



Meeting: Steering Committee Meeting # 1
May 31, 2006
11:00 AM – 1:30 PM
City Hall Annex

Attendees:

Ray Allen, Albemarle City Manager
Debbie Bennett, Stanly County Health Department
Elbert Branch, School Resource Officer
Bill Clark, URS Corporation
John Cock, The Lawrence Group
Lindsey Dunevant, Albemarle Parks and Recreation
David Eddy, Albemarle Parks and Recreation Department
John Fields, Stanly County Family YMCA
Rachel Hough, Public Housing
Mike Lambert, Albemarle Public Works
Rick Laton, Layton's Body Shop
Mary Meletioui, ITRE / NCDOT
Bob Sasser, Albemarle Planning and Community Development
Brett Wallace, URS Corporation

The meeting began with Lindsey introducing himself and allowing each member of the Committee to introduce themselves. Mary then took some time to discuss the NCDOT bicycle / pedestrian planning grant program and how the City of Albemarle could best utilize this opportunity for the development of a Pedestrian Plan. She explained that enhancement applications will not be accepted again until 2008, but that the City could use Independent Project Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funds. Projects are most likely to get funded in areas that haven't received much funding before. Identify segments of roadway improvements in TIP that would accommodate bike/ped facilities. Albemarle can request bike/ped improvements with a 20% match. She emphasized that the plan should look at the long-range comprehensive transportation plan, and incorporates pedestrian accommodations and policies into it. She asked about transit plans for Albemarle, and none were known to be in the works. She commented on how a transit system can increase the effectiveness of a pedestrian system, and Bill Clark commented how a pedestrian system can increase the effectiveness of a transit system.

There is also money available for pedestrian projects close to elementary and middle schools through the *Safe Routes to School* program. Schools may also request a day-long workshop with school staff, community members, and other key stakeholders. An opportunity exists for participants to apply for project funds after the workshop. Ray Allen commented that the new middle school in town has no



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sidewalks and requires the kids to be shuttled by parents. Mary also discussed the potential for a *Fit Communities* program to be implemented for Albemarle as well to deal with the health issues.

There is a Community Needs Assessment Survey to be conducted in Stanly County next year. This study will be led by the Health Department. It would be good to include pedestrian-related questions on the survey. The *Active Living by Design* website may have such questions as examples.

Mary concluded her comments by reminding the Committee that there is an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design workshop sponsored by NCDOT and NC State on June 26 and 27. Registration is \$250.

Brett Wallace then discussed the purpose of this plan, its scope, and our anticipated schedule. He described how we will get input from the City of Albemarle, this steering committee, and from the citizens to determine the needs of the community. He emphasized that we will write a detailed plan that will include a prioritization and an implementation strategy, but it will be up to the City of Albemarle and its citizens to see that the plan is implemented.

After lunch, Bill pointed out the printed map to the committee and asked to hear specific issues, concerns, or ideas that could help defined areas of emphasis for this plan. A supplemental sheet was included in their materials with the map to show examples of some types of improvements. Comments included the following:

- Greenways are being actively pursued now in Albemarle along some abandoned rail lines. The concepts for greenways in Albemarle emphasize connections to parks, schools, public spaces, and commercial areas.
- Need connection from Fairway Street to middle school.
- Papa John's / Wal-Mart area – residential area on north side of NC 24/27, commercial area on south side. (Brett and Bill actually watched pedestrians dash across this street after this meeting). Need pedestrian refuge islands, look at a midblock crossing between Papa John's Pizza and convenience store.
- Old core of the city has sidewalks, but there are very few sidewalks outside of the core.
- Need connection from the hospital to YMCA; applied for funds in the past, but was denied.
- ADDC plan mentioned connection from hospital to Montgomery Park.
- As part of discussion on connectivity, Mary mentioned signs in Matthews on stubbed (dead end) roads that say “future connection to...”
- Mary mentioned the need to ensure that greenways and sidewalks are connected to each other.
- Stanly Commons near hospital is big walking area (it is a former shopping center, now government services center). Stanly Commons is between 1st and 2nd Street.
- It would be good to have a “public service” layer on the map.
- Most of Albemarle is connected well north to south, but needs more east-west connections.



- An ordinance should be developed to encourage parking lots to develop walkways into the property from the fronting arterial.
- US 52 at Little League ball park needs a safe crossing.
- In discussion about the school environment for potential *Safe Routes to School* programs, it was noted that Albemarle has 3 elementary schools, 1 middle school.
- Walk to School Day has been done at 2 schools.

