

CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE

PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

MICROSOFT TEAMS
MEETING CONDUCTED IN PERSON

SEPTEMBER 5, 2023
7:00 P.M.

Present at the 7:00 P.M. meeting:

Commissioners Present:

Chairman: Willard Hurd, AIA
Vice Chair: Alan Silverman
Secretary: Karl Kadar
Allison Stine
Scott Bradley
Kazy Tauginas

Commissioners Absent

Chris Williamson

Staff Present:

Paul Bilodeau, City Solicitor
Jessica Ramos-Velazquez, Deputy Director of Planning and Development
Mike Fortner, Senior Planner
Joshua Solge, Planner II
Katie Dinsmore, Administrative Professional I

Chair Hurd called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Chair Hurd: Alright, good evening, everyone, and welcome to the September 5, 2023, City of Newark Planning Commission meeting as I try to get this mic in the right spot. This is Will Hurd, Chair of the Planning Commission. We are conducting this hybrid meeting through the Microsoft Teams meeting platform. I'd like to provide the guidelines for the meeting structure so that everyone is able to participate. This new camera system will auto track whoever is speaking so everyone needs to keep their microphones muted until they are ready to speak so the camera isn't bouncing around. Katie Dinsmore, the department's Administrative Professional, will be managing the cameras, chat, and general meeting logistics. At the beginning of each item, I will call on the related staff member to present followed by the applicant for any land use items. Once the presentation is complete, I will call on each Commissioner in rotating alphabetical order for questions of the staff or presenter. If a commissioner has additional questions they would like to add later, they should ask the Chair to be recognized again when all members have had the opportunity to speak. For items open to public comment, we will then read into the record comments received prior to the meeting followed by open public comment. If members of the public would like to comment on an agenda item and are attending in person, we would ask you to sign up on the sheet near the entrance so we can get the spelling of your name correct and, they will be called on to speak at the appropriate time. If members of the public attending virtually would like to comment, they should use the hand raising function in Microsoft Teams to signal the meeting organizer that they would like to speak or message the meeting organizer through the chat function with their name, district or address, and the agenda item on which they would like to comment. All lines will be muted, and cameras disabled until individuals are called on to speak. At that point the speaker's microphone and camera will be enabled and they can then turn on their cameras and unmute themselves to give their comments. We are unable to manually turn on cameras or microphones through Microsoft Teams. All speakers must identify themselves prior to speaking. Public comments are limited to 5 minutes per person and must pertain to the item under consideration. Comments in the Microsoft Teams chat will not be considered part of the public record for the meeting unless they are requested to be read into the record. We follow public comment with further questions and discussion

from the commissioners then the motions and voting by roll call. Commissioners will need to articulate the reasons for their vote for any land use items. If there are any issues during the meeting, we may adjust these guidelines if necessary. The City of Newark strives to make our public meetings accessible. While the City is committed to this access, pursuant to 29 Delaware Code 10006A, technological failure does not affect the validity of these meetings, nor the validity of any actions taken in these meetings, nor the validity of any action taken during these meetings.

1. Chair's Remarks

Chair Hurd: That takes me to item 1, chair's remarks. I want to recognize Allison Stine for her time on the Commission, she has opted not to continue for another term, and we will miss her and her unique insight and experience. And I do hope that she remains involved as she is able to and you have the lovely certificate I see, so take that home and enjoy it. A reminder that next month's meeting will start with the election of officers. If anyone is interested in running or has any questions about the roles, you can reach out to me or there are descriptions in the Commission's bylaws as well. Traditionally we have someone nominate a candidate but that's not required, you can self-nominate. Lastly, I will be attending a virtual presentation by Strong Towns on saying yes to all types of housing in your community on October 5th and I can have Katie send out information to anyone who's interested in registering for that, and if you haven't checked out Strong Towns you should, they're advocates for fiscally strong development that is a counter point to the post-war suburban style development that has caused some problems. And bike people know about that too, the various issues. Alright that's it for the Chair's remarks.

2. Minutes

Chair Hurd: For the minutes are there any edits or corrections to the minutes from August 15th? Yes, Commissioner Bradley.

Commissioner Bradley: Line 416, it says yellow defense, it should be LOD.

Chair Hurd: Oh, see I thought that was (inaudible) fence from the comments.

Commissioner Bradley: Yeah, I was trying to figure it out, yellow defense, yellow defense, oh LO Defense, level of defense.

Chair Hurd: Got it, that's better than mine.

Commissioner Bradley: That's the only one, thank you.

Chair Hurd: Great. Any other? Ok seeing none the minutes are approved with those edits by acclimation.

3. Review and Discussion of the Newark Bicycle Plan Update

Chair Hurd: That takes us to item 3 review and discussion of the Newark Bicycle Plan update. And it looks like Planner Fortner is leading us on this.

