everyone that BFK's role has been to serve as a communications mechanism. He emphasized that implementing any ideas shared is up to each individual/organization as they see best.

Updates

At last year's planning meeting, the top three suggestions for BFK to work on were:

1. Awareness-building & infrastructure: encouraging mutual respect between motorists/non-motorists; signage on as many bike routes as possible.
2. Education: How to ride safely; Educating both drivers and bike riders. Could be/should be supported in schools?
3. Policy and Planning: Complete Streets policies, long-term non-motorized plans

*BFK - 2017 Highlights*

Credit for any and all progress goes to BFK's many participants and friends of bicycling!

- KATS-BFK Community Forum – May: Theme was what it takes to achieve “Bike Friendly” awards from LAB
- Chain Gang Memorial Ride – June: Connected Chain Gang with Honorary ride leaders, MC and Ghost Bike Route planning
- Silent Observer Relationship – July: Fund for reporting crimes against bicyclists
- “Bikes & Beers” Ride – August: Facilitated AMBUCS donation
- Public Forum on Bicyclist-Motorist Relations – August: Drafted Q&A fact sheet
- “Southwest Michigan Bikeway” – Facilitated naming “Map 7” bike route network
- Bicycling-Motorist Relations Safety Town Hall in Portage – November: Facilitated connections with Brandt Iden, Margaret O'Brien and Larry Shaffer

Selden volunteered with other volunteers/community leaders on:

- State-level bike/pedestrian safety education and safe passing laws
- Bike safety rodeo with Safe Kids
- Southwest Michigan Bikeway Implementation Plan and Sign Guidelines (via KRBRC)
- Sign location inventories for Comstock, Cooper & Oshtemo (via KRBRC)
- Kalamazoo Bike Week: KATS-BFK Community Event (May 16 in 2018), Mayors City to City Ride (May 19 in 2018)
- Presented bike safety session to KPS Northeast Elementary School's bike club students (Open Roads led sessions as well)
- Input to Road Commission on Kalamazoo County's Proposed Sign Policy
- Updates to township non-motorized plans (via KRBRC)

In progress / ongoing (in addition to unfinished business above):

- 501(c)3 incorporation (in review since 2015)
- Release-ready draft of Bicyclist-Motorist Fact Sheet w/ Paul Runnels
- Collaborative Cross-Jurisdictional Southwest Michigan Bikeway Sign Guidelines
- BFK Logo
- Bringing "Driving Change" program to area
- Increase awareness of protected bike lanes

### Info Exchange

Representatives from three groups presented information about upcoming events and programs:

- Bike Camp and KalTour: Kalamazoo Bicycle Club (Paul Wells)
- Fixapalooza, Earn-A-Bike, Apprenticeship & Youth Advisory Board: Open Roads (Erin Denay)
- Helmet Fitting and Bike Rodeo Adventure: Safe Kids of Kalamazoo County (Deb Carpenter).

Those with web pages that meet BFK's criteria have now been added to BFK's Event's page at <http://bikefriendlykalamazoo.org/events/>. Note: Paul Wells, Education Chair for the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club has "5 Foot Safe Passing" yard signs available at no charge while supplies last (email [educationchair@kalamazoobicycleclub.org](mailto:educationchair@kalamazoobicycleclub.org) for more information).

### Planning Input

Selden opened the planning portion of the meeting by recalling that BFK has been planning for its incorporation since its October 2015 meeting on that topic. He presented planning worksheets related to BFK's potential goals and requested participant input, mentioning that names would not be associated with specific ideas. The extensive input from received participants begins on the next page, organized in order of the worksheet. An additional set of ideas was received by email after the meeting.

Please note: all ideas are welcome now and throughout the year, regardless of anyone's ability to attend this meeting. Thanks to Paul Guthrie for contributing in writing many ideas after this meeting (already integrated into these minutes.) Please continue to email ideas to [info@bikefriendlykalamazoo.org](mailto:info@bikefriendlykalamazoo.org).

