

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

PaTHs 4 Bethlehem Committee

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To: Supervisor Messina and Town Board Members
From: PaTHs 4 Bethlehem Committee (Rob Leslie and Jason Gallo)
Subject: 2011 Accomplishments and Status Update on Bicycle and Pedestrian Tasks
Date: December 7, 2010
Cc: M. Morelli, N. Lanahan, G. Saggendorph, P. Penman, N. Moquin, T. Beebe, E. Deyoe,
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This memo serves as an annual status update on the PaTHs 4 Bethlehem Committee (PaTHs Committee), since its presentation to the Town Board last year at the November 24, 2010 meeting. Town Board action at that meeting directed the PaTHs Committee to implement several tasks. Provided below are the Committee's 2011 accomplishments, as well as status of tasks:

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

1. Held CDTA Albany County Route Restructuring Presentation/Workshop

At the January 2011 PaTHs Committee meeting, the Committee invited Ross Farrell, Senior Transportation Planner at CDTA, to present CDTA's route restructuring program for Albany County. CDTA conducted a priority setting exercise amongst the 40 attendees to identify service improvements to bus routes within and to/from Bethlehem. These improvements were incorporated into the service improvements that were implemented by CDTA in November 2011.

2. Appointment of Three New Members

In February, three new members were appointed by the Town Board to the Committee. These members bring a strong bicycling background to the Committee.

3. Public Service Announcements

The Committee worked with the Spotlight newspaper to run an article highlighting the importance of pedestrian safety, specifically informing drivers of the requirement to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. This article coincided with the Highway Department's placement of "Yield to Pedestrian" bollards at the following crosswalk locations: Delaware Avenue at the Post Office, Town Hall, and BCSD High School, and Elm Avenue at Axbridge Lane. The Committee also worked with the Bethlehem Public Library TV-18 to run bicycle and pedestrian safety public service announcements during the months of April and May.

4. CDTC/CDTA 2011 Bike Rack Program

The Town was successful in receiving 10 bicycle racks through the CDTC/CDTA Bike Rack Program. Through the PaTH Committee's application 4 bicycle racks were awarded for the Four Corners area and 6 bicycle racks were awarded at the Elm Avenue Town Park.

5. Mohawk Hudson Cycling Club Mini-Grant

The Town was successful in receiving a \$200.00 mini-grant from the Mohawk Hudson Cycling Club to purchase outdoor brochure holders. To help further the Committee's bicycle and pedestrian Educational campaign efforts, the Committee utilized the holders for the dissemination of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Tips Palm Cards. The holders were mounted to Town bike racks at the Four Corners and Veterans Memorial Park. Unfortunately, the holders were removed from the bike racks and the Committee has decided not to replace them. MHCC has indicated the remaining funds can be used for other pedestrian and bicycle safety or education activities. The Committee will utilize the remaining funds in 2012.

6. Town Police Department Distribution of Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Tips Palm Cards

Through funding from the Bethlehem Citizens for Pedestrian Safety, (acknowledged by the Town Board in April and July), the Committee reproduced over 4,000 Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Tips Palm Cards. The PaTHs Committee has actively distributed the palm cards to schools, churches, bicycle shops, businesses, motor vehicle driver safety courses, and Town facilities. Additionally, the palm cards were distributed to the Town Police Department for their dissemination at the time of motor vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle infractions.

7. Participation at YMCA Healthy Kids Day

In April, Committee members participated in the Bethlehem Area YMCA Annual Healthy Kids Day event. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Tip Palm Cards were unveiled and kids participated in a “Safety Quiz” based on the palm card safety tips. Two local bike shops (Mad Dog Bikes & Steiner’s Sports) provided donations of two bicycle helmets. The helmets were used as a giveaway for those who participated in a “Safety Quiz” activity.

8. Rensselaer Lighting Research Center’s Roundabout Lighting Study (Ecoluminance Study)

In June, Committee members participated in the Rensselaer Lighting Research Center’s (LRC) Roundabout Lighting Study at the New Scotland Road/Cherry Avenue Extension roundabout. The study involved lighting vegetation (ecoluminance) within the roundabout and pedestrians at refuge (crosswalk) islands to provide visual guidance to drivers. Vegetation and bollard crosswalk lighting was temporarily installed at the New Scotland Rd. (northeast) entrance to the roundabout and Committee members provided feedback as to the effectiveness of the bollard lighting for pedestrians and vegetation to illuminate the roundabout.

