



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS: MARIN COUNTY



Transportation Authority of Marin
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Ross Valley Task Force Meeting Notes January 20, 2012

Present (20)

Wendi Kallins – Program Director for Safe Routes to School; Laura Kelly – Volunteer Liaison for Safe Routes to School; Katie Rice – Marin County Supervisor; Laurie O’Hara – Aide to Supervisor Katie Rice; Bret Joyner – Director of Maintenance and Operations for Ross Valley School District; Sean Condry – Public Works Director, San Anselmo; Gerhard Epke – Assistant Public Works Director, San Anselmo; John Reed – Fairfax Town Council; Ofelia Guner – Parisi and Associates; Bob Sutherland – Fairfax Police Department; Robert French – San Anselmo Police Department; Eric Hohmeister – California Highway Patrol; Jason Richardson – Manor School Principal; Ted Fehlhaber and Helen Badger – Wade Thomas Team Leaders; Jeanne Carlson – Manor Team Leader; Karl Vavrek – Cascade Canyon Team Leader; Bridget Clark – Brookside Lower Team Leader; Debra Merten – Brookside Upper Team Leader; Ofelia Guner – Parisi Associates.

Note: Lori Lopin, San Anselmo Town Council, is our new representative for Safe Routes to Schools for 2012. She was unfortunately in Sacramento today and could not attend today’s meeting.

Attachments to Meeting Notes:

- A. School Survey Results
- B. Safe Routes to Schools’ Report Card

Embedding Safe Routes to Schools as part of the RV School District Policy

Wendi distributed a copy of the newly created Mill Valley School District guidelines which establishes Safe Routes to Schools programs as official policy and encourages all Mill Valley schools to embrace the Safe Routes to Schools program. Stephanie Moulton-Peters, Mill Valley Town Council member and MV SR2S Task Force chair, assisted School Board member Raoul Wertz in developing and getting the guidelines incorporated into policy. Nothing so comprehensive has ever been passed by a

school district. Wendi shared that she would like to make Ross Valley the 2nd school district to adopt the guidelines.

Katie asked if adopting the policy changes anything. Wendi said the policy doesn't change anything, but it keeps things from being changed and validates the program. It was concluded that the Task Force would like to embrace the policy. Bret will talk with the District Superintendent to seek approval, and then proceed from there. He said that protocol is important in getting this done.

Student Travel Surveys Results

Wendi distributed a copy of the results from the classroom travel surveys that were conducted in October 2011 for all schools that participate in the Safe Routes to Schools program. Great job everyone! A copy of the student travel survey results are attached to these notes, and more detailed surveys can also be obtained at http://www.saferoutestoschools.org/ross_valley.html#surveys

Safe Routes to Schools' Report Card

As a way to measure progress and set goals, a report card has been designed by Safe Routes to Schools and to be provided to the school at the end of the academic school year. Each school will be given a green level by Safe Routes to Schools based on the schools percentage of green trips. The report card will reveal ways to boost your school's standing. A more detailed discussion about the new report card will take place at the countywide Team Leader luncheon on February 16th in San Rafael.

Suggested Biking Areas to Teach Children Safe Riding

Team Leader Ted Fehlhaber of Wade Thomas School created a list of eight suggested public areas for parents to practice riding with their children to develop safe biking skills.

This is a list of our favorite out of traffic or off street rides. Start short with lots of stops, snacks and attractions. Work on biking skills. Nothing is better than repetition. Many of these involve driving to the start...a compromise for training the young ones.

Samuel P. Taylor- Cross Marin Trail

Park at the Trestle over SFD. Walk up to the trestle and ride 2.5 miles (total 5) to Covered Bridge and back. Shady. Bonus: Start at Inkwells. Park at the Salmon view area, open in winter.
(Mountain or Road)

Golden Gate Park, SF

Sunday road closure- spring, summer, fall. Park outside the park or west of Park Presidio. Ride to Academy of Science, DeYoung, Japanese Tea Garden,

Conservatory of Flowers, or Children's Playground. Loops-2-5 miles.
(Mountain or Road)

Crissy Field, SF

Exploratorium to Fort Point. Warming Hut for snacks. Ft. Point is free, has a museum and lots of real cannons. 2.5 miles (total 5)
(Mountain or Road)

