

Canterbury Active Transport Forum

Meeting minutes

Tuesday 30th October 2007

Facilitators: Michael Ferigo, Christchurch City Council
Rose Dovey, Environment Canterbury
Minute Taker: Sophie Toutain, Environment Canterbury

Present: Refer to attached attendance list.

Apologies: Refer to attached attendance

1. Minutes of last meeting: accepted

2. Matter arising:

- Bike racks on buses: trial will start in December. Rose tried unsuccessfully to get a presenter to come to the Forum to talk about it.
- Footpath maintenance: Andrew Macbeth contacted David Cope from LTNZ and will get back to us.

3. Bob Chauncey – Creating walk and cycle friendly communities

Bob Chauncey works for the U. S. National Center for Bicycling & Walking and part of his job is to organise workshops and make presentations to elected members and the community. His background is in sociology. He gave us a presentation on how to encourage an active community:

- Footpaths are well maintained
- Landscape is attractive
- Buffer between pedestrians and vehicle traffic (preferably trees)
- Cross-walks are abundant and visible
- Benches and street furniture
- Appropriate lighting (especially at night)
- Good signage (maps, signs, historical data)
- Gateways (encourage people to explore)
- Parks
- Attractive bus system
- Public restrooms
- Good maintenance
- Sociability (the 'front-porch' idea: sit outside, talk to passers-by)
- Attractive parking garage (cars are hidden), safe, well-lit, pleasant with shops on the ground floor.
- Re-use old buildings (instead of pulling them down), turn them into shops, cafes, etc.
- Take care of ALL people (old, disabled, etc.): Provide slopes for wheelchairs, rumbled surface for blinds, etc.
- NO wide streets (vehicles tend to go faster), reduce and include cycle lanes (with green buffer)
- Take out gradual bends and make them more abrupt (to slow down traffic), take corners out, make more protected space for pedestrians, cyclists (traffic islands)
- Make sure emergency access is still possible (when reducing the width of street, etc.)
- Get the buy-in from the police, ambulance services, etc. (they are also interested in having fewer crashes).
- Encourage street art, murals
- Involve kids
- Think about 'rails with trails'.

This was followed by questions and discussions. The main topics were:

- Dangerous pedestrian crossings: instead of removing them, improve them! Reinforce safety, reduce speed limit, reduce number of lanes. We're sending the wrong message if we say 'walking and cycling is dangerous', instead we should teach motorists to respect pedestrians.
- Pedestrians/cyclists = good public health sense + good environmental sense + good economic sense.
- Supporting cycling and walking as a more social and environmentally friendly way to move around

4. Bob Chauncey – Traffic Justice Initiative (see attached presentation)

Bob showed us, through a press article and two TV news items how views can be biased when it comes to the responsibility of a motorist (as opposed to a cyclist in the press article and 2 pedestrians in the TV coverage) in a traffic crash. Traffic justice should be: asking ourselves the question 'why people are killed by motorists?' and 'How do we increase pedestrian/cyclist security'. A few ideas to achieve greater security were discussed:

- Slow down traffic,
- Mix it with other means of transport (Germany)
- Vision zero (1 traffic crash is one too many – Sweden)
- Use the OSH low-tolerance approach (work-related accidents) and apply it to traffic accidents
- Look at what is being done in other countries
- Introduce your organisation to the media so that you get to comment on crashes and give a pro-pedestrian/cyclist version of the story
- Traffic cameras: use the revenue from the fines to fund a specific traffic issue.

5. Smorgasbord of Bob's experience

Examples of successful experience in creating an active community:

- After a workshop in Kentucky led by Bob, the Mayor decided to turn his city into a bike-friendly community and asked Bob for support. A two-day fair was organised with 200 people invited as the result of which a list of things to do was drafted. 6 months later the measures were implemented and the city won an award. The Mayor decided to go further and work on creating a 'pedestrian-friendly' community.
- Bob explained how a North Carolina activist managed to create a cycling network after 30 years of hard work.

This was followed by questions and comments from the floor. Interesting comments were made on:

- Christchurch City seen as a cycling city – how to restore our civic identity?
- Selwyn district: 'not allowed to promote cycling because roads are too dangerous' – Bob's comments: reverse the situation, make road safe for cyclists
- Declining numbers of cyclists shouldn't be a cause for inaction, on the other way
- Get kids active (fight obesity/health problems)
- What is the goal of this forum? When the TOR were drawn up, it was more networking and sharing info, rather than a group with 'a business plan'. Bob suggested that maybe it was now time to involve the community. He also asked the group how they would propose to work together to influence the decision-makers to promote active transport?

6. Next meeting

Date: 19 February 2008

Time: 1pm- 3.30pm (12pm -1pm lunch)

Venue: Environment Canterbury Waiau Theatre