9. Partnership with Bethlehem Central School District

During the summer/fall the PaTHs Committee met with BCSD Superintendent Dr. Michael Tebbano, the BCSD Administrative Council, and the PTO president’s Council to work together on educating students on bicycle and pedestrian safety. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Jody Monroe and Fred Powers, Supervisor for Health and Physical Education have been designated as BCSD liaisons to the PaTHs Committee and will attend the Committee’s monthly meetings. Discussions at the recent Committee meeting introduced the idea of a Bike to School Day event in May to help promote bicycle education.

STATUS OF TASKS:

NYSERDA Energy Management, Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Initiatives

At its August 10, 2011 meeting the Town Board authorized an agreement with VHB Engineering, Surveying, and Landscape Architecture, P.C. for consultant services on an Energy Management, Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Bicycle Pedestrian Program Initiatives project, funded through a NYSERDA grant. While the overall project concentrates on opportunities to conserve energy in Town buildings (i.e. Town Hall, Highway Department, etc.) and facilities (i.e. Clapper Road Water Treatment Plant, Dinmore Road Sewer Treatment Plant), the Town recognizes its roadways as a component of Town facilities. Since a goal of the project is to reduce GHG emissions from Town buildings and facilities, accommodations for alternative modes of transportation including bicycling and walking along Town roadways is an important element of any Town-wide energy management program.

The Committee is working with the VHB team on the following tasks associated with the Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Initiatives

1. Sidewalk Maintenance Manual – VHB/Committee are developing a system to evaluate existing bicycle and pedestrian facility conditions (sidewalks and shared use paths) and a process to prioritize the maintenance of these facilities. This system will be documented in a maintenance manual for the Town Highway Department's use.
2. Review of Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network – Additions - VHB/Committee reviewed the existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network developed by the PaTHs committee to identify other additional valuable connections for future consideration. Recommended additions to the Network include:

POTENTIAL ADDITIONS TO THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY NETWORK

<u>Road Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Adams Place/Herber Avenue (Bike/Ped)	Roweland Avenue	Elsmere Avenue
Hasgate Drive/Forsten Drive/ Ashgrove Lane/Harvest Ridge Road (Bike/Ped)	Feura Bush Road	Elm Avenue East
Willowbrook Avenue (Bike/Ped)	South Albany Road	Bridge Street
Bridge Street (Bike/Ped)	Willowbrook Avenue	Ten Eycke Avenue
McGuffy Lane/Parkwyn Drive (Bike/Ped)	Winnie Road	Murray Ave

3. Create list of Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Projects - VHB/Committee are creating a prioritized list of bicycle and pedestrian projects using the Bethlehem Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network and Bethlehem Evaluation Process for New Pathway Investment, Budget cost estimates will be included for all projects identified. Potential pedestrian and bicycle projects include:

POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS

<u>Road Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>
Delmar Place	Kenwood Avenue	Fernbank Avenue	TOWN
Adams Street	Kenwood Avenue	Hudson Avenue	TOWN
Brockley Drive	Delaware Avenue	Orchard Street	TOWN
Feura Bush Road	Bayberry Road	Jefferson Road	STATE
Feura Bush Road	Jefferson Road	Route 9W	STATE
Murray Avenue	Delmar Bypass (NYS Rt 32)	Feura Bush Road	TOWN
Kenwood Avenue	Pine Tree Drive	Delmar Bypass (NYS Rt 32)	TOWN
Blessing Road Krumkill Road	NYS Rt 85 Blessing Road	Krumkill Road Russell Road	TOWN
Route 9W	Glenmont Elementary Driveway	Town Squire	STATE
Kenwood Ave (Crosswalk)	At Edgewood Road		TOWN
Delaware Avenue (Crosswalk)	At Bennett Terrace		STATE
Orchard Street	Brockley Drive	Crestwood Lane	TOWN