At that point, Bill asked that the members of the committee keep thinking about new projects or concerns that exist in the community that could be incorporated into the pedestrian plan. The planning team can be contacted throughout the process with additional comments.

Example goals from other cities' pedestrian plans were shown to the group and Bill asked for suggestions on and how we might want to incorporate these goals into Albemarle's plan or develop new goals.

- The themes of the discussion centered on connectivity, the ability to move around without cars, and recreational and health aspects of greenway corridors.
- Albemarle is currently seeking to revise their land-use ordinance and add a streetscaping element. Information from the pedestrian plan could be beneficial to the land use plan update.
- It was mentioned that we should consider school access as a specific goal.
- Lindsey mentioned the importance of managing the existing inventory of sidewalks – currently used for maintenance.
- Youth programs, education awareness, and enforcement were mentioned.
- A goal to make certain that the plan is implemented was recommended.
- Mary suggested a goal related to “soft programs”

The ideas presented at this meeting will be incorporated into a draft goal list, which the committee can edit at our next meeting.

The next steps in the planning process are for the planning team to look at the existing conditions and compile that information so that this steering committee and the citizens of Albemarle can evaluate and comment on it. Another committee meeting will be held in August to begin to look more closely at how the plan will take shape and to prepare for the public forum.

The meeting ended at approximately 1:30 PM.



Albemarle Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan

Meeting: Steering Committee Meeting # 2
 August 31, 2006
 11:00 AM – 1:30 PM
 City Hall Annex

Attendees:

Peter Ascutto, Uwharrie Running Club
Ray Allen, Albemarle City Manager
Elbert Branch, School Resource Officer
Bill Clark, URS Corporation
Lindsey Dunevant, Albemarle Parks and Recreation
David Eddy, Albemarle Parks and Recreation Department
John Fields, Stanly County Family YMCA
Margaret Rudisill, Stanley Regional Medical Center
Bob Sasser, Albemarle Planning and Community Development

After introductions, Bill showed the committee the basic concept that URS and the City of Albemarle were considering for this plan. Included in with projects such as sidewalks, shared-use paths, safe crossings, and striped pedestrian shoulders are some major land use recommendations. Six regions of the City, known as Pedestrian Oriented Development Districts, are established in this plan that define parts of Albemarle where pedestrian traffic will be concentrated. This concentration is not possible alone with the infrastructure, but must include land use decisions such as mixed-use and higher density development, small building setbacks, and roadways designed with the safety and comfort of pedestrians in mind. Existing land-use policies that encourage large surface parking lots, far setbacks, cul-de-sacs, wide multi-lane roadways, sprawl, and a general lack of connectivity will be reviewed for revision in this plan. A map showing the conceptual pedestrian network was then reviewed with the committee showing the existing conditions along with proposed locations of sidewalks, shared-use paths, striped shoulders, and pedestrian districts. At this time, the Albemarle Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee agreed on this concept for the Pedestrian Plan and the proposed project locations with the understanding that the public's upcoming comments could further revise these proposals.

The next item on the agenda was the adoption of the goals for the plan. The previous meeting defined seven goals for this plan, and these goals were presented to the committee. Some minor modifications were suggested that add some language on the health and fitness benefits of the plan, resulting in the agreement of the goals.



The next item on the agenda was to discuss the public survey. A draft survey was presented that's primary purpose is to determine the need for this plan by discovering if there are people in Albemarle who currently walk, and to determine where they walk regularly for either recreation or transportation. This survey will also ask if there are any barriers that currently keep residents from walking, and if the public will support initiatives that encourage walking. These survey questions and format were generally accepted by the committee, with recommendations to specifically mention specific parks, schools, and the YMCA as places to walk.

With the survey ready to be distributed, the next step is to have this done to a wide audience across Albemarle. The most cost effective method that will reach the most people will be to include it in the City's water bill. Bill mentioned that including this survey in the next available water bill (October) will also serve as a way to advertise for the next public meeting. A public meeting held in November could have a draft plan to this committee by the end of the year. The committee agreed that they would like to see a draft plan by this time, but understood that it might not be possible to distribute this survey until the December mail out. In this case, the survey will act to advertise a public meeting in January.