Planner Fortner: Can you hear me? Alright ok. Good evening, Mr. Chair and Planning Commissioners. My name is Mike Fortner, I'm a senior planner with the City of Newark and over here we have Bob McBride he is among other things the chairperson for Bike Newark. We're going to review with you the update to the 2014 Newark Bicycle Plan which we're now going to call the 2024 Newark Bicycle Plan so basically after 10 years of this. I'm going to turn it over to Bob McBride and he's going to talk about Bike Newark and then we're also going to talk about the current 2014 plan some of the accomplishments of that and some things that are still in the pipeline. We'll also talk about our designation as a bicycle friendly community and upgrade to the silver level and I'll talk about that and our evaluation and how that will kind of feed into the process of updating our bicycle plan and finally we'll have a little discussion and a path forward. This plan's being updated with the City of Newark and our partners, so our partners are Bike Newark and also WILMAPCO, the Wilmington Planning, Metropolitan Planning Council, and then we also have DelDOT was also a partner through WILMAPCO and also the University of Delaware and other kinds of stakeholders, so we do a lot of outreaches to stakeholders during this process.

Mr. McBride: Hi everybody, I'm happy to be here and we are representing a coalition of organizations. Bike Newark is really a partnership of organizations. One of the things that we did several years ago is partner with University of Delaware to create these poster boards that I brought here and set up amongst the chairs just to increase the amount of etiquette that we see sharing the streets and roads of

110 Newark. So, one of things that we'd like to do is say that we're moving bicycling forward in Newark,
111 that's our main purpose in life. We touch on pedestrian issues as well because that's part of what we're
112 looking for in the balanced transportation idea.

113 We're trying to make bicycling central to Newark's culture, there's a reason for that, it makes a good
114 argument for sustainability, it makes a good argument for not spending too much money on parking
115 infrastructure and other things that take up space that you may have to adjudicate at some point in your
116 careers. We're trying to look at connecting Newark to other things so that we have a safe and connected
117 Newark for people on bicycles or on foot. And we're trying to do education, part of our education effort
118 is this, part of our other education effort is regular sessions, public sessions on bike safety and bike
119 equipment. And we're trying to make sure that Newark is the best city in the mid-Atlantic area for
120 bicycling, and that is saying something because there aren't many other cities in the mid-Atlantic region
121 that have achieved our level of bicycle friendliness from the League of American Bicyclists.

122 So, I have been happy to serve on this since I've been in Newark or moved back to Newark, I moved back
123 in 2015 after 35 years away. And I've worked on several collaborative efforts with some of you, The
124 Newark Partnership, the Transportation Improvement District and all those other things to look at the
125 balance of transportation in the city. One of things that we're hoping to do as part of the bicycle plan
126 which thankfully was already written before I got here, was to try and review progress we've made since
127 then and update any new visions and actions and update the bicycle network that's been actually put in
128 place since that plan was first devised. And recommend programs and policies that the city might adopt.
129 And then also to look at things that haven't been looked at too much; equity of access to bicycle
130 facilities, safety, and most importantly for our children and grandchildren, is sustainability and how we
131 can keep Newark from being overrun by vehicles and becoming a polluted place that no one wants to
132 live.

133 Some of the things we've helped with, as you can see the Emerson bridge was a big project that we had.
134 And one of the other things is the Newark Bikeway system, it's the one with the brown signs. Those are
135 actually in place, they're not quite finished; we're about ¾ finished with the bikeway system, we've
136 established that, worked with the city, the traffic department and engineering committee and we raised
137 the money for the signs and gave them to the city to be installed. Most of them are installed and they
138 try to point out things from the point of view that someone who is not from Newark could find their way
139 around. And we also have maps that are going to be available on kiosks next to the trails and I actually
140 brought a couple of maps if you would like to see one, but they're pretty well marked. The route
141 improvements you can see and some of you have already noticed. There's the cycleway on Delaware
142 Avenue. That's a huge change from when I lived in Newark in the 70s because now you don't have to go
143 around the block to go in another direction. You can go from the West Side of the University Campus to
144 Newark High School via bike route. And I did it the other day to take my car for service at Newark Toyota
145 and it cut 10 minutes off of my bike route just because I could go straight through.

146 One of the things we've helped to do is think through the Main Street revamp with those big green
147 sharrows on the road. And in the meantime, we've found time to help with some of the signs on the
148 trails. We partnered with another organization, Wilmington Trail Club, to help with that and we've put in
149 bike racks at one of the schools and on some of the city buses. Plus, lots of online material, videos,
150 telling people what to wear and how to be safe. And lots of standard published materials that also talk
151 about safety.

