SAFETY ADVISORY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

A G E N D A

October 13, 2004 - 7:00 P.M.

Public Assembly Room - 400 S. Queen Street - Dover

Public comments are welcomed on any item and will be permitted at appropriate times. When possible, please notify the City Clerk (736-7008 or e-mail at Jgreen@dover.de.us) should you wish to be recognized.

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

1. Proposed Letter to the General Assembly Requesting Sound Amplification Systems in Vehicles be Prohibited *(Continuation from Committee Meeting of June 16, 2004 - Discussion - Proposed State Legislation, S.B. 165, An Act to Amend Title 21 of the Delaware Code Relating to Unlawful Use of Sound Devices and Section 14-8 of the Dover Code)*

2. Report by Police Chief - Cost Estimate for Quality of Life Task Force *(Requested at Special Committee Meeting of September 22, 2004)*

3. Review of Bicycle and Pedestrian Needs for Dover *(Chris Asay)*

4. Updates
   A. West Dover Connector *(Mr. Gary Laing, DelDOT Municipal Liaison)*
   B. Traffic Studies - SR1/Route 8 and East Dover Housing Development Projects
   C. Statewide Bicycle Facility Master Plan - Report on Public Workshop held on September 29, 2004 *(Chris Asay)*

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THE AGENDA ITEMS AS LISTED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED IN SEQUENCE. THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OR THE DELETION OF ITEMS, INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS.

October 26, 2004

Local Legislators of the General Assembly
State of Delaware
Legislative Hall
Dover, DE 19904

Dear Legislators:

Recently, members of the City of Dover Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee and City Council have been discussing concerns relative to "monstrous sounding stereo systems in motor vehicles" and the effects on the quality of life for our citizens. Although Section 14-8 of the Dover Code clearly prohibits such noise, the dilemma is the ability to issue tickets in the case of car stereos because a City police officer must actually be present to observe the violation in most cases. It was felt that the only way to successfully address and solve this problem would be if the General Assembly would address legislation prohibiting the installation of these stereo systems for motor vehicles licensed in the State of Delaware.

On behalf of the Dover City Council, I would request that the General Assembly consider the passage of legislation to prohibit the installation of loud-sounding stereo systems as mentioned above.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, may I suggest you contact Mayor Speed at 736-7004.

Sincerely,

Janice C. Green, CMC
City Clerk

/jg
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cc: Mayor and Council
Police Chief Horvath
Governor Minner

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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

September 21, 2004

Janice C. Green, City Clerk
City of Dover, City Hall
P.O. Box 475
Dover, Delaware 19903-0475

RE: Motor Vehicle Stereo Legislation

Dear Janice:

I think the Safety Advisory Committee has the right approach in asking our General Assembly to consider legislation banning "monstrous sounding stereo systems in motor vehicles". I believe that we should approach our local legislators, who have been very responsive to our requests in the past, about researching and sponsoring legislation in this area. I think a short letter from you on behalf of Council would be adequate directed to our local legislators simply stating:

1. The City is very concerned about the disturbance in the City caused by loud-sounding stereo systems in motor vehicles;

2. The City has ordinance language which prohibits these loud motor vehicle stereo systems;

3. The Ordinance is difficult to enforce and actually only is enforced if a City of Dover patrolman actually is present to observe the violation in most cases;

4. If the General Assembly would address legislation prohibiting the installation of these stereo systems for motor vehicles licensed in the State of Delaware, this would be in all probability, the only way to successfully address and solve this problem.

I hope this addresses your questions but feel free to call me if I can add anything further.

Very truly yours,

NICHOLAS H. RODRIGUEZ

NHR:tlk

cc: Bill Pepper

From: ChrisAsay@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, September 22, 2004 11:45 AM
To: Green, Janice
Subject: Bike & Pedestrian Proposal

Janice:

Here is the complete document I had prepared for the Safety Committee. Following the list of "Top Five Needs" is an overview of the situation for bikes & pedestrians in Dover, which is the reasoning for the choices I am suggesting.

Please see that Chairman Ritter gets a copy of this.
Thank you. -- Chris

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN NEEDS FOR DOVER:
TOP FIVE NEEDS
submitted by Chris Asay
516 Carol Street
Dover, DE 19904
674-3422

1. Intersection of Saulsbury Road & Route 8 needs Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.

Needs Crosswalks, signals, painted bike lanes in intersection. Also needs painted bike lane on Saulsbury Road heading south from Route 8 to Water Street.

Also needs painted bike lane on north side of Route 8 between Weston Drive and Carver Road, approaching intersection with Saulsbury Road. The latter is a 2-block gap in the extensive bike lane along Route 8 from the railroad tracks east to Greentree Village.

(Currently there is a project in the DelDOT pipeline process to modify the Saulsbury/Rt 8 intersection to prevent left turns from Saulsbury Road into the gas stations & into Subway. This presents an excellent opportunity to upgrade the bike/ped situation at the same time, if we are able to communicate our priorities to DelDOT in a timely manner.)

2. Bike & Pedestrian connection between Shutte Park and Crossgates neighborhoods.

Involves crossing railroad tracks and constructing a trail through woods along Puncheon Run.

(This plan was being developed by DelDOT, but has been put on hold, while the route of the West Dover Connector is being decided.)

3. College Road, east of McKee Road needs Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.

Narrow, shoulderless road needs widening and installation of sidewalks and painted bike lanes. This is an important connecting route to downtown Dover from the Fox Hall neighborhoods.

