

Doylestown Community Bike/Hike Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2022, 8:00am
Doylestown Township Municipal Building
425 Wells Road

Present: Lynn Goldman, Chairman; Judy Hendrixson, Vice Chairman: Tom Kelso; Cynthia Jones; Tom Kelso; Chelle Clancy; Chris Stanford, Baker Engineers; Larry Gage; Rick James; Mary Pat Holewinski; Shawn Curran, Chalfont Borough; Captain Lance Carlin, Central Bucks Regional Police; Chief Clowser, New Britain Township Police Department; Karen Sweeney, Director of Parks & Recreation; Dean Logan, Doylestown Township Chief of Police; Dan Wood, Board of Supervisors Liaison and Stephanie Mason, Township Manager.

Visitor: Glenn Maxson

Minutes Approval – Approval of the minutes from **January 18, 2022**, on motion of Ms. Hendrixson seconded by Ms. Jones the minutes were unanimously approved.

Ms. Goldman did introductions and welcomed everybody to the meeting.

Review of Projects

Electric Bikes (E-Bikes)

Ms. Goldman introduced the topic and the question of how we handle E-Bikes, E-Scooters, skateboards. Do we do it with speed limits signage, age restrictions. She was glad that police departments were in attendance to share ideas on philosophy, talk about problems, procedures, different types of vehicles, roads and trails and the impacts of them.

Chief Logan, Doylestown Township Police Department, indicated that the most important thing is to have consistency between municipalities, especially ordinances, if not it could create a nightmare regarding enforcement. Enforcement mechanisms regardless of the type need to have a standard in order to be regulated as well.

Chief Logan commented on a draft ordinance that Mr. Kelso shared from Boise, Idaho that had some restrictive languages about storage and thinks of the like. Chief Logan indicated that abandoned vehicles taking position things that are unclaimed in disposal is difficult as space is limited for most of the police departments. The goal is to again be consistent.

Capt. Carlen, Central Bucks Regional Police Department, indicated that he agreed with Chief Logan and that Title 35 lays out how states enforce a speed limit and bicycle with e-assist versus full electric bikes, sets the speed limit at 20mph by law. He also indicated that enforcement can be difficult and that the Central Bucks Regional Police Department has no complaints regarding bicycles on sidewalks or trails but if the Bike/Hike Committee is proposing to do anything conformity is a must.

It was agreed that signage could be helpful, certainly etiquette could be helpful because Ms. Hendrixson indicated that seems to be the largest problem on the trails.

Chief Clowser, New Britain Township Police Department, agreed with Chief Logan and Capt. Carlen. He also indicated that some E-Bikes can go upwards of 30mph and even manually powered bikes can gain a significant speed especially on hills. He also suggested that the jurisdiction look at what is their unresolved issues and not try to create new rules for E-bikes. Use what's existing.

Mr. Kelso indicated the intent is not to place burden on the shoulders on the police departments however, he believes adding definitions and information signage in a draft ordinance might be helpful to the different municipalities, especially

now that trails can go from one municipality into another and that riders won't know when they have crossed from one municipality into another and the rules changed if it is not identified.

He also believes that educating cyclists and those using scooters or walking/running on the trails is important as well. The width of the trail can be anywhere from eight to twelve feet and so that can make an impact. He also indicated that in New York City outside of the park they've created things that can accommodate bikes and have begun to actually separate bikes and pedestrians.

Capt. Carlen questioned whether there was a problem that really needed fixing, if it doesn't exist there is nothing to change.

Chief Logan indicated that adopting regulations and posting informational signs may reduce liability, but it may not impact from a civil standpoint especially with limited resources.

Ms. Goldman indicated that this is just the beginning of the discussion. The Bike/Hike Committee felt was needed and certainly want to look at what is happening at state park level as well.

It was suggested that we need to try to figure out what the issue is and get our arms around it.

Ms. Hendrixson indicated that if there is a problem with the ordinance from a technical standpoint we need to come up with things but as devices such as E-Bikes evolve, education is important and consistency with rules and regulations are also important.