The Tunnel

Park near Office Depot on Anderson in San Rafael. Cross the street. Ride the path thru the SMART train tunnel. 1.5 mile one way. Starbucks at the Landing.
(Mountain or Road)

Corte Madera Creek

Ross Post Office to Larkspur Ferry and back. Starbucks at the Landing. 3.5 miles (total 7)
(Mountain or Road)

Rush Creek Open Space, Novato

101 North. Exit San Marin/Atherton. Right turn. Go 300 feet, left turn to Gness Field, park just past Park n' Ride. Almost flat dirt fire roads narrowing to near single track. Great birds and views. 3 miles (total 6)
(Mountain)

Phoenix Lake-Grilly's/Scoop

The classic: Phoenix, 5 Corners, Deer Park. Lunch at Grilly's. 5 miles one way. And home on streets...good intro to dirt and back streets riding. Mud and puddles a plus in a normal winter.
(Mountain)

The second phase is learning to ride the bike safely on any street, and the rules of the road. The Riding with Youth class was also mentioned as a class that is offered by Safe Routes to Schools for parents and students to learn together by a certified instructor. Parents need reminders on how to bike safety too. Katie asked if the class has been advertised through the San Anselmo Rec department as a way to reach a broader base. Wendi said that she has tried offering classes through the Rec department without much success.

Eric mentioned that the California Highway Patrol has five bicycle officers and have conducted bicycle training. The bikers can be requested to support student training events.

White Hill School Construction Update

Bret provided an update on the major construction at White Hill Middle School, which will begin this summer. To accommodate increase enrollment, 1,600 square

feet of old building will come down, and construction of 35,000 new square feet will be built which includes a new gymnasium. Sixteen portable classrooms will be installed by mid-August 2012. Traffic patterns will be heavily impacted during the construction time period, which is 14 months, ending September 2013.

A White Hill safety committee met for the first time on January 11th to discuss traffic disruption issues and recommend strategies to assist the community in coping with the anticipated major construction. The next meeting is scheduled for February 1st to further discuss traffic impact. Safety on Glen Drive continues to be the primary focus, and adding more signage and recommending pathways. A pathway along the side of the field that would lead to SFD at Shemran is being explored. Another possible solution is to have the Marin Transit buses drop off on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, and not go all the way to White Hill via Glen Drive. This is trickier to implement after school, when packs of students would need to be supervised to walk directly and safely to get to the buses waiting for students on Sir Francis Drake.

Bridget asked if they would make a larger blacktop area. Bret said yes, near Gomez field, but without disrupting soccer and baseball areas.

Wendi mentioned that there is a new crossing guard policy allows for a request for a mid-year application to be submitted if new conditions arise at a school. The site would need to be evaluated by TAM. New construction often presents challenging traffic issues and sometimes the need for additional supervision. The school must direct the request to TAM.

Fairfax Bike Spine

John talked about the Fairfax Bike Spine, which connects neighborhoods with safe routes to ride to school. The problem is that some parents do not always choose the safest route to school, or in some cases a bad route is randomly selected by the parent. Bright color markings will be installed on the pavement to clearly make the Fairfax Bike Spine routes. Grant funding has been approved. The highly visible marking were modeled after a Portland, Oregon program. The markings help to increase awareness for kids and drivers that a route is present. The map of the spine is in the preliminary design stages. Completion is expected next fall.

Elementary School Updates

150 green trips were tallied at the most recent Walk and Roll day at Brookside Upper. Bridget showed a mini-flyer campaign sample that was distributed on parked car windshields as a friendly reminder that reads: "Kids are near ... keep it clear." Bridget is working on educating parents about critical times to keep out of the bike lanes, and to be extra careful about parents being cautious when opening their car doors after parking. A car door being opened recently hit a student biker.

Bridget mentioned that the traffic issues on Rutherford continue to be a problem. Sean said that he did request police presence at Rutherford and Drake near the Mt. Vision eye care building. It's tough to take a left hand turn on Butterfield in the triangle area when coming from Fairfax. That's why drivers' turn left earlier on Rutherford and then bridge over to Butterfield via Valley Road.

