

MEETING MINUTES

Philadelphia Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan
 Steering Committee Meeting
 February 25, 2009
 1:00 – 3:00 P.M.

Consultants in attendance:

Toole Design Group
 Jennifer Toole, Principal
 Nick Jackson, Project Manager

Steve Spindler Cartography
 Steve Spindler

Campbell Thomas & Co.
 Bob Thomas
 Mike Szilagyi

MFR Consulting
 Sandy Roberts

Steering Committee members in attendance:

Alex Doty
 Kyle Gradinger
 Peter Hecht
 Bob Groves
 Kate Brower
 Marisa Waxman
 Spencer Finch
 Greg Krykewycz
 Trish Ellis
 Charles Carmalt
 Darin Gatti
 Stephanie Craighead
 Robert Allen
 Laura Spina
 Deborah Schaaf
 Breen Goodwin
 Dan Nemiroff
 Sarah C. Stuart
 Sgt. Robert Casselli

Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
 Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
 Philly Walks
 Philadelphia Senior Center
 Design Advocacy Group
 Design Advocacy Group
 Pennsylvania Environmental Council
 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
 Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA)
 Mayor's Office of Transportation and Utilities
 Streets Department – TEPS
 Fairmount Park Commission
 Green Plan Philadelphia
 Philadelphia City Planning Commission - Community Planning
 Philadelphia City Planning Commission - Project Manager
 Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
 Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
 Philadelphia Police Department

I) Public Meetings

Public meeting format – set up as round tables of 6 to 8. Start meeting with a brief presentation by City and Consultant, then have participants at each table work together to come up with ideas, mark up maps, talk about physical safety issues, what things need to be fixed about the pedestrian and bicycle environment.

There will be three public meetings. We are thinking about having one of them on a weekend, one during the day and one in the evening, geographically distributed around the City. Outreach will be very important – Steering Committee will play an important role in that. This is the beginning stage of the project – it's an information-gathering stage.

Ideas for locations for public meetings:

- Philadelphia Senior Center Main Branch – near Center City and South Philly. Could fit 80 to 100 people. They could set up the tables, etc. Better for weeknights and/or weekends. There was question whether this would work as a central location between Center City and South Philly.
- Library and Recreation Center on Broad Street
- Locations that were used for the *Imagine Philadelphia* – City can recommend locations that would work well for this. Debby will follow up.

Comments:

Meeting Content:

- Let’s not separate pedestrians and bicycles. Let’s put the two together.
- Another option is to rotate tables, so people can move from one issue to another.
- Another idea is to have stations (e.g. bike network) in the background.
- Existing conditions maps up as posters.
- What are things that make it challenging to walk and bike, specific locations, but also general information on what types of conditions prevent them from walking or bicycling.
- One framework is to ask what you do now, what you would like to do in the future, and what are your ideas for getting from here to there.
- Suggestions to have some simple handouts that help participants understand the issues.

Timing and Turn-out:

- Meetings will be held in first half of April
- Recommend evenings and Saturdays
- Discussion about how to deal with people who come to public meetings to talk about neighborhoods that are outside the study area? The policy components of the plan are city-wide but there was agreement from Committee member that targeting areas is also important. All meetings will welcome people from the entire city and it was noted that there are many people who work in the study area, but may live outside the study area.
- Important to have good pre-publicity, explain what the meeting is for and don’t want to rely on just one method of outreach.

Locations:

- It was proposed to have one meeting in Northwest, one in North Philadelphia (i.e. Temple) and one in South Philadelphia.
- Some have said that South Philadelphia and North Philadelphia residents will not attend meetings in Center City, while Center City residents would be more willing to travel to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Others felt that Center City is the linchpin of the whole Plan and that a meeting in Center City is absolutely critical. However, some described a perception that Center City gets more than its fair share of planning attention, and that there should not be a Center City meeting at the expense of a neighborhood meeting.

2) Website and Questionnaire

Website has two main roles - one is communicating the basics of the project, the second is announcing meetings and housing documents. Also, it will be the main portal for the questionnaire.

Questionnaire is a tool for outreach to complement the public meetings. Not intended to be statistically reliable, but is still a great way of getting information from residents.

Comments

- Need to ask questions about what types of improvements that people want to be made, and specific locations. Committee member comment: we want to know what prevents people from bicycling and walking.
- Need to ask what area of the City people live in, so that you know neighborhood-level priorities.
- Ask people what they DO like about the walking or bicycling environment.
- If you are a parent, what kind of facilities would you want to see? Or, the questionnaire could have a question for parents to pose to their children.
- A card with the questionnaire address and the website address that can be handed out would be helpful.
- Fairmount Park just completed a survey and got better responses from some neighborhoods than others. They can let us know which neighborhoods they got poor responses from, so that we can do targeted outreach.
- Put a link to the questionnaire on SEPTA's website.

3) Literature Review, Existing Conditions Maps and Treatments & Facility Types

Nick Jackson reviewed the Existing Conditions Analysis and Maps (see slideshow).

Committee members brought up some other issues they felt were important:

- Construction zone issues (maintaining access through construction zones)
- Personal security
- Encroachment of vehicles into pedestrian crossing areas
- Reducing conflicts with vehicles on sidewalks
- Green building practices
- General traffic enforcement – failure to yield, speeding, etc.

Nick reviewed the maps. Comments:

- It would be useful to overlay sidewalk coverage with some traffic volume data to help with prioritization.
- When it comes to land use categories – commercial categories are actually mixed use – combined with residential. Under the key, change it to Commercial/Community Services/Mixed Use
- “A majority of the crashes we see are midblock.” Philadelphia Police Department accident investigator
- Coding crash data by age would be useful.

Nick presented an overview of Bicycle and Pedestrian Treatments and Facility Types and Treatments.

Comments:

- Plan needs to acknowledge that some trails separate use (bikes vs. peds) – since they are doing that on a few trails.

4) Action Items

- Consultant team will work with City to determine dates, locations, agenda and marketing materials
- Consultant team will work with City to develop website and questionnaire and pretest with Committee.
- Steering Committee Members have an important role in turnout and will assist with marketing the meetings by utilizing their own communication networks to get the word out – both about the meetings and the questionnaire.