152 Planner Fortner: Do you guys know what sharrows are? Ok, so sometimes we use language that people
153 outside might not know. It's basically,

154 Commissioner Bradley: (inaudible)

155 Planner Fortner: So, you'll see them in places where it's not practical to put a bike lane and so it's a way
156 to share the road with a bicycle, it notifies the cars that they're there. And then I think Bob covered a lot
157 of the project, of course we also have the bike path on Elkton Road, the expansion of that to the state
158 line a lot of new infrastructure that helped us get to the next level of the silver community. I also wanted
159 to talk about bikes on buses. We had bike racks on the Unicity buses and now we're switching over to
160 the, it's called Newark Connect, it's more of a rideshare type of bus service now and those are going to
161 have bike racks on them too. So now you have a bus service that's more direct to where you want to go,
162 and you can still bring your bike. So, you could go to a park, anything in the region or immediate Newark
163 area. So that's been some great progress as well. Hey Bob, can you just talk about the committees you
164 have, the engineering committee?

165 Mr. McBride: Yes, so Bike Newark works as a partnership organization with others and we bring in people
166 from Bike Delaware, and the city, and the University of Delaware and we work through several
167 committees, the engineering committee is the one that helps us design the bikeways and you know
168 where we would put bike amenities in town, like the new kiosks that we're going to install next to the
169 trails. We have other groups that sponsor the safety events that we do on University Campus and during
170 community days and other community gatherings like that. And Bike Newark members often serve on
171 committees in other organizations. The city and I helped with the Transportation Improvement District
172 planning that we did. And we're consulted sometimes when the city has a question about something
173 that might be related to bicycle access or safety.

174 Planner Fortner: Thank you, we can go to the next slide. So, these are some upcoming projects I'm not
175 sure if you can see that, but you do have your own presentation there. The first one on your lefthand
176 side is the I-95 interchange and one of the big barriers to bicycling in Newark is connectivity to the
177 outside. And that has always been a big barrier; you can't get across that 896 bridge over 95. As luck
178 would have it, this just happens to be a bad intersection for even cars, so it just led to the state to say
179 well we need to redevelop this and rethink how we do this interchange. And so, you also have to look
180 into how other modes of transportation like bicycles and pedestrians can get across that intersection too
181 because that's always been a problem. So, they've designed this new pattern and that's happening right
182 now, and this is what it will ultimately look like. And this, the purple line that will be basically an off-road
183 bike path that goes along if you're going North from 896 to Newark going north you would get on the
184 road, and it would be parallel with an off-road protected bike lane and that would get you to the other
185 side which would connect into the Iron Hill Park and places south. Glasgow Park for example, and Lum's
186 Pond ultimately. Because there's already quite a bit of network on that side of the bridge anyway. And
187 then next on the right-hand side you have a project that's actually in the TID. It is a connector with the
188 Emerson Bridge to the Pomeroy Trail. The problem with Emerson bridge is on the south end it just sort
189 of empties into the sidewalk so we need something to just connect it. So, there's two ways you could go.
190 You could go along Papermill Road or add another spur that would connect you west.

191 These are some completed plans that we've done over the last 10 years. It includes the Newark
192 Transportation Improvement District which we've discussed some, and that has a lot of projects in it for
193 bicycles and pedestrians. Wyoming Road corridor and the University, the Delaware Bikeshare Feasibility
194 Study, that's a study that's been done and I don't know much about it, but I know it was done.

195 Mr. McBride: It was done as a faculty senate project and the city and Bike Newark helped with that
196 project to see if a bike share for the University community made sense. It's still in flux so far as we know.
197 We talked about it with the sustainability office last Wednesday, so they still know about it, but that's still
198 something they'll be considering.

199 Planner Fortner: There's also the New Castle County Bicycle Plan, the author of that, Heather Dunigan is
200 also going to be one of our principal authors. So, there's a lot of coordination between our plan and the
201 County plan. And then finally there was a Newark to Wilmington trail study, so that's always been a
202 thing, how can we get off road from Newark to Wilmington somehow. And that came up with a lot of
203 alternative approaches and all of them have their own goods and bads.

204 So, plans are underway, we have the Chrysler Avenue Bikeway. Chrysler Avenue is an example of road
205 dieting which we'll talk more about later, but basically you have a road that's overly wide and can you
206 make that more multi-modal, slow traffic down, South College Avenue gateway, both starting at 4 and
207 before 4. So, as you saw, that interchange over 95, that section of town where all the gas stations are is
208 looking to become more pedestrian and bicycle friendly to connect that to the city. So, we're looking
209 into the redevelopment of that area, as well as improving the pathway from the stadiums into the
210 University. And of course, we have the 2024 Newark Bicycle Plan. Anything else on that Bob, did you
211 want to?