Deb shared that new parking bumpers were installed at Brookside Lower, and were well received by the community. People are now going around the parking spots.

Jeanie mentioned that the sidewalk near the church is still not completed near Manor School. She also said that drivers are surpassing the 25 mph speed limit on Sir Francis Drake where the crossing guard is stationed prior to turning right on at the traffic light. Fairfax police is very aware of the speeding issue patterns, and when they are present near the crossing guard on SFD, drivers do slow down.

Katie mentioned that she has an upcoming meeting with San Domenico and will try to recruit a parent team leader to support the Safe Routes to Schools program.

San Anselmo Police Department Merging with Twin Cities

A few more police officers will be available to assist when needed now that the San Anselmo Police Department has announced it is sharing services with the Twin Cities police department. The two departments will share dispatches and some patrol officers.

San Anselmo Public Works Update

Five locations were approved for the Caltrans infrastructure upgrades that include new sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic signal improvements, ADA compliant curb ramps, safety barriers, and traffic calming measures. The projects, which are listed below, are in the conceptual design and review phase. Implementation is scheduled to take place during the summer of 2013. Sean said that there is an upcoming important meeting open to the public about the projects on Tuesday, February 7, 2012. It would be helpful if the school district could help spread the word about the upcoming meeting.

1. Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Proposed Pedestrian Safety Barrier: Install pedestrian safety barrier along southwest side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from Butterfield Road to Broadmoor Avenue.
2. Neighborhood of Lower Brookside Elementary School: Install 1,450 feet of new sidewalk, seven ADA- compliant curb ramps and restripe four crosswalks along Arroyo Avenue, The Alameda, Berkeley Avenue, and Broadmoor Avenue. Install a raised intersection to calm traffic at Berkeley Avenue and the Alameda.
3. Sir Francis Drake Blvd and Tamal Ave/San Francisco Blvd: Reconfigure existing

four-way traffic signal to split phase timing, re-stripe three crosswalks across Sir Francis Drake Blvd, Tamal Ave, and San Francisco Blvd, and construct three ADA-compliant curb ramps at the new crosswalks.

4. San Francisco Blvd. Neighborhood Route to School: Install 150 feet of new sidewalk, six ADA-compliant curb ramps, and restripe ten crosswalks along Santa Cruz Avenue, Veterans Place, and Los Angeles Boulevard.

5. Barber Ave. Route to Wade Thomas Elementary School: Install 100 feet of new sidewalk, four ADA compliant curb ramps, and restripe one crosswalk along Barber Avenue. Install raised intersection to calm traffic at Barber Avenue and Prospect Avenue.

Neighborhood Maps and Routes for the Ross Valley School District

Ofelia will be working in 2012 to develop neighborhood maps for each school with suggested routes for parents. She will be working on recommended walking maps for all schools in the county. Larkspur is the first town she has worked with, and Brookside Schools are next. The maps will show crossing guards, traffic signals, and areas where kids should take caution. The maps are the first step in establishing neighborhood SchoolPools. It was concluded that the next step would be for Ofelia to meet with Wendi and the Brookside team leaders.

Marin Transit Buses: Parking Concerns on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard

Karl expressed concern that there is a safety issue with the Marin Transit buses that park along the Sir Francis Drake curbside in anticipation of White Hill 3:15 p.m. student release from school. The concern is that the buses obscure the vision of Cascade Canyon walkers and bikers. Karl said that he talked with the individual drivers about being cautious, however, drivers change rotation every few months. Karl said he has had no luck in getting through on the phone at Marin Transit to talk with someone about this concern. Katie offered to contact to Marin Transit about this safety issue. It's a red curb so the buses are not allowed to wait in the zone. Karl and John will tackle the issue from a town standpoint and propose additional signage and flashing lights.

Residential construction on Grove Lane in San Anselmo

9 Grove Lane in San Anselmo is undergoing major construction renovation, including a new fence. Residents are inquiring if the new fence will obstruct vision for walkers/bikers to school. The Task Force concluded that the area is not a main route to school, and thus, not our business.

Our next meeting is scheduled for April 27, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. in Room #2 at the Ross Valley School District Office.

