

Burlington Walk Bike Council (BWBC)

April 3rd, 2024 Meeting Notes

The monthly meeting took place 5:30- 7:00 pm via Zoom and at the DPW Office.

In-Person Attendees: Erik Brotz (South End), Gordon Dragoon, Julia Ursaki (DPW), Phillip Peterson (DPW), Jak Tiano, Julia Bowden (AARP), Breck Bowden, Karen Sentoff (VHB consultants), Bob Leidy, Jason Van Driesche

Online Attendees: Serrill Flash, Jonathon Weber (Local Motion), Jason Stuffle

1. Introductions, Announcements, Updates and Public Comments

Julia & Phillip: Safe Streets for All (SSforA) Grant - For demonstration activity, has been applied for to potentially have protected bike lanes on north champlain and new facilities on Battery Street

DPW Job Updates

- **Phillip is our new Senior Transportation Planner**
- Associate position to be posted tomorrow
- Public Works Engineer position will be posted as well
- Olivia Darisse left last week and Maddy Suender took her position
- Maddy's position will also be posted

Dave & Bob Leidy are doing a walking tour/audit of the Winooski Bridge Project on 4/10/2024 4:00 PM

2. World Car-Free Day/Neighbor Streets Proposal (20 minutes)

Date: September 22nd

Jason Van Driesche started us off.

The sentiment is that closing a street requires a fair bit of work, taking signatures from 75% of residents. Jason wants us to start thinking of streets as not being exclusively for vehicular use. Wants city ordinances to support doing additional things on quieter (non-arterials) in the city without having to ask permission each time. Basically anything that could be cleared out should an emergency vehicle round the nearest corner, hockey and block parties and the like. Jason wants us to consider other uses and consider streets where this process could occur.

Working name for this idea - Neighbor Streets

Already discussed this with Ben Traverse, who is now the city council president. Research needs to be done on state law.

Questions and comments:

- 1) Julia Bowden: During the pandemic some streets in town closed during the pandemic
 - a) Jason: Yes this is true, but it was mostly for signage at the time and things should be expanded to make it easier.
- 2) Breck: Likes the idea, giving an amendment. Wonders if there would be resistance to a blanket designation to streets. Thinks that a street should only need to be designated one time using the existing process. (75% of signatures)
- 3) Phillip: As part of this, the ordinance will definitely need to be changed. Will need partners that are residents and further support from those that make the ordinance.
 - a) Jason: They're still considering the process, but agrees
 - b) Jak: In the fall they were considering the existing ordinances and what will need to change. They'll need additional people in other neighborhoods
- 4) Phillip: Parking services might give final approval in current process.
 - a) Jason + Jak: Think it may be the police. Also thinks they will potentially enjoy not needing to deal with this quite as much.
 - b) Bob: Disagrees because some critical streets are closed during some events and need the police. Maybe we should go bigger with this and consider larger streets
 - c) Jak: This could just be a stepping stone.
- 5) Jak: This relates to car free day in the downtown last year. It was a lot of work. Says that what Jason is getting after is the ease of making things like this happen.
 - a) Jason: Even wants to bring this downscale quite a bit. It's not necessarily about closing a street entirely, but more about giving more allowed uses for streets.
- 6) Phillip: Suggests looking into Minneapolis, as this is a very common thing that is done there. Also provided us with the factoid that this is where he was from.
- 7) Jason is looking for more people interested in helping to refine the idea and move it forward

Email Jason for support at 129caroline@gmail.com

3. Battery Street (50 minutes)

Karen Sentoff (VHB) - Currently trying to weigh the preferred options based off of the bike facilities. Discussion was conducted over roll plans of each concept

Option 1 - one-way separated bike facilities on each side of Battery Street

Option 2 - two-way separated bike facility on west side of Battery Street

College Street / Battery Street intersection dangerous for peds

Long crossings

Right turn conflicts

Queuing space

Lots of pedestrians

Likes where pedestrians are protected by parked vehicles and protected by two-way bike facility
Separation from vehicles

Intersection conflict points are key concern with both options

How to get into / out of facilities at connections?

Why not scrambles like at Winooski / Pearl?

Why not Dutch Intersections? Protection of bikes at intersections

Discussion of tradeoffs at intersections to get protected intersections or other desired intersection treatments

Queuing space for pedestrians

Two stage left turns for bikes

Bikes using accessibility ramps to queue for two stage lefts

Connection to rail yard enterprise

Avoiding messy transitions or unintuitive connections

Discussion of bus prioritization

In lane bus stop vs. pull off

Reactivation of the corridor

underutilized areas today with lots of opportunity

Discussion of constructability of Option 1

Challenges with grade between travelway and existing sidewalk

Particularly for Pearl to Monroe

Could on street protected bike lanes between Sherman and Pearl be considered instead of separated?

Avoid constructability concerns?

Discussion of two-way facility on steep grade section

Speed differential concern

Option of separating or buffering opposing movements in steep section

After discussion, took a straw poll:

Disregarding constructability and potential cost issues, how many people present support

Option 1? 7

How many support Option 2? 2

Some discussion of wavering on those choices given:

constructability concerns (Option 1)

two-way opposing bike operation on hill (Option 2)

driveways / conflicts on east side (Option 1)

If considering constructability and cost, would anyone change their mind? 1, maybe 2 would choose Option 2 instead of Option 1.

Suggestions of phased implementation

Short term - paint and bollards

Medium term - grade separated with beveled curb