

PASTURELAND PARKWAY MEETING MINUTES

Accommodation of bikes and pedestrians

May 26, 2005, 5:30 – 6:30 pm

Wings Ole, 1125 University Ave

Morgantown, WV

Present were: Brian Talbott, Frank Cox, Frances Van Scoy, Jonathan Rosenbaum, Councilman Don Spencer, Mike Breiding, Jim Rye, Rob Pack, MPO director Chet Parsons, WV DOT Bike Coordinator Bill Robinson, Dan Hobbs, Beth Krause, Ralph Larue, Jan Reger-Nash, Bill Reger-Nash.

Overview: An overview of the Pastureland Parkway was presented by Chet Parsons, director of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) of the greater Morgantown Region.

Growth: The Morgantown region is growing at an astronomical rate. As a result, there is increased commuting from the Cheat Lake area to WVU Health Sciences, Evansdale, NIOSH, Mylan, and the other employers in the area. If adequate pedestrian bicycle accommodation is not included in this Pastureland Parkway construction project, this opportunity will be lost forever.

Concerns were raised that no safe corridor presently exists for bicyclist or pedestrians to move from the Hampton Center (Stewartstown Road and 705) to the juncture of 119 and 857, near Easton Hill School.

The **proposed accommodation** for cyclist is having cyclist on the eight-foot shoulders of the four-lane highway is unacceptable. The danger of being immediately adjacent to traffic moving at 50-70 miles per hour is perceived as too great. In addition, historically these shoulders become laden with cinders, glass, and other debris which are likely to cause bike tire punctures and flats.

Preferred Alternative: One single 8 to 10 foot pathway, adjacent to but separate from the four lane Parkway, is the preferred alternative accommodation. This transportation resource would spawn increased non-motorized commuting, thus decreasing air pollution and traffic congestion, as well as increased energy efficiency.

Use: If the 8-10' pathway were established, it would be used by commuters as well families for recreation. There is more and more housing being established in this area, which would lead to increased use for commuting and recreation. In addition, this pathway would provide another valuable opportunity for physical activity, and accordingly, an important contribution towards combating the obesity epidemic in our State.

Grade: The issue of the steep grade of the terrain was raised. Cyclist indicated that the new gearing technology of bicycles is such that 24 and 27 speeds are commonplace. The steep grade is not a substantial barrier as formerly. In addition, many walkers seem to prefer a hilly terrain (as exemplified by the popularity of walking at Cooper Rock State Forest as well as Oglebay Park in Wheeling). The scientific literature report that people are more likely to walk in hilly compared to flat areas.

Cost Benefit: The AASHTO guide indicates that Bike Pedestrian Accommodation is not to exceed 10% of the total project cost, which is currently projected at somewhere between \$18,000,000 and \$25,000,000.

Master Plan: A comprehensive master plan for bike/pedestrian accommodation needs to be developed. Anyone interested in being part of the development of this master plan should contact Rob Pack (rpac@hsc.wvu.edu), who will work with Bill Reger-Nash in presenting this to the Greater Morgantown MPO.

Important upcoming Dates:

1. **MPO Citizen Advisory Meeting on June 21 at 1:30 pm, Morgantown Airport, 2nd Floor Conference Room.**
2. **Public hearing on the Pastureland Parkway in late July/Early August**

Minutes submitted by Bill Reger-Nash