(An upgrade of this road has been on the list of proposed projects list of the Dover/Kent MPO since last year.)

4. Dover-Kenton Road, from Walker Road to Denny's Road.

Narrow road needs widening and installation of sidewalks and painted bike lanes. This is an important connecting route to downtown Dover from the Fox Hall West neighborhoods, and upcoming housing developments.

(An upgrade of this road is now on the list of proposed projects list of the Dover/Kent MPO.)

5. Bicycle and Pedestrian connections along businesses on east side of Route 13, from Bucson Drive up to the Dover Mall.

What is needed is a north-south route connecting neighborhoods and businesses that parallels Route 13 but does not put bike riders on the shoulder of the highway.

(Pieces of this idea are on the list of proposed projects list of the Dover/Kent MPO.)

PHYSICAL BARRIERS TO BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN USE IN DOVER

Our Goal:

To have Dover residents, wherever possible, replace short trips using the automobile with trips made by walking or using a bicycle.

This will not only reduce automobile traffic congestion, air pollution, and street maintenance costs, but, through the physical exercise involved in walking and bicycling, improve the general physical and mental health of our citizens. While few people will choose to walk or bike just so that others driving autos will experience less traffic congestion, a significant portion of our population is actively motivated to improve their own health and well-being, and would be willing to consider walking and bicycle riding to achieve those ends.

(Some of us also consider biking and walking fun!)

What we must do to encourage our citizens to walk or use their bicycle is to ensure that routes appear comfortable and safe, primarily from automobile traffic. A route will only be considered "safe" if it appears safe along its entirety. A short gap in the route that appears dangerous makes an otherwise "safe route" into an "unsafe route."

We can encourage our citizens to walk by providing continuous sidewalks, and, at busy intersections, crosswalks, sometimes with crossing lights (such as those at the intersection of North Street and Mifflin Road). To encourage our citizens to use a bicycle we need, at select key areas, designated bicycle routes, either painted on the road shoulder (such as those along South State Street Extension) or off-road routes (such as that along parts of Saulsbury Road).

What works:

Many neighborhood streets in Dover are ideal for bike & ped use. Most streets have continuous sidewalks on both sides of the road. Most streets have low volumes of auto traffic and good pavement quality. Many neighborhoods are a network of such streets, providing safe and easy bike & ped routes from one's home to other homes and to businesses. Most of these areas need no additional facilities.

Travel distances are short in this small capital city, and the terrain is flat. It is an easy walk, distance wise, from many neighborhoods to downtown, and from most neighborhoods to many businesses. For bicyclists, it can be an easy ride from one side of town to another, if one's route doesn't encounter one or more of the hazards that will be discussed below.

For example, a resident living on Fairview Avenue (in the north of town) can walk or ride a bike to Spence's Bazaar (in the south of town) by traveling down Queen Street. Queen Street has sidewalks and low auto traffic volume along it's length and at most cross streets. There are two busy cross streets, Division Street and Loockerman Street, which can be crossed with the assistance of the stoplights.

Major Barriers:

There are two major barriers to east-west movement in Dover: The railroad tracks and the St. Jones River. Flanking these are two secondary barriers, Saulsbury Road and Route 13. All four of these barriers interrupt the networks of small neighborhood roads, so that the city is divided into three major parts, with other small pockets of neighborhoods. There are limited accessways across the barriers, all of which are dominated by automobile traffic, making bike and pedestrian use difficult, if not outright dangerous. To meet our Goal, it is vital that these barrier crossings provide safe access to bicycles and pedestrians.

The railroad tracks provide a north-south-running barrier with only three crossing points:

North Street
Loockerman & Division Streets, which merge after crossing the tracks
Walker Road

The St. Jones River is a north-south-running barrier with only five bridge crossing points:

North State Street
Division Street
Loockerman Street
Court Street
Route 113

In addition Silver Lake and its tributaries divides the central portion of the city from its northern parts in a line between the North State Street bridge over Silver Lake and McKee Road. Similarly, Puncheon Run divides central neighborhoods from the southern neighborhoods.

On the east side of Dover, Route 13 is also a major north-south-running barrier, although with a larger number crossing points, but because of the higher speed and the very high volume of automobile traffic, it remains a significant barrier to bicyclists and pedestrians.

On the west side of Dover is Saulsbury Road, with higher speed and volume of auto traffic. There are only three crossing points:

Walker Road
Route 8
North Street

Barrier crossing points are key areas requiring facilities to encourage bicycles and pedestrians. Boldly striped pedestrian crosswalks, pedestrian crossing lights and painted bike lanes are the most common facilities. As an alternative, crossings for bikes and pedestrians that are completely separate from automobile traffic are another option. An example of this would be the dam and the bridge, both at Silver Lake Park, which allow bikes and pedestrians to cross the St. Jones River.

Note that all of the above mentioned major barrier crossings are part of state-owned highways. It is imperative, therefore, that the City of Dover maintain consistent and persistent communication with DelDOT and their project “pipeline” process to meet our objectives.

In addition, Dover's Planning Department needs to maintain and refer to this overall concept so that, as development continues in this community, modifications relating to bike and pedestrian use can be made whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Many of the suggested steps to achieve the goal of increasing the bike and pedestrian use in Dover involve little more than the judicious use of paint on the roadways. And while other steps involve a larger investment, the long-term payoff can be a significant boost in the quality-of-life for our community.