

League of American Bicyclists....Bicycle Friendly Community
Application Meeting..... Wednesday, January 6, 2010

Present:

- Teresa Lewis, Tuscaloosa Economic Development
- Heather Hill, Tuscaloosa Planning and Safe Routes to School
- Margaret Purcell & Dan Wolf, University of Alabama Financial Affairs
- Joe Robinson, Tuscaloosa City Engineer
- Pixie Hicks, President, Druid City Bicycle Club
- Druid City Bicycle Club & BFC Committee Members: Jerome Hathcock, Joy Burnham, Gina Simpson, Shari Augins, Lauri Bonnici, Turnley Smith, James Ramsey, Brian Darr, and Allison Milham

Teresa Lewis updated the group on the City RailTrails project. City Attorney, Jimbo Woodson and Teresa are working with the Railroads to confirm ownership. The University has recently acquired easements to some of the railbed under consideration. This includes a tract that will be bordered by a new university parking lot. Discussion included the idea that the University may provide some public parking spaces for individuals wishing to access the Trail.

Teresa talked about the Alabama Scenic Byway, a 26-mile loop which borders the Tuscaloosa Riverwalk and the Northport Levee Trail. Development plans include the in-progress amphitheatre, parks, pedestrian and bicycle trails.

Heather Hill heads up the Safe Routes to School Program which serves 3 Tuscaloosa area schools: Central Primary, MLK Jr. ES, and Westlawn MS. She currently has a couple of grant applications in review for funding for this program.

Laurie Bonnici, who is filling in the "Education" portion of the application will look into upcoming classes offered by LAB in which she can become an official LAB Instructor for bicyclists in the Tuscaloosa area.

Sidewalks will begin construction from 13th St. to Skyland Blvd along McFarland Blvd.....hopefully these will be a shared-use path for both pedestrians and cyclists.

Allison Milham, U of A student, has developed the Facebook page "I bike Tuscaloosa." Students and faculty share safe routes in Tuscaloosa for the purpose of developing a safe bike routes map. The group is raising money for printing with sales of I bike Tuscaloosa t-shirts they print themselves.

LAB is developing a pilot program in which they will invite 4-5 universities as beta institutions as a prelude to a new program to be introduced in 2011: Bicycle Friendly Universities and Colleges. They have expressed interest in the University of Alabama as a possible pilot. Margaret Purcell will follow up with a call to Jeff Peel with LAB to discuss details.

Allison brought up the problem with crossing 15th St. at Hackberry. Shari is developing a poster with contact info for UA campus locations, encouraging students and staff to contact Mayor Maddox, Harrison Taylor, and Joe Robinson about the effect it has on their commute.

Pixie Hicks and Bill Herz have looked into the #50 ranking that Alabama received in '09 concerning the state's progress in making itself bicycle friendly. Follow up will be pursued to make sure the LAB is up to date on Alabama's efforts in the past year.

All of the above projects and many more in the areas of Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation & Planning will make Tuscaloosa's chance at becoming a Bicycle Friendly Community very possible.

The next step is to make the proposal to the Projects Committee next Tuesday, January 12th. The group feels very optimistic this will be accepted, then taken to the Pre-Council Meeting on Tuesday, January 19th, followed by the Council Meeting the same evening. At that time, we expect Mayor Maddox and the City Council to decide to file the application for the City. This action may result in the creation of a bicycling task force made up of members from various key stakeholder groups.

In the meantime, BFC Committee members will continue to fill out the online application with the goal of completing by January 20th. This will give ample time for review and editing before the submission deadline of February 19th.