### Discussion

During discussion participants relayed ideas that seemed to most catch their attention (noted with an asterisk in the ideas presented, beginning on the next page).

Commission Jack Urban characterized Bike Friendly Kalamazoo's meeting today as like a "congress," given the presence of so many diverse bicycling stakeholder groups and community leaders.

### Next Steps

- BFK incorporation later this year; Steering Committee has been formed to guide that effort
- Continued project work; Selden will follow-up on written questions
- KATS-BFK "Bicycling in 2018 & Beyond" Community Meeting May 16, 4-5pm, at KRESA

Paul Selden thanked everyone for coming/participating and thanked KRESA for providing the facilities.

These minutes were prepared by Paul Selden and distributed April 2, 2018. Please email corrections (esp. re. misinterpreted handwriting) to [info@bikefriendlykalamazoo.org](mailto:info@bikefriendlykalamazoo.org).

## BFK Planning Input (Worksheet Ideas)

March 26, 2018

### Overview

This is a summary of participant's written ideas, comments and questions. They have not yet been sorted or otherwise prioritized.

### 1. Input into BFK Efforts/Goals in 2018

BFK is taking steps to incorporate as a chartered 501c3 corporation. Our mission will likely stay the same: to help make our community become even more bicycle friendly. Ideas for doing so could include:

- 9 funding other bicycle-related non-profits through grants, in-kind agreements, donations
- 13 funding bike signage, other affordable infrastructure
- 9 engagements related to achieving Bike Friendly Business, Community and University awards
- 16 organizing, encouraging, supporting and sponsoring bicycling related events (helping to "institutionalize" Kalamazoo Bike Week, other events/rides)
- 13 train-the-trainer sessions for staff of other institutions (e.g., schools, churches, communities, libraries) wanting to start bicycle clubs or shorter bike safety sessions

other:

- **organizing all the various bike friendly organizations, lessen confusion among all various groups**
- **coordinate a bike friendly policy and improvements for the metropolitan area by involving all the interested parties**
- **I would check the funding options above if the organization had a fund developer and one big event**
- **in 2018 facilitate through others; easier to fundraise if already 501c3**
- **continue pushing passing of 5 foot law. Disappointed in 3 foot watered down.**
- **continued education to public - share the road**

Which of the above ideas seem realistic & achievable? (See tallies, above).

Ideas / best practices / key ingredients that would make for successful: Note: participants address topics assigned by Table Letter, PLUS Topic C; all were invited to share ideas on any topic as well.

#### A. Fostering Bike Friendly Cultural Shifts / Improving Public Awareness & Mutual Respect

- **Bike signs**
- **Have named bike paths and signage, esp. for route into downtown Kazoo from the west (Drake Road)**
- **Have named bike route going NE through Spring Valley Park**
- **Have named bike route going south from Rose Park to Lake St.**
- **Standard design bike rack available from city**
- **Share the road messages in KT newsletter**
- **Speeded up bike trip video in Public Media Network**
- **\*Portager: 25, 000 distribution [Note: corrected from first release minutes, same day]**
- **Web site**
- **Lexington Green Bike Rentals**
- **\*New trails - Portage Road**
- **Bike Friendly Community Committee**
- **Adopted "Complete Streets" Program**
- **Adopted 5 foot pass[ing] ordinance**
- **Include "share the road" in township newsletter**
- **Bike route tour video on Public Media Network (time-lapse, Go-Pro)**
- **Share the road public service announcements produced [by] BFK offered to Public Media Network & others**
- **Bike Friendly flyer - best driving/riding practices**
- **You Tube videos**
- **Social Media**

