

Bike/Ped and Ellsworth On The Move

How can we all work to make Ellsworth a more accessible community for all?

May 21, 2009

6:30-8:00 PM

Council Chambers-City Hall

Meeting Notes

Welcome and Introductions:

- Attendees:
 - Jef Fitzgerald-Ellsworth City Planner
 - Cathy Kozaryn-Resident of Ellsworth and Union River Healthy Communities Board Member
 - Tom Stipe-Resident of Ellsworth and Union River Healthy Communities Board Member
 - Darrell Wilson-Resident of Ellsworth and City of Ellsworth Planning Board Member
 - Denise Hue-Pyramid Studios, CPA in Ellsworth, and Sustainable Ellsworth
 - Mike Sauber-Interested Citizen, Resident in Blue Hill
 - Jane Freeman-Resident of Ellsworth, Union River Healthy Communities Board Member, and Sustainable Ellsworth
- Regrets:
 - Helena Peterson-Resident of Ellsworth and Union River Healthy Communities
 - Phyllis Young-Chamber of Commerce, Resident of Ellsworth, and Union River Healthy Communities Board Member
- During the welcome, all attendees and notes from emails received before the meeting were shared. See the synopsis below:
 - More accessibility
 - More bikeways

- People need to be able to bike safely within the city.
- Look at the obstacles and make plans to change them (snow on the sidewalks so people cannot move along them in the winter, breaks in sidewalks, etc.).
- There are many opportunities for all to work collaboratively to create more ways to travel in Ellsworth so all can enjoy what Ellsworth has to offer.
- It would be great to pool together the community resources to continue the good work that was started with the bike/ped committee.
- We need to engage people in the community and bring them together on one or two projects that are feasible.

Overview of the *Bike/Ped Committee* Accomplishments

- Jef, Cathy, and Tom gave an overview of the work that was started with the Bike/Ped Committee.
- Jef also gave a superb slide show about the projects that Ellsworth has accomplished, projects that are in the planning stages, and hope for the future.
 - Jef explained that there are tiers of what needs to be worked on in terms of accessible paths and sidewalks. It is vital that we look at what is really feasible so that people will support the projects that will allow them more accessibility to areas in the downtown area and near the downtown area.
 - The bike/ped plan that was developed by the committee was adopted by the city council and this helps all key people involved in any project plan for new construction or fix areas that need work.
 - Bike/Ped planning map-http://www.cityofellsworthme.org/planning/bike-ped/Bike-Ped_map_4-9-09.pdf
- Tom and Cathy mentioned that it is important to get people involved in the bike/ped work so they can realize that work is being accomplished and local people as well as visitors will look at Ellsworth as a destination and not just a place to pass through.
 - This would be good for the economy of Ellsworth and for the local attractions such as Birdsacre, Woodlawn, etc.

Overview of “From Where I Sit”

- Tom and others shared experiences of having to use a wheelchair to get around town.
- Tom explained his website and how this was a catalyst for some of the work that has been accomplished in fixing the sidewalks or for the construction of new sidewalks in Ellsworth. <http://www.geocities.com/thomasstipe/index.html>

Ellsworth On The Move Power Point Show about a Downtown Loop

- Tom and Jane shared their findings about the Main Street, School Street, and State Street loop they investigated in August-2008. To view the slide show, click here http://www.cityofellsworthme.org/planning/bike-ped/bike-ped_homepage.htm and scroll to “Ellsworth On The Move Downtown Trip”.
 - This 8/10 of a mile loop was mostly accessible, however there were some places that were in great need of repair.
 - We discussed how we repairing the two or three areas of the sidewalk and put in crosswalks to make this a great loop for all.

Union River Healthy Communities Coalition healthycom.org:

- Jane reported for Helena Peterson.
- It was noted in the most recent Union River Healthy Communities Health Planning process that bike/ped and more accessible paths and trails would be a great benefit for recreation, the economy and for public health concerns.
- People are very interested in alternative means of transportation and in getting more physically active.

Discussion:

- After the presentations, we discussed all that we learned and realized that:
 - What was discussed hold great interest from many other groups around Ellsworth
 - Local Citizens
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Downtown Business Association

- Sustainable Ellsworth
 - Snowmobile groups
 - Horseback riding associations
 - Recreation
 - Schools
 - City Government
 - And more...
- Mike noted that his job is to be sure that people have the best bike to fit them and their needs and he just wants to get people out there to enjoy what Ellsworth has to offer.
 - It is important that all the groups who are working on this issue in some capacity come together so that we will not be redundant in our work. This will build momentum.
 - Having crosswalks in some areas that do not have them as well as local signage about accessible paths/trails would create more visibility for people.
 - Jef mentioned that a big overall list of **sidewalk** projects is being put together so the most **needed and** feasible projects can be worked on in an organized way.
 - People noted that a bridge over the Leonard Lake would bring many groups together and have a lot of public interest.
 - Working with the new dock making business in Ellsworth would be great for using local resources.
 - Students could get involved in service-learning projects to figure out the length and materials needed.
 - People would be able to have another loop to travel around that is close to the downtown area.
 - Complete Streets was mentioned and this will be presented in the HCPC presentation on May 28th at the VFW Hall.
 - Sustainable Ellsworth might be the next logical step to present to as it involves so many partners in the city.

- This group connects businesses, associations, organizations, government, and people together.
- It is a group that can help develop and promote the assets of Ellsworth in a proactive manner.
- Have Ellsworth on the Move and Bike/Ped come under the Sustainable Ellsworth umbrella as a committee so we will be working with other partners in the city.
- Website for Sustainable Ellsworth-<http://sustainableellsworth.org/> (This website is under construction and more is being added to it all the time).
 - How we can change the culture and behavior so people will not have to rely on their car so much?
 - We need to get support from all key stakeholders and citizens in Ellsworth.
 - We all have a lot of energy and we want to figure out way to move this work forward.

Next steps:

- Plan to gather groups together to discuss the feasibility of a bridge of **the Union River near** Leonard Lake.
- Develop a plan and meet with the roads committee to city fix the Main Street, School Street, and State Street loop.
- Present to Sustainable Ellsworth.