

Advocacy Committee Meeting Minutes 1/31/2011

GEARs Advocacy Committee Meeting Minutes
31 January 2011, 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Coquille Room, Erb Memorial Union

Present: Eric Selker, Richard Hughes, Heidi Beierle, Anya Dobrowolski, Alex Baldino, Duncan Rhodes, Patrick Deegan, Kent Fleming, Allen Hancock, Shane Rhodes, Price Armstrong

The purpose of this meeting was to get everyone up to speed on active advocacy efforts. For those not yet involved, we looked at how they might help and what specific actions should be taken next.

Local advocacy

We discussed:

- Transportation Enhancements projects in Eugene and Willamalane,
- BPAC's work on better managing construction signs to be more bicyclist friendly
- GEARs' work on Eugene's Leaf Removal Program
- The Eugene Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
 - There is an open house with public comment on the Bike/Ped Master Plan on February 28 at the Eugene Library, 5:30 – 7:30 (confirm with Shane MacRhodes). GEARs should be there to comment.
 - The question was raised whether Springfield has a similar plan – Price is following up.
 - There was a discussion about the Bike/Ped Master Plan and its relation to the other plans the city uses – in short, it feeds into the Transportation System Plan.
 - We will send out a reminder about this event.
- Allen Hancock brought up the fact that in west Eugene, neighborhood associations had blocked the striping of bike lanes because they would take up on-street parking. He suggested that GEARs take up as an official position that we want the city to use the streets for

people, not for storage.

- Paul Adkins emailed to suggest that we meet one-on-one with City Councilors to see what their commitment to bike/ped facilities and programs is. This unfortunately did not make it onto the agenda. Price or Paul will follow up with members on that.

State advocacy

We discussed:

- Proposed bills related to bicycling, including
 - A study to look at the impacts of statewide bike licensing (HB 2331)
 - A law prohibiting carrying children under 6 years old on a bike or in a cart (HB 2228)
 - A law prohibiting the use of earphones while riding a bike (HB 2602)
 - A bill that would increase funding of multimodal infrastructure by \$50 million over the next two years through lottery bonds (HB 2626)
 - A bill that would increase the fine for selling stolen bikes (HB 2824)
- Richard Hughes mentioned that he had been contacted regarding a bike helmet bill, though didn't have any more information than that.
- Several people mentioned that they planned to attend the Active Transportation Summit in Salem (March 29-30), where advocates statewide will network and lobby state legislators some key bike/ped issues. More coordination will take place as the Summit approaches.
- Shane MacRhodes discussed the Safe Routes to School Retreat/ Training going on in Bend (June 16 – 18), where there may be League Cycling Instructor certification courses and other trainings. More information will be forthcoming.

Federal advocacy

We discussed:

- The main issue is the Transportation Bill that may or may not be passed during this session of congress. Either way, the main thrust of national advocacy is to defend Transportation Enhancements and

Safe Routes to School, the main vehicles of federal bike/ped infrastructure and education funding.

- The National Bike Summit is taking place March 8 – 10. Price has been coordinating with staff at the Bicycle Transportation Alliance and the League of American Bicyclists to create a unified message to congress.
 - A big request is to present personal stories that people have about the importance of bike/ped infrastructure and programs in their lives. Some examples could be, “I was overweight and had diabetes but then started biking to work; I lost 40 pounds and don’t have to take insulin anymore.” The more “Mom and apple pie”, the better.

Next Steps

- Price will coordinate with those who attended the meeting to follow up and see how they might best get involved with the committee.
 - This could include things like following specific pieces of legislation and recommending that GEARs take an official position on it.
- The next meeting was tentatively set for the end of February/ beginning of March, pending what timeline for the advocacy efforts develops.
- One project that could be useful, but did not make it on the agenda, is to call up bike-related businesses in town and ask how many employees they have and what their net revenue is. From that, we can aggregate it and say, “Bicycling sustains X jobs and X dollars in the local economy.” Price will follow up on that.
- A Google group and email list will need to be established for the group. Price will follow up on that.