

TOWN OF ROCKINGHAM WALK-BIKE COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes and Notes
January 25, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

3rd Floor Conference Room, Rockingham Town Hall

Members present: Bonnie Anderson, Rick Cowan, Marsha Stern, Stanley Talstra
Nonmembers present: Gary Fox

1. **Changes to the agenda:**

- add discussion of invitation to participate in June 6 Downtown and Historic Preservation Conference
- postpone discussion of plowing on Rockingham Street north of the police station until we can have Glenn Schrieter and Wendy Levy in attendance

2. **Approval of the minutes** of January 4 meeting.

NEWS / REPORTS

Marsha pointed out that changes in the spreadsheet will probably occur in the columns describing specific objectives, while overall goals remained the same. For example, there is greater urgency to the objective of improving traffic safety in the Square since the recent fatal accident.

Several ideas were generated in the check-in:

- Gary suggested the covered bike parking might be combined with covered bus shelters. Such a collaboration would both be economical and serve multiple ends.
- Rick reiterated the importance of including Glenn Schreiter (Highway Superintendent) in as many meetings as possible, and that we still haven't solved the problem of a safe pedestrian route on north Rockingham Street.
- Gary pointed out that the spreadsheet might be presented to the Selectboard or the Tri-Board as part of a presentation to keep those bodies apprised of our efforts. * Gary reported that Betsy Thurston is working on a grant to repair/modify bumpouts on The Square, due February 19.

DISCUSSION

1. **Bike Bus**

We previously agreed to seek individuals from within both the elementary and middle schools to spearhead a local version of a "bike bus," which is a movement encouraging children to ride bikes to school. The program, which has been successful in many locations in the U.S. and other countries, devises routes and provides adult chaperones; otherwise it varies widely according to local situations. We have discussed starting out with an Earth Day ride, but ultimately, the strategy will be up to the school communities. Bonnie noted that the Bike Project is able to help assure that every child who wants to participate has a bike and a helmet.

2. **Recommendations for improved pedestrian safety in The Square**

Our assessment of the dangers for pedestrians in The Square was tragically confirmed with the death of Jeremy B urrell on January 8. At issue is the lack of visibility related to the dark hours, nose-in parking, a speed limit of

25 mph, and lack of enforcement of even that limit. Rick was concerned that details of the accident were not available except through rumor.

A number of suggestions were presented in a brainstorming mode:

- orange cones in the center of crosswalks (quick and easy)
- post “watch for pedestrian” signs at both ends of the square
- lower the speed limit
- make 6 spaces between Town Hall and the antique store “for compact cars only”
- install lighting focused on the crosswalks
- use green paint on crosswalks
- traffic-calming murals in the roadway
- install speed bumps designed to allow snow plowing
- install at least two stop signs
- flashing beacons indicating crosswalk(s)

Many of these ideas would require approval by VTrans, making them long-term solutions. Others—cones, lighting and changes in parking, for example—can be implemented by approval of the Selectboard, the Village Trustees having ceded traffic regulation to the Town.

ACTION STEPS

Marsha agreed to arrange with Scott Pickup to get on the agenda for April 30.

Marsha and ?? will attend the public meeting concerning the School/Atkinson project at 2:30 on Tuesday, January 30, in the Lower Theater of Town Hall. Our interest here is both for pedestrian safety and bike rider accessibility.

Marsha will research paints used in traffic marking.

Marsha will extend invitations to the next meeting to Glenn Schreiter and Wendy Levy.

Bonnie will contact Peter Lowry (PE teacher at Central Elementary) as a possible leader for a Bike Bus.

MEETING ADJOURNED, 11 PM

Note: After the adjournment, Scott joined the group and reported that he had contacted the Safety Engineer at VTrans with all the data he had on the accident. He will follow-up with her on January 29, and report the outcome by the next meeting.

Notes submitted by Marsha Stern, 1/26/24