

Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

MINUTES

May 30, 2013, 4:30 PM

Approved 6/17/13

Members Present: Chair Eric Weis, Jef Nickerson, Matthew Moritz, Jenn Steinfeld, Jenna Yu

Staff: David Everett,

Guests: Cliff Wood, Ellen Cynar, Katuska Perez, Leo Perrotta,

Public Attendees: Jennifer Walsh, Dennis Taylor, Joanna Dietz, Amber Ilcisko

1. City Signs/Bike Locks Issue – Parking Administrator Leo Perrotta:

Mr. Perrotta explained that an employee had been inappropriately cutting locks attached to City sign posts and that the problem has been rectified. Current policy is for such action to be taken only in cases where a bike has been abandoned - as testified to by local property owners/long-term repeat witnesses (bicycles unmoved for several months). He further explained that, while signs do need to be repaired on occasion, it can be done without cutting locks. Parking meters are off limits for locking bikes as they need to be unobstructed.

This discussion segued into a conversation about bicycle parking generally and the possibility of using \$30,000 in CMAQ funds controlled by the Providence Foundation to address the need

downtown. Identification of potential sites should be a priority.

2. Kennedy Plaza Improvements:

Bonnie Nickerson of the Department of Planning and Development was not in attendance; Mr. Everett explained that some of the details of the Downtown Circulator, which includes Kennedy Plaza and the third meeting agenda item, Fountain and Sabin streets, were still being worked out. Ms. Nickerson would be able to attend the June BPAC meeting to discuss both items and an upcoming public meeting about the Circulator.

Cliff Wood, representing the Downtown Parks Conservancy, briefly discussed the plans for Kennedy Plaza, citing the need for change because it has become “too much of one thing” (transit) and not a safe and efficient place for a variety of users. The bike parking discussion continued, with an emphasis on appropriate locations in the Kennedy Plaza area. Mr. Everett said he would confer with bike plan consultant Bill DeSantis on this. Mr. Wood discussed several components of the latest proposed physical plan, including a gateway from Burnside Park to the train station. He also cited the need for flexibility in design and programming to allow for changes when something doesn’t work.

3. Fountain and Sabin Street Improvements:

Mr. Weis led a brief discussion (Bonnie Nickerson had been scheduled to talk about this item as well as Kennedy Plaza but agreed

to do so at a later date). It was noted that both streets are wider than they need to be and should better accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. The item will be revisited at the June meeting

4. Providence Y Bicycle Efforts:

Jenn Steinfeld summarized some of the emerging efforts of the Providence YMCA regarding bicycle education, safety and skills.

5. Cyclovia – Ellen Cynar and Katuska Perez, City of Providence, Mayor’s Office:

Ellen and Katuska reviewed the scheduled “Cyclovias”: Sunday, June 30 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM on a section of Broad Street; Sunday, July 28 from 10:00 or 11:00 AM until 2:00 PM on Valley Street in Olneyville; and Saturday, September 14 (probably 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM) on the north end of Hope Street. Prospective vendors and exhibitors should contact Ellen or Katuska. Discussion followed about the relatively short length of the stretches for which the Cyclovias are scheduled compared to what occurs in Bogota, Colombia where the concept originated, and whether less emphasis should be on bicycles.

6. League of American Bicyclists Bike-Friendly Community application.

Matt Moritz distributed forms and other documents relative to the

application and initiated discussion about the merits of the City applying. It was decided that at the very least the resulting ranking would provide a benchmark for future bicycle infrastructure and programming efforts in Providence. Matt agreed to set up a meeting with Ellen Cynar, Dave Everett and perhaps Sheila Dormody. Ellen said that one or more interns can work on the effort if a decision is made to pursue it. Dave will attempt to locate the City's previous application from about ten years ago.

7. Ordinance Repeals

BPAC revisited the topic of unenforced, obsolete and/or inappropriate City ordinances relating to bicycles that the commission recommends be repealed. The commission unanimously approved recommending repeal. Next steps will be looked into by Matt and Dave.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment: 5:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted by David Everett 6/3/13