Two dates were then proposed for the first public meeting. These two dates were Monday the 25th at 7:00 PM or Tuesday October 3rd at 7:00 PM. The committee was strongly encouraged to be there if they could, and Bill promised to send out an email for everyone on the committee for their opinion on the better of the two dates (*Monday the 25th was later determined to be preferred*).

At this time, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Albemarle Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee will take place before the second Public Meeting. This date would be in November or in January, depending on the survey distribution.

The meeting ended at approximately 1:30 PM.



Albemarle Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan

Meeting: Steering Committee Meeting # 3
January 16, 2007
12:00 PM – 1:15 PM
City Hall Annex

Attendees:

Ray Allen, Albemarle City Manager
Debbie Bennett, Stanly County Health Department
Bill Clark, URS Corporation
Lindsey Dunevant, Albemarle Parks and Recreation
David Eddy, Albemarle Parks and Recreation Department
Michael E. Lambert, Albemarle Public Works
Bob Sasser, Albemarle Planning and Com. Development
Laura Wheeler, Albemarle Greenway Commission
Toby Thorpe, Albemarle Parks and Recreation
Nina Godwin, Albemarle Public Works

Absent:

Ernie Borders
Peter Ascutto
Elbert Branch
John Fields
Rachael Hough
Rick Laton
Mary Meletioui
Margaret Rudisill

Mike Lambert began the meeting by introducing himself as the new project manager for this project since the retiring of Lindsey Dunevant. He proceeded to show the recorded results from a survey that Albemarle distributed with its utility bill in December. At the time of this meeting, over 200 people have responded, with typical results.

A copy of the Draft Concept to the Albemarle Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan was distributed to each member of this steering committee. There was a simple agenda at this meeting to review this draft plan section by section. Members were asked to take some additional time on their own to review the plan and encouraged to send additional comments or suggestions to Walt within the month on a date that will be determined shortly. At the conclusion of this quick review of this draft concept plan, some minor suggestions were given that will be incorporated into the final plan, and some comments were made from the citizens on the committee that they were happy with the plan's development and looking forward to its implementation. *(Absent members can pick up their copy from Mr. Lambert, who can be reached at 704-984-9674)

The next steps in the planning process would be a presentation of this concept plan to the public later this evening. Once all the ideas, suggestions, and concerns from this public forum, from the steering committee, and from the survey are incorporated into the plan, a draft will be presented to the City Council for adoption. This can be expected to occur in early March. *(This date may be extended to April or May depending on NCDOT review)



At this time, the meeting was adjourned. Mr. Lambert will send out an email within the week that will give a date for the final steering committee meeting and that will give a deadline for comments on this draft. The final meeting of the Albemarle Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee is expected to take place near the end of February.

The meeting ended at approximately 1:15 PM.



Albemarle Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan

Meeting: Steering Committee Meeting # 4
September 20, 2007
12:00 PM – 1:15 PM
City Hall Annex

Attendees:
Ray Allen, Albemarle City Manager
Debbie Bennett, Stanly County Health Department
Bill Clark, URS Corporation
Michael E. Lambert, Albemarle Public Works
Rick Laton
Nina Godwin, Albemarle Public Works
Bob Sasser, Albemarle Planning and Com. Development

Absent:
Peter Ascutto
Ernie Borders
Elbert Branch
David Eddy
John Fields
Rachael Hough
Mary Meletiou
Margaret Rudisill
Toby Thorpe
Laura Wheeler

This was a simple meeting that consisted only of a final review of the Draft Plan that will be presented to City Council for adoption during their October 1 meeting. All Steering Committee members are encouraged to attend this meeting held at City Hall Annex on Monday, October 1st at 7:00 P.M.

The only major new material in this plan from the last time the committee reviewed it were the final rankings of the proposed projects. There were 15 identified “High Priority” projects that may have the largest impact on the pedestrian environment in Albemarle. The Plan thoroughly explains the process that the City or a future Pedestrian/Bicycle Committee can use to address changes to these proposed priority projects as the conditions on the ground change or when new opportunities present themselves.

Some comments were presented regarding policy intentions and clarification on street names in Section 7, and the idea that concepts in this plan will be heavily incorporated into the ongoing revisions to the Land Use Plan was discussed. At this point (almost 1:15), the meeting came to a close.

URS and the City of Albemarle would like to sincerely thank every member of this steering committee for their effort throughout this process.