POTENTIAL BICYCLE PROJECTS			
<u>Road Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>
Wemple Road/Weisheit Road	Beacon Road	River Road	TOWN
Delmar/Winnie/McGuffey/Murray/Axbridge/Elm	Kenwood Avenue	Elm Avenue	TOWN
Feura Bush Road	Elm Avenue	Route 9W	STATE
Murray Avenue	Elm Avenue	Feura Bush Road	TOWN
Kenwood Avenue	Delaware Avenue	Delmar Bypass (Route 32)	TOWN
Delaware Avenue	New Scotland Town Line	City of Albany Town Line	STATE
Delmar Place	Kenwood Avenue	Fernbank Avenue	TOWN
South Albany Road	Old Quarry Road	Bridge Street	COUNTY
Old Quarry Road	New Scotland Town Line	Bridge Street	COUNTY
Elsmere Avenue/Feura Bush Road/Wemple Road	Delaware Avenue	River Road	STATE/TOWN
Cherry Avenue	Kenwood Avenue	New Scotland Road	STATE
New Scotland Road	Cherry Avenue	Albany City Line	STATE
Blessing Road/Russell Road	Route 85	Albany City Line	TOWN
Meads Lane/Elm Avenue	Delaware Avenue	Delmar Bypass (Route 32)	TOWN

As a result of this task, the Town Board will have a Tiered list (Tier I, II, III) of priority projects to select from for the construction of sidewalks and/or bicycle routes.

4. Bike Pilot Projects – VHB/Committee are developing two bicycle route pilot projects based on the roadways included on the Town Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network. The pilot projects will be an on-road facility designated by pavement markings such as Shared Lane Markings (SLM's or sharrows) and appropriate bike route signage. A wayfinding signage system that includes destination signs (i.e. Schools, Town Hall, Library, etc.) will be developed.
 - Route #1 – Delmar Place, Winnie Road, McGuffey Lane, Parkwyn Drive, Murray Ave, Axbridge Lane, Elm Avenue, Delmar Bypass Ext., Van Dyke Road
 - Route #2 – Delaware Avenue (Van Dyke Road to Elm Avenue) – proposed
5. LAB Traffic Skills Course 101 – Committee members participated in the League of American Bicyclists Traffic Skills 101 course which centered on bicyclists education while traveling on the roadway. Participants, including Town Staff and members of the Police Department learned bicycle maintenance, hazard avoidance techniques, and skills for safely riding in traffic.

6. Walk Friendly Community Application and Bicycle Friendly Community Application

VHB/Committee are completing the League of American Bicyclists' (LAB) Bicycle Friendly Community Application and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center's (PBIC) Walk Friendly Community Application. Both applications serve as an assessment tool of bicycling and walking conditions in the Town. Through the questions and resources in the applications the Town will be able to identify areas of needed improvement and use the tools to develop specific solutions. Both applications are due January/February 2012 and the PBIC and LAB will evaluate the Committee's responses to the application and provide a "Report Card" of how well the Town is doing to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle mobility. Award levels include Gold, Silver, Bronze and Honorable Mention status.

Committee Members Vacancy

As you are aware, in September, Town Board Member Mark Jordan resigned from the Committee due to his new/upcoming responsibilities as Town Justice. In November, committee member Kristin Legere also resigned due to other personal commitments that would not allow her active participation. Since the Committee is actively engaged in completing the bicycle and pedestrian tasks associated with the NYSERDA grant (as mentioned above) it would not be beneficial to fill these vacant positions at this time. The NYSERDA grant is scheduled to be completed by March 2012. It is recommended that the Town Board solicit for members in late February/early March. This would result in the new members participating at the April 2012 meeting. The new members would fill the remaining time of Mark Jordan and Kristin Legere's term, which ends December 31, 2012. Also, please note the Committee has suggested a Planning Board member may be helpful to fill a vacant position to provide the connection between bicycle and pedestrian mobility and new developments in Town.

Town Board Action

At this time, there is no Town Board action to be taken on the tasks listed above.

Next Steps

As you can see through these accomplishments and ongoing efforts, the Committee is actively pursuing their goal of a 3-E approach to bicycle and pedestrian mobility (Engineering, Education, and Enforcement) in the Town. The Committee will complete these tasks by the end of March 2012 at which time a presentation will be provided to the Board.