Karen Sweeney, Director of Parks & Recreation Doylestown Township, indicated she is a big advocate for the trail system and a bike advocate, she thanked the committee for the consideration of the impact on parks with the E-Bikes. She indicated that the Township does not allow skateboards in public property but there is a concern of getting people on bikes & E-Bikes to be aware of walkers, joggers and those walking dogs in the parks and that they can't disregard them.

Chief Logan indicated that all of the municipalities have Crime Watch and would be happy to post videos and information to inform the area residents about using trails safely through social media.

Mr. Maxson indicated that he is teaching a program to seniors at Delaware Valley University and was questioning the E-Bike and whether it is a motor vehicle and is it prohibited from being on local trails, as he saw a sign on trails in Doylestown Township that say no motorized vehicles and therefore he want to be able to tell his students the correct information.

There was discussion regarding making sure that federal and state laws align with local laws regarding bicycles and E-Bikes as well.

There was a discussion on the definition of motor vehicles and a ped-a-cycle.

Mr. Kelso indicated that it was great to get the issue on the table, he suggested that we take a breather and pare down the information that we have looking at appropriate vehicle code definitions, park definitions and ways to get a message out to the public.

Ms. Sweeney suggested one-minute videos may be away.

Changing signs might be another.

Ms. Goldman indicated that the committee would come up with something and certainly share with everyone going forward she believes that the conservation was admirable and she enjoyed the common sense approach being shared by everyone. Safety is important for the trails as well.

Capt. Carlen indicated that some of the Borough codes regarding bicycling on sidewalks and things are from 1959 although the Pennsylvania law changed in 1977. Definitely going back looking at state and local ordinance should be done.

Ms. Mason thanked all those who participated in today's discussion and the committee will look forward to more dialogue in the future.

Master Plan – Central Park

Ms. Hendrixson indicated that she, Mr. Wert and Mr. Kelso participated with the Township Parks & Recreation Department and consultant regarding the update of the Township's Park Master Plan. There are several parks that are being targeted and that the Bike/Hike Committee is being asked to review the locations and determine ways to access those and begin to put information together that could go into the parks master plan at this time.

Mr. Kelso suggest the Pine Run Reservoir on Old New Road in the opportunities that might exist to the Pine Run Community. There are specific parks that have been identified and we will need to focus on those first.

Ms. Hendrixson asked everyone to take a look and to come back to the next meeting.

Video and Mapping Project – Update –

Two of the videos are up and the rest are in editing.

New Britain Road Trail Project - Update

We have a grant and we are starting to look at the engineering and work that will need to be done associated with that.

Mr. Kelso indicated that we met with the staff to discuss technical and aspects of the trail, but he believes that taking back some of the cartway creating a curb and fencing, improving the intersection at Rolling Hill Blvd. and crossing over the bridge simply is the way to go.

Shady Retreat Safe Routes to School Trail

Nothing new to report. Additional funding has been applied for but we have not heard whether or not the grant has been approved.

Baker continues to finalize the engineering associated with the project.

Bucks County Trail – Update –

No Update

Pump Tract – Update

Closed for the winter.

There was discussion about curriculum in the schools and Ms. Goldman indicated that she is reaching out to Angela Duckworth.

Projects on Hold

Old New Road & Connections

Mr. Kelso suggested changing that to Bristol and hopefully being able to work with Doylestown Walk and Warrington Township to eventually continue that trail along Bristol Road to Folly Road and access Central Bucks South and the other way toward the parkway.

Dark Hollow

Mr. Stanford indicated that scope has changed and they are working with the County revisit the length of the trail.

Turk Road Area Trail Feasibility

Hoping that the County is able to put that out for bid later this year.

Ms. Goldman indicated that the other section of Turk being able to go from Bomaca to Pebble Woods Road might be helpful.

Adjournment - Being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:29am. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 8:00am at the Doylestown Township Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stephanie J. Mason
Township Manager