212 Mr. McBride: I think that's a pretty good summary.

213 Planner Fortner: Ok, we're going to get into, as you know there is an organization called the League of
214 American Bicyclists and they, one of the things they do is encourage bicycling nationwide as an
215 alternative form of transportation, and they rate cities, you apply to them, you provide them with a very
216 extensive application process, they evaluate you and then they rate the towns from honorable mention
217 to all the way, it's kind of like the Olympics, you have bronze, silver, gold, and finally you have platinum.
218 So, we started out in 2003 as an honorable mention, we worked our way up and by 2010 we were a
219 bronze so for the past 14 or 13 years really, we've been trying to get to the silver level, we apply every 4

220 years, and we finally got that this year. And so, our next kind of goal is to be gold. This is a little bit of our
221 evaluation, in your packet is our report card so not only do they rate you, but they also explain why they
222 rated you that way, and give you sort of a grade. And so, they have criteria and it's the same type of
223 criteria we use for a bicycle plan and that Bike Newark has adopted, it's called the five "E's". So, it's
224 engineering, which is basically your infrastructure. You have education, which is training bicyclists and
225 motorists about road safety, how to ride safely. And then you have encouragement which is basically
226 promoting a culture of bicycling in our community, then there's evaluation and planning, what kind of
227 analysis are you doing in your community to both build a network but also, we've talked to different
228 groups that might be left out in some processes, sometimes we think of bicycling as more of an elitist, or
229 entitled? What's the word I'm looking for, like a wealthier person thing and we want to make this
230 something that all people can do and have access to. Children, low to moderate income, make this
231 something that people can do outreach to. And finally, we have equity, which is, equity is reaching out
232 to different groups so poorer areas, areas that are minorities, things like that that sometimes get left out
233 of these planning processes.

234 Mr. McBride: That was actually added from the last time we applied to this time. It's a really new idea.

235 Planner Fortner: Yeah, and next to that you see a percentage which is kind of like the grade we got.
236 That's the percentage of points out of 100% that we got. So engineering was 35% and our highest one I
237 guess was encouragement and that was 46%, we got 46 of the points that were available on
238 encouragement so that's very high. And our lowest of course is equity and I wrote, there were a lot of
239 questions on equity, I wrote and gave a lot of analysis trying to explain that Newark was very equitable
240 and that there was no problem, that it was great here, but they didn't buy it obviously. So, what they're
241 looking for is some very specific analysis, analysis that we're able to create through WILMAPCO and it'll
242 be much more systematic than my back of the envelope analysis of looking at census tract stuff.

243 Things that are in yellow are the things we scored lower in. As you see, all the criteria that fall under that
244 and the green, we scored fairly high in terms of percentage of points. So, some of those yellow ones
245 we're going to be taking a look at in terms of the bike plan update and seeing what types of things we
246 can do in those categories to improve our score. Of course, I frame everything in this score like the goal
247 is to get gold, but really, it's about making Newark a better place for bicycling and if we get and do these
248 things then Newark will be a better place to bicycle and then the score will, well maybe we'll get a gold
249 at some point in the future. Go ahead Bob.

250 Mr. McBride: We think that part of the reason that progress has been so slow is that the University itself
251 hasn't been all that interested in helping us. As you may remember they went through sort of a
252 traumatic period when a student was killed in a bicycling related accident and not much happened after
253 that for a few years. But they're beginning again to be interested and we're working with the newly
254 established sustainability office to see if that's going to bring us a little further along.

255 Planner Fortner: So also, in the report card they give us comments and suggestions of things we can do
256 to get to the next level and so I wrote, some of those notes, one is adopting the National Association of
257 City Transportation Officials Urban Bikeway Design Guidelines or something that we develop that's
258 equivalent to that. So that's something that the Council could adopt or adopt a version of that to get us
259 to the next level. Another thing is lowering speed limits to 20 miles per hour in residential streets so it
260 would be, categorically doing that, doing things like road diets that I discussed when you shrink the roads
261 and make them more multi-modal when you have a wider road you tend to get higher speeds of traffic,
262 there's other kinds of things that shrink the road or appear to shrink the road. And finally bicycle
263 boulevards are another thing to consider; that's part of what Bob was talking about, our network about,
264 what do you call it?

265 Mr. McBride: Low stress bike lanes.

266 Planner Fortner: Low stress bike lanes, right.

267 Mr. McBride: Where we define low stress is a bike route that you could send a 12-year-old on without
268 worrying about their safety. By themselves.

269 Planner Fortner: Thank you. Another thing that was kind of a big thing was outreach to the schools,
270 we're really weak on this. The school district is a separate government entity from us, and they have,
271 obviously they have a lot of demands on their time and attention and so they're always, why don't we do
272 more of this, so we're going to do that, let's do more of the bicycle safety training and other ways of
273 outreach to those schools.

274 Mr. McBride: We're going to have to work on that because they don't have a lot of extra time in their
275 curriculum for us. It may take a few years to figure out how to do that.

