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Minutes, Nov. 2005

Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee

Minutes for November 7, 2005

Board members present were Jack Johnson, Stephan Miller, Ron Sender, Scott Smith, Ted Packard, and Christopher Tonkin. Joey Glushko also attended.

The meeting was called to order at 7:32.

*The minutes of the October meeting were approved with minor corrections.

Update on bicycling Skills classes held in Arlington on October 14-15. About thirty people attended the initial evening session on Friday night. There were eight people at the second session the next day. The class was taught by two instructors, and there were two assistants on Saturday. It rained Saturday, so the drills were skipped. We discussed the effectiveness of the classes and the demographics of those who attended. We discussed other possible venues for future classes.

Update on ABAC report on bikeway safety issues. Jack sent in the report to the Selectmen, and we will have to attend a Selectmen's meeting within the month.

Update on Mass. Ave. redesign project. VHB has sent the design input to MassHighway for approval.

Update on bicyclist/pedestrian counts in Arlington Center. The counts have now all been taken. There are slightly more bicyclists than pedestrians during peak hours. We also reviewed accident statistics which show that there have been more pedestrian accidents than bike accidents in the Center.

Discussion on bicycling to school issues. Lauren Hefferon thinks that hopes for promoting biking to school are looking dim. The local Safe Routes to School group is neglecting biking. The focus is primarily on walking to the grammar schools. We discussed the fact that the national and international SRTS groups emphasize both walking and bicycling.

Other communities have piggybacked bikes on their walking programs. Often the goal and focus is fitness rather than safety. Ron suggested that ABAC get involved in bicycle education in the schools. This might be the wedge for furthering the idea of children biking to school.

Christopher mentioned that Ed Sassler might be interested in teaching bicycling skills to children in Arlington. Jack thought that the middle school would be a good place to start and reported that John Siemiatkoski (certified cycling instructor) is also interested in teaching bicycling skills for middle-school-age students. Jack could help with preparing a class for middle-schoolers.

Christopher thought giving bicycle rodeos at school fairs around town would also be a good beginning. Ted thought that a flier, mailed out during the summer with information about equipment and routes, might also help. Ron thought that some instruction should be given in conjunction with the flier. Christopher suggested a meeting between all the potential teachers and the school Physical Education instructors.

Volunteers for a possible subcommittee are Ted, Jack, Ron, and Christopher.

ACTION ITEMS:

β Ted will research when the fairs will occur and contact the PTAs to get details.

β Jack will set up a subcommittee meeting with ABAC reps and others to discuss plans for bicycling skills classes for middle schoolers.

Discuss plans for ABAC's Winter Social. Proposed date is Thursday night February 16 2006. Jack suggested showing the instructional video "Cyclists Eye View" and giving a mini-lecture on bicycle commuting. Other suggestions were having speakers such as Andy Rubel or Anne Lusk. Joey suggested a report on the East Coast Greenway.

Stephan suggested a talk on bikeway linkages in the area. We discussed whether the Whitemore-Robbins house or the Senior Center would be the better venue. We decided to try and get the house because it a more intimate setting. We will also try to get Linda Guttman to serve cocoa again this year.

Discussion on action items from prior meetings.

β We decided on Sunday, May 21,2006 as the date for the Bike Arlington Tour.

β We discussed possible questions for the Vision 2020 census survey such as plowing the Bikeway or surveying the winter uses. Ron suggested a sidewalk plowing question for the survey.

β Joey suggested that Jack's first monthly bicycling column for the Advocate could explain the reasons for not plowing the Minuteman Bikeway.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33

*Designates a vote was taken.

The minutes were taken and submitted by Stephan Miller.