- **Age Appropriate**
- **Drivers education - in process**
- **Partnership with schools**
- **Work with public safety**
- **Elected officials: newsletters, Facebook**
- **There is a correlation to runner/pedestrian/disabled safety concerns - partner w/relevant groups**
- **Create more bike friendly / positive education in schools**
- **2018 - “The Year of the Friendly Cyclist”**
- **Sustainability Initiatives across corporate Kalamazoo**
- **Bike Racks provided**
- **“Speakers Bureau” for service clubs, etc.**
- **Advocacy (encourage) to various governmental agencies (e.g., road commissions, legislators, trustees, councils, etc.)**
- **Appearances on local media**
- **Specific talking points provided by BFK-talking points**
- **“Don’t reinvent the wheel” - tap other organizations / experts where they exist (linked to points D and E, below)**
- **Share the road messages in township and city newsletters, etc.**
- **Promo video**
- **Public service announcements**
- **Check social media and make positive comments**
- **Share the Road Public Service Announcements**
- **Improving employee awareness of demand for program**
- **Bike Saf[?] Road**
- **Required bike safety elements of driver’s training**
- **The post-event race (social aspect)**
- **Beer & place to sit down afterwards**
- **(Iceman/Barry-Roubaix)**
- **3-4 (series) of educational clinics/classes**
- **Local campaign - bringing together a committee of all the bicycling groups**
- **Bike racks**
- **\*Bikes into hands of children who can’t afford them**
- **Town hall like Portage held last November in townships?**
- **Comprehensive look at bike laws in other states v.v. Michigan**
- **Road commissions Complete Streets policy**

**B. Planning Community Oriented Annual Rides (including Century Ride)**

- **Grants. Some of these funds might be available if we applied for them.**
- **Donations from the community and corporations should be asked for.**
- **Municipality involvement**
- **Celebration afterwards**
- **Entertainment**
- **Sponsors**
- **Planning - 1 year in advance**
- **All levels**
- **Find a Date**
- **Weekend of Fun! Dirt, Road, Race, Play**
- **Any bike works**
- **After event**
- **Take an existing event and make it awesome->KalTour?**
- **Urban bike event**

- **Hill climb**
- **Vertical event**
- **\*Consider using the services of Deb Droppers of Kalamazoo Experiential Learning Center (KELC) [<https://www.experientiallearningcenter.org>] at WMU to help organize/staff a bicycling event. (They have interns that specialize in staffing events.)**
- **Follow established bike routes to extent feasible**
- **Put energy for this into promoting existing KBC KalTour Ride. A ride of this caliber could become much bigger - generating funds.**
- **Add or to event**
- **\*KalTour - could be platform, promoted on larger scale**
- **Build on successes & keep improving**
- **Melting Mann**
- **Municipality buy-in important**
- **Include economic development groups, watering holes, etc.**
- **Training program**
- **\*Community ride**
- **Spaghetti dinner after ride**
- **Brochure**
- **Partner with Bronson?**
- **Awards**
- **Band before and/or after**
- **T Shirts**
- **Ice cream social**
- **Event could include:**
  - **Appeal to many hundreds of people of all ages and levels of bicycling interests/fitness**
  - **Include social event / celebration with various beverages and food at end of event**
  - **Could build upon existing KalTour date and routes**
  - **Would need major sponsors and full municipality support**
- **Help designated charities**
- **Event models: Gran Fondo in Grand Rapids; Bookwalter Binge (Asheville, NC)**
- **To increase interest for those who like the challenge of racing - offer riders chip-timed ride segments within a longer ride, with results posted and linked to some sort of award**
- **Get major sponsor**
- **Skin cancer related charity**
- **Get restaurant / brewery involvement**
- **Could close off section of a downtown with music, food, drink**
- **Bronson - could use this as comparable to Kalamazoo Marathon / Borgess Run for the Health of It**
- **Bronson campus / parking in downtown Kalamazoo could work on weekend; possible trail connections for child-friendly routes to the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail or Portage Bicentennial Trail (would require good traffic control - police and/or volunteers); Bronson parking lots could be set up with vendors/tents from local brewers, food trucks or restaurants for the celebration. Registration might include a ticket for one or two food or drink options.**

C. BFK - Revenue Generating Ideas; Useful Paid Services

- **T Shirts**
- **Races**
- **Rides**
- **Ride around Kalamazoo Fall Tour**
- **Use City of Kalamazoo boundary streets - considering safety - considering sightseeing**