276 Planner Fortner: And as Bob referenced, getting UD as a bicycle friendly university, so there's bicycle
277 friendly communities which is Newark, there's other things too, bicycle friendly universities and bicycle
278 friendly businesses. We have one in Newark and it's the City of Newark, it's a bicycle-friendly business. If
279 we could get some other ones, I think there's probably some pretty good candidates here that could
280 apply. And then getting the University of Delaware as an honorable mention. And so, they have a report
281 card just like we got, and they could work on their action items. And we could help them work on their
282 action items and then if we get them up as bronze or maybe even a silver. My son's looking at colleges
283 now and so he's looking at a lot of different campuses. And all the campuses that he's looked at besides
284 UD is all silver level; Penn State is silver level, University of Cincinnati even is silver level, University of
285 Maryland is silver level so I think Delaware could be silver level, I mean I don't see why we should be so
286 far behind them. Because I've visited all those campuses and you know we'll get there.

287 And then public bike share program that's a big lift we talked about that already, I don't know but we're
288 still looking into that. And then Vision Zero, which is state policy that Council could adopt which is
289 basically developing a list of strategies to ultimately reduce traffic deaths to zero right?

290 Mr. McBride: Right. And that's a vision that we have that focuses on all kinds of things, enforcement,
291 encouragement, safety, safety planning, bikeways, you know new ways to get to people to make sure
292 they don't ride around at 2:00 in the morning with no lights on, that sort of thing.

293 Planner Fortner: So, it's a policy that the Council adopts, a set of policies that we could adhere to. And
294 finally, we have equity as one of our weak points and doing this analysis, finding better ways to outreach
295 to different communities not just kind of the normal suspects that are into bicycling. And just having a
296 broader coalition of bicyclists in Newark. Go ahead Bob.

297 Mr. McBride: So, the bicycle friendly community report card gives us some marching orders on how to go
298 about things that we want to do to improve our ratings, but it also gives us some challenges about what
299 we might do as a community to make things work better for all of us instead of having a full
300 transportation system. They've already taken a great step, by changing the city bus system into a on
301 demand ride share program. That will be much better in terms of being equitable as well as being
302 usable.

303 Planner Fortner: So, what's next is some of the stuff we're going to emphasize in the 2024 bicycle plan.
304 Connecting bicycling with land use, we'll talk more on that in just a little bit, of course bicycle parking is a
305 hot topic, we have very good design guidelines for new development and a lot of them have put in
306 adequate bicycle parking. It's a lot of older developments that sometimes have antiquated bike racks,
307 bike racks in not very good locations so finding ways to retrofit those older areas, and of course sticking
308 with new developments, making sure they have proper bicycle infrastructure. We've talked about Vision
309 Zero, sustainability, and of course equity. Can you go ahead and switch to the next one? Thank you.

310 Just to connect with our land use, in our Comprehensive Development Plan as well as our sustainability
311 plan, our newest version of the Comp plan adopted into it. In theme 2, we tie land use to sustainability
312 into using the model called the Complete Communities Toolbox, which was developed by the University
313 of Delaware, you see some of those things include complete streets, which is planning streets for all
314 modes of travel. Efficient use of land, healthy and sustainable lifestyles, inclusive and active and
315 resilient. So, it's a way of planning communities so that all these types of modes of transportation are
316 applicable to it and that people of all different ages and incomes can get around in Newark. Part of that
317 is a goal to support a car free lifestyle, so bikes are a key part of that. And bikes are a key part of
318 reducing our transportation greenhouse gas footprint. So, this ties into again our sustainability plan for
319 land use and our Comprehensive Development Plan. You can go to the next one.

320 Some of the discussion questions, we don't have to go through each of these if you don't want but this is
321 just, how can the bike plan promote the Comp Plan implementation, how can zoning changes and
322 development promote bicycling and better mobility. Who do you think we should reach out to, what
323 projects would you like to see included, and what programs or policies should we explore? Our path
324 forward on this, the next event is probably Community Day, we'll have a table there, we'll be doing
325 outreach to folks, we're going to meet in front of the different city committees this is our first stop, but
326 we'll be going to the CAC, the Diversity Committee, the Council ultimately. And finding other outreach
327 avenues too. Bob, I'll turn it over to you.

328 Mr. McBride: One of the things that Bike Newark tries to do through our participating organization is
329 trying to reach out to all parts of the community and Delaware being so small most of the other
330 organizations that we work with are either County or statewide, but we have lots of connections in
331 Newark. Right now, we are the recipient of a grant from The Newark Partnership for the kiosks along the
332 bike trails. I'm also the secretary of the board for The Newark Partnership so we have a lot of
333 connections with that and we're hoping to work with the city and university, and the nonprofit
334 community to think about the transportation system not just as it focuses on bicycles, but as it focuses
335 on all kinds of non-motorized transportation, principally now pedestrians, but it might be some
336 motorized transportation that we haven't thought of yet that we do want. There's some that we
337 probably don't want, but there's some that we might. So, the bike share we probably might want,
338 scooters we probably don't want because they're just a horrible problem when they don't go right. So,
339 we're asking everyone in the city to help us think through these things as we are working on the bicycle
340 plan over the next year, I think we have a year.

