



MEETING NOTES

PROJECT NAME	Warren County Transportation Plan
PROJECT NUMBER	30900091.001
DATE	30 June 2020
TIME	04:00 PM (Eastern Time)
VENUE	GotoMeeting
SUBJECT	Bike/Ped Focus Group Discussion Summary
CLIENT	Warren County

Bicycle and Pedestrian Focus Group

This focus group session brought together a group representing a variety of interests centering on bicycle and pedestrian matters. Focus group participants included experts and stakeholders with a mix of state and local knowledge and experience. Following a welcome, brief overview of the study goals and timeline, and sharing of guidelines specific to the online format of the discussion, study team members (from WSP and FHI) led a discussion among the participants:

- Aaron Hyndman – NJ Bike & Walk Coalition
- Lisa Cintron: Voorhees Transportation Center
- Elise Bremer-Nei: New Jersey Department of Transportation
- Ryan Scacci: Warren County Community College
- JanMarie McDyer: Warren County Transportation Coordinator

Others present included:

- Dave Dech: Warren County
- Brian Appezzato: Warren County
- Valerie Discafani: Warren County
- Blythe Eaman: North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
- Pete Kremer: Michael Baker International
- Jessica Ortiz: FHI
- Debbie Hartman: WSP USA
- Charlie Romanow: WSP USA

During the discussion, participants were asked a number of open-ended introductory and follow-up questions to spur conversation.

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The following issues were raised and discussed among the participants and study team. Comments and concerns are separated into three categories: Challenges, Strengths, and Opportunities

Challenges

- Most roads are designed solely for cars
- Warren County does not have a Complete Streets Policy
- Warren County roads lack proper bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure; limiting demand and use
- Much of the County is hilly; makes biking difficult
- Much of County lacks bicycle and pedestrian facilities
 - Few sharrows or “Share the Road” signage
- Intersection on east side of bridge in Phillipsburg to Easton is a challenge
- Poor motorist behavior
 - Motor vehicles don’t look for pedestrians when turning in Belvidere
- Biking between Washington Boro and Belvidere feels very unsafe; narrow roads; dedicated bike facility would be preferred
- Riding to Washington Boro over Brass Castle Ridge is challenging for all levels of riders
- Every year traffic gets worse; particularly in Hackettstown
- Mountain Avenue is a death trap
- Sidewalk connectivity is challenge, depending on who’s responsible for maintenance

Strengths

- Greater demand for biking and walking facilities in boroughs
- Recent work in constructing sidewalks and making intersections ADA compliant
- Marty’s Cycle Shop in Hackettstown runs many group bike rides; there are serious bike enthusiasts in County
 - Marty’s also teaches children to safely bike and walk to school
- TransAction oversees Safe Routes to Schools, works with many local schools

Opportunities

- Encourage installation of dedicated bike lanes
- Encourage installation of all-way crosswalks (also known as Barnes Dance, pedestrian scramble, or all-pedestrian phasing)
 - Particularly on either side of free bridge between Phillipsburg and Easton, PA
 - Demand for walking between Phillipsburg and Easton along bridge
- Warren County could adopt a Complete Streets policy
- Consider addition of off-road trails, particularly along rail line right-of-way
 - Can pave towpath
 - Can build off Morris Canal Greenway to connect townships
 - Would offer an alternative to commuting by car, remove cars from road
- GoHunterdon in Hunterdon County has been successful with biking/walking programs in small towns; can build off their programs
 - Walk to School Day

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- Golden Sneaker contest
- Award for class with most walkers/bikers
- Voorhees Transportation Center does walk audits
- County should develop bike and pedestrian master plan
 - Can also develop joint plan for Hackettstown and Mansfield
 - Main Street in Hackettstown would be good place for separated two-way cycle track; good for business; Hackettstown has lots of off-street parking
- Demand for biking and walking in Belvidere
- NJDOT is doing a study of Main St and Grand Ave in Hackettstown; looking to make more pedestrian friendly
- Many people walk to Warren County Library, but no sidewalk is present
 - A paved bike/ped lane exists to Belvidere pool, can do something similar for library