- **Foundations - health oriented**
- **Grants for special events / outreach**
- **Consulting for communities looking at long range planning for non-motorized?**
- **Fundraising event or dinner: make activity fun that people will want to attend. Include opportunities for non-cyclists to support/attend (i.e., lunch/dinner after event for anyone - cost of meal only?)**
- **Memberships, particularly for businesses “be a bike-friendly business!”**
- **Host a bike ride**
- **Board control; reporting to self?**
- **One big event with sponsors**
- **Grant-writing**
- **Fund developer**
- **Membership**
- **Grants**
- **General donations**
- **Tell the story**
- **Bike club membership**
- **Spotting opportunities to properly sign bike related facilities and improvements**

D. Joint Non-Profit Opportunities with BFK and others

- **Bike the Zoo**
- **Ride with cancer groups**
- **Ride with Heart Association**
- **Work with Douglass,**
- **HAL**
- **Islamic Center**
- **Have existing bike groups work with needy kids**
- **Bike club support in schools.**
- **KBC to volunteer at riding, safety, bike programs - expand - elevate current efforts**
- **Open Roads has programs to support low-income youth getting bikes. We can expand this if more support is received financially.**
- **[Matt Lechel] - Bike the Zoo (Vine St. Neighborhood)**
- **Communities in schools**
- **Provide support in schools so others can follow**
- **Possible coordination of fundraising and allocations**
- **Be a hub for local bike organizations**
- **Bring together bike clubs - hub**
- **Share revenues with non-profits in exchange for volunteer support**

E. Non-Profit Organizational Elements; Best Practices

Explore a PR campaign to encourage alliances between bicyclists and pedestrians and mutual respect

- **Communities in schools**
- **Provide support in schools so others can follow**
- **Strategic plan**
- **Board Size**
- **Timeline**
- **501c3**
- **Regular board meeting**
- **Mission**
- **Vision**
- **Strong mission, vision, & strategic plan that isn't threatening to other bike-centric organizations**

- **\*Bylaws**
- **Structure**
- **Regular meetings**
- **See League of Michigan Bicyclists, Greater Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition, KBC models for purpose, bylaws, etc**

F. Other?

- **Look at Kalamazoo Area Runners - good model - has grown last few years - model could be adapted / modified**
- **Challenge - is there a membership model for BFK?**
- **Full singular mission**
- **\*mission**
- **Vision**
- **Strategic Plan**
- **Encourage and support implementation of more protected bike lanes**

2. Questions/Answers (Instructions)

Due to the amount of material to be covered in this meeting, we may not be able to answer every question on your mind. Please jot remaining questions you have, below, or follow up with each other more directly. Paul Selden will try to facilitate answers to questions noted below. (“Off-line” questions directed to Paul may be recorded in the minutes; for practical reasons, others will remain off-line.)

Make sure you note WHO you would like to answer your question and word questions clearly.

Individual

Question(s)

**Michelle** Is “Bikes in PE” a grant? How would it be integrated into other schools? (noted by two individuals)

**Portage Central Elementary Schools - Bike Program**

**Paul Wells** boilerplate bike safety messages for City of Kalamazoo website. Keep doing them annually. [Contact] Neal Conway [Communications Director]

**Margaret O’Brien [same as above]**

3. Personal Interest

Most of BFK’s participants work off-line in many ways to make our community even more bicycle friendly – larger BFK-facilitated group meetings were not been as necessary last year.

If you would like to volunteer on projects as they come up, please list topics / efforts, etc. that most interest you, below. Use the topics above for ideas or add your own.

**Nicolette Leigh**

**Getting more bikes to kids who can’t afford them.**

**Hayden Guild**

**Awareness Rides, most other volunteer work that can be done. Feel free to contact me especially during the “off-season” after tax day [April] 17<sup>th</sup>)**

Special thanks go to Paul Guthrie for sharing an extensive set of comments after the meeting, which have been incorporated into the ideas above.