341 Planner Fortner: The spring, I think.

342 Mr. McBride: So, 6 months maybe, ok so it has to be faster.

343 Planner Fortner: The process will be bringing this back to the Planning Commission, and it will ultimately
344 be recommended by the Planning Commission, Council will approve it, and then WILMAPCO's Council
345 will approve it as well. And that's about it.

346 Chair Hurd: Alright, thank you so much. I will begin questions with Commissioner Bradley.

347 Commissioner Bradley: Thank you and thank you for the presentation. Congratulations on silver, what
348 does it take to get the gold from here?

349 Mr. McBride: Probably teaching bicycling lessons, they seem to be very concentrated on that in part of
350 the response we got. And to get the University to be a little more interested in a shared transportation
351 system.

352 Commissioner Bradley: That was one thing reading through this stuff is that UD doesn't participate in
353 this? It really surprised me to see that they're not a bicycle friendly university.

354 Mr. McBride: Well, they did get honorable mention so they're not completely off the table, but they
355 haven't participated as much as the other universities that Mike mentioned. We think that that's just a
356 matter of time before we get them to do that.

357 Commissioner Bradley: You talked about Iron Hill to Glasgow, is that something that's on the TID or is
358 that kind of outside our realm? Because it's outside of Newark.

359 Planner Fortner: So, you had the interchange or the I95 thing being constructed. There are already in
360 that section, off road bike trails in a lot of sections they're not all connected, so there's just some links to
361 meet up with and then you'll get to Glasgow. And from Glasgow there are kind of plans and efforts with
362 the county on how to get Glasgow connected with Lum's Pond. And then from Lum's Pond you can get
363 to, what's the name?

364 Mr. McBride: The Mike Castle Trail.

365 Planner Fortner: Yeah, and then you can get connected to that from Lum's Pond fairly easily. So, these
366 links have been studied, to find the best way there, but one of the big little obstacles was that I-95
367 bridge.

368 Commissioner Bradley: Speaking of bridges, that bridge over the railroad tracks heading into 95 on 896 is
369 there anything that would be done with that for biking?

370 Mr. McBride: Oh, we have hoped that would change for years and it's unlikely to change, there's some
371 discussion on how to restripe it and to reuse the existing space as part of the South College Avenue
372 corridor project which is separate from the I-95 project. And we've made all kinds of recommendations
373 there, the University's made some recommendations, one thing that we hold out hope for and that we
374 haven't heard of is that the University is thinking about building a pedestrian bridge to the east of the
375 existing bridge onto the farm property probably at the end of Academy Street. So, we'll hope that
376 maybe that happens in the next few years, that will greatly improve access to their south campus as well
377 as give the center of Newark a much better way to get across the railroad tracks.

378 Commissioner Bradley: The only other question I had on the report card, it says our poverty rate is 26%
379 is that correct?

380 Planner Fortner: Yes, so we have a high poverty rate here, a lot of it is because of the students I believe.

381 Commissioner Bradley: Ok, that's all I had thank you.

382 Chair Hurd: Thank you, Commissioner Kadar.

383 Commissioner Kadar: What's the utilization rate of bicycle infrastructure? I mean you can use any metric
384 that you want because I wouldn't know how to express it but.

385 Mr. McBride: Well, we don't know, to put it simply. The only thing we can really count is parked bicycles
386 and that we don't have a good handle on yet. We're going to have to do that as part of our assessment
387 of the need for bike parking. The anecdote is when I went to a meeting with the sustainability office last
388 week, one of the members of the committee couldn't find a bike parking space on the University campus
389 so she had to chain her bike to a tree, which she didn't want to do. But the metrics are very difficult to
390 come by because as you can imagine, they're sort of fleeting, people get on the bike path, they ride over
391 and then they're gone. So, people say, somebody once told me "That new bike path on Elkton Road isn't
392 used at all" and I go because it only takes a minute to ride from Route 4 up into the development. And it
393 seems like there's nobody on it, but there may have been about 20 people on it, you just never see
394 them.

395 Commissioner Kadar: That's one of the reasons I ask, you know you drive around the community, and
396 you don't see a lot of utilization for bike paths.

