

TOWN OF ROCKINGHAM WALK-BIKE COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes and Notes
February 8, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

3rd Floor Conference Room, Rockingham Town Hall

Members present: Bonnie Anderson, Peter Bergstrom, Rick Cowan, Marsha Stern, Stanley Talstra
Nonmembers present: Colin Bratton, Wendy Levy, Scott Pickup, Glen Schreiter, Betsy Thurston

1. **Changes to the agenda:**

- add report from Peter on progress of Riverfront Trail Scoping Grant
- move north Rockingham Street to first discussion item

NEWS / REPORTS

- Bonnie emailed the PE teacher at the elementary school with information on Bike-Bus programs, but has not yet received a response. She will follow up before the next meeting.
- Marsha reported that the consultant working on a proposal for improving safety at School and Atkinson Streets presented a range of possibilities, including: signage above the road or beside it; more street marking to show parking-restricted areas, additional lighting raised crosswalks, bumpouts, and a roundabout. The presenter implied that the last would be a needless extravagance, but that any of the others could have value. They will present recommendations at their next appearance.
- Peter announced that Colin has drafted an RFP for scoping work on the Riverfront Trail extension. Colin explained that once the draft has been approved by Chris Hunt at VTrans, it will go to Stantech, one of the six firms pre-qualified by VTrans for this kind of work.

DISCUSSIONS

North Rockingham Street

Wendy Levy described the situation she and her neighbors on the east side of Rockingham Street face when the snow is not cleared at the north end of the sidewalk. Glen Schreiter explained that it is not safe for a sidewalk plow in that area, but that some plowing has been done using a wing plow. Wendy acknowledged that, but said the plowed area stopped about 20 feet short of where it would be useful to her. Glen agreed to speak with the personnel who are plowing, to learn why they had not gone further, and to relay that information, and any possible changes to procedure, to Wendy.

Committee members continue to support the need for both traffic calming and additional crosswalks on the north end of Rockingham Street, both for safety and to encourage more use of the east sidewalk as a scenic area. Colin explained that in order to make changes on the road that is currently designated as state highway, it is possible to change the designation of a short stretch. This would require the town to maintain that area, but would also make lowering the speed limit, installing flashers, adding signage, or making any desired changes, less complicated. He suggested Joy Wah as a possible outer limit. Betsy pointed out that requesting signs to be moved on the state highway might be easier than asking for new signs.

(continued next page)

Colin discussed the highlights and conclusions he was able to draw from the data presented in WRC's preliminary report on a study of density of pedestrians and bicycles at several locations: School/Atkinson intersection, The Square, Green/Rockingham Street intersection, and Rte 121 at the Rockingham/Westminster boundary. The surveys were conducted partly by electronic counters and partly using human observers.

The wedge-shaped corner where Dari Joy sits is, according to Colin, a dangerous situation due, he suggests, to the lack of curbs that allows cars to enter the parking area at any point on the street. He felt that the entire area between Green Street and Canal Street should be the subject of a scoping study. Scott pointed out that this should be delayed until the bridge work at Canal is completed, since that will change the situation. (Later, Rick shared the information that VTrans will appear at the TriBoard meeting in April to address the issue of the delayed starting date for the bridge project, which threatens to cause Rockingham to lose the federal funds we have already won to implement the plan.)

Colin suggested a few possible funding sources for such a study: VTrans Bike-Ped program, a TAP grant, or a Better Connections grant, the next round of which will be in 2025.

The most pedestrian traffic by far is within the Square, and Rick asked whether painting the crosswalks green could be accomplished with a minimum of delay, perhaps while the small parking lots and the adjacent "painted sidewalk" project are done in summer 2024. Scott noted that that job will be done by a contractor, and that for every job we add we need to scrap another, due to manpower shortages. Bonnie asked whether the lack of manpower was due to budget constraints or labor shortages. Scott answered that potential applicants are discouraged by the drug test requirement.

Stan asked Colin why the survey had not included any parts of Saxtons River. Colin replied that a bicycle count east of Saxton's River wasn't completed due to the destruction of the counter strips by truck traffic. He proposed redoing that spot and, in addition, a spot west of the village, as well as pedestrian and bicycle surveys at the center of town.

NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 22, 10 AM

MEETING ADJOURNED at 11:15

submitted 2/9/24 by Marsha Stern