397 Mr. McBride: Yeah, I agree with you. One of the things that we have done and one of the grants that The
398 Newark Partnership gave to a new business in Newark is a company that uses camera footage to capture
399 the use of facilities, and they particularly focus on park facilities, but they're not restricted to that. And
400 one of things that they did was test the project out on the James Hall trail and Newark to the other bike
401 trail that goes out of town through the state park, I can't remember, Pomeroy, the Pomeroy trail. And
402 they found you know they got pretty good data from that without personally identifiable information.
403 They could identify what people were doing, if they were walking, skateboarding, if they were riding a
404 bike based on the analysis that they did in the video data which is pretty amazing so far as I'm
405 concerned. So, they have a project that they're doing under this grant to try and improve that, and I
406 think that based on that we'll have some good ideas about how we can make measurements on bicycle
407 infrastructure.

408 Commissioner Kadar: Second question, you talked about education, safety education, and I had some
409 personal experience. I was walking in the woods down behind my development going towards the
410 reservoir and almost got hit by a biker coming down the trail. They had a cheesy little alarm that nobody
411 could hear. So given that, does the program include anything that would talk about what the bicyclist
412 needs to do in terms of regulations, requirements, licensing, registration, safety checks, forced
413 education, helmets, horns, lights, I've been in Rehoboth for example. And at night I've actually watched
414 police pull a bicyclist over because he didn't have a headlight. And I don't know if I'm ever going to see
415 that in Newark, ok? So, does it include anything like that?

416 Mr. McBride: It does. Currently I've attended four sessions at White Clay Creek State Park where we were
417 talking about trail etiquette and how people share trails. So that likely addressed some of the issues that
418 you experienced on the Redd Trail, which is actually in Newark, so it doesn't really affect, but those are
419 things that I've done. I've talked to bicyclists, I've talked to pedestrians, I even talked to deer hunters the
420 other day – that was an interesting difference. They were out, bow season has started so they're all out
421 in the woods too. So, we've had pretty good positive experiences there, talking to people about using a
422 bell or alert device appropriately so you can be heard. It's a difficult thing because some of us like to ride
423 fast in the woods, I'm one of those people but I'm always aware that I'm not the only one in the woods
424 and I almost hit a deer the other day, that was no fun. Because I came tearing down a hill around a
425 corner. But the simple fact of it is that almost nobody in the United States gets bicycle instruction at any
426 time in their history as a bicycle rider. So, we have a terrible time trying to catch people. What we do is
427 we have basically street level demonstrations on the University campus four times a year where we give
428 away lights, and we give away information about bike safety and sometimes we have mechanics there to
429 check the bikes that people are riding. We're starting with the little ones; we had the first annual Family
430 Bike Fest this June on the campus, and we had about 300 people come to that. Mostly young children
431 and their families. We had the state park and some other organizations there for bike safety things, we

432 had some demonstrations from vendors so we're starting with the younger people but the ones in
 433 between, it's tough. You don't have a good way to get to them. It's very difficult, the bicycle rules in
 434 Delaware are very slim so the enforcement is not going to be something that we can count on. Except in
 435 places like Rehoboth where it's crowded, and you said it was a night when you were walking?

436 Commissioner Kadar: That shouldn't preclude the City of Newark from...

437 Mr. McBride: Yeah, it shouldn't but it's a difficult thing when we have so many different neighborhoods
 438 and not one big place where everybody is.

439 Commissioner Kadar: My final question is around your point about lowering speed limits in residential
 440 areas, and once again by education I'm an engineer and I want to see some data that says by lowering
 441 that you actually reduce injuries. Because I don't see a lot of people following a 25 mile per hour speed
 442 limit and lowering it to 20, I don't think is going to make much difference.

443 Mr. McBride: Well-

444 Commissioner Kadar: The plants that I used to work on, in my previous life they had really strange speed
 445 limits; 17 miles per hour, you have to think about that a little bit. And it might work, it might not.

446 Mr. McBride: It worked in my mother's retirement community, but I'm not sure it'll work everywhere
 447 else. There is data showing that the injuries are much reduced at speeds below 25 miles per hour.

448 Commissioner Kadar: And does that apply to the bicyclists as well?

449 Mr. McBride: It applies to pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

450 Commissioner Kadar: Because I have people who ride bikes in my neighborhood that zip by at over 30
 451 miles per hour, so I thought I'd just point that out.

452 Mr. McBride: Well, I would be happy to go 25 miles per hour on my bike, I used to be able to do that,
 453 can't now.

454 Commissioner Kadar: Well, these guys are good. Alright that's all I had, thank you very much and thanks
 455 for your efforts.

456 Chair Hurd: Thank you. Commissioner Silverman?

457 Commissioner Silverman: I enjoyed your presentation and the work that's been done since the last
 458 document has given me the opportunity to not only look at what looks good on paper but really does
 459 work in the field. A couple of things from a public safety point of view. If the engineering group that's
 460 associated with your group could consider partially in the non-paved street areas, some kind of mile
 461 markers? When emergency services have somebody who's injured it'd be nice to know well what the
 462 last mile marker was you saw, for example, 4.5. That makes it a whole lot easier to find someone who's
 463 in distress. And it serves all the walking and recreation community also.

464 Mr. McBride: So unique identifiers are where somebody might be. Most of our routes are within the city
 465 so they're within a cross street.

466 Commissioner Silverman: Agreed, but as we develop more things down towards 95 and away a mile
 467 marker will be ideal.

468 Mr. McBride: Ok.

469 Commissioner Silverman: This is something that the city had been looking toward for its walking trail
 470 system in its parks. It can be as simple as a stencil on a paved surface or a small sign or even a properly
 471 done blaze on an existing tree, some kind of marker. Another thing that has been an experience with the
 472 Delaware Avenue bike lanes. The fire company has just issued a directive that as the emergency vehicles
 473 leave the Academy Street station they are to hesitate for as much as 45 seconds to a minute because the
 474 Opticom devices that we have on our apparatus which help control traffic at traffic light intersections,
 475 somehow is not included in the bicycle traffic signal system nor the pedestrian signals. So, it's awfully
 476 confusing.

477 Mr. McBride: I had no idea, that was a whole new system that DelDOT created, and I wish we'd thought
 478 about that when we were talking with them on it.

479 Commissioner Silverman: Well, that's something we discovered, we'd be responding out of the fire
 480 house, the brand new installed Opticom system would be working fine except our drivers would say

481 there were still bicyclists going by and pedestrians still crossing, and we've made that an internal policy.
482 So that's something that the engineering groups may want to work with DelDOT on. Getting into techno
483 speaking. One of the other things that I saw with the Delaware Avenue project was when this was talked
484 about in 2014, I commented that if a bicycle lane was going to be installed on Delaware Avenue it should
485 be installed on the University side of Delaware Avenue and discussed the merits on that. And lo and
486 behold it was installed on the Main Street side of Delaware Avenue. There's a term that we use in
487 planning called curb cuts, that's anytime that anybody cuts across a curb, whether it's a pedestrian
488 crossing, a private garage that backs out, alleyways, it turns out they put the bicycle lane on the busiest
489 side with respect to curb cuts including again in front of the fire house, where there were safety
490 equipment bay doors that drive literally onto the bicycle path. So that margin of safety is not there
491 under the circumstances. So maybe when these projects are located in the future that kind of thing
492 should be taken into account. With respect to school and school education and the use of bicycles you
493 may want to look at the state school board and state legislation. At one time there was a policy in effect
494 where if you lived a mile distance from the school you had to take the school bus.

495 Mr. McBride: More than a mile.

496 Commissioner Silverman: More than a mile, yes, I'm sorry. More than a mile. That may not be applicable
497 anymore in the circumstances that we're generating in the city of Newark with the very safe bike paths
498 that are being proposed. I, too, like Mr. Kadar, am very concerned about the number of bicyclists not
499 only at night but during the day who do not display bright lights particularly forward. It's difficult in an
500 urban area with streetlights, the dark, the shadows, the traffic to sometimes even see a bicyclist coming
501 through an area.

502 Mr. McBride: Sometimes it's difficult even during the day as well so we...

503 Commissioner Silverman: LED flashing lights are so practical and so inexpensive and something we can
504 look at from a land use point of view are having more discussion about bicycle lockers being provided
505 along with having more open-air places to lock up bicycles. Mile markers, it is important to have
506 continued discussions with the University. As we found out with our TID group, when we were looking at
507 the bicycle path along South College Avenue, here's an organization that controlled virtually one side of
508 College Avenue who for design reasons, aesthetic reasons, whatever did not want to give up any of their
509 property behind the curb to put in the kind of facilities we're calling for. So now from an expense point of
510 view as the project moves forward, at that time we were talking about 2 or 3 years ago, it costs about
511 10,000 dollars to move a telephone pole let alone trying to buy existing right of way and all the court
512 tied up in private property. So just by being a good partner of the university will really contribute to this
513 effort.

514 And finally, very unpopular, way back when I was using a bicycle where I lived, they had a bicycle
515 registration, you actually had a medallion that went on your bicycle. I would like to see a program in the
516 city of Newark to register bicycles for a fee and have that fee go back into the registration program,
517 bicycle safety programs, and enforcement of proper bicycle ridership and display of lights. I don't know
518 if that can be done without special legislation but that's just an idea that I think would bring home the
519 education component you talked about, which is probably the weakest. And those are my comments
520 Mr. Chairman thank you.

521 Chair Hurd: Alright, thank you. Commissioner Stine?

522 Commissioner Stine: I don't like that fee idea. I think we just acquired our 14 bikes between my husband
523 and me. We're avid cyclists and they do everything, they go uphill, downhill, across gravel, BMX bikes,
524 you name it. We did our first bike Newark ride in the spring, and it was really enjoyable, thank you for
525 that. It was a great group of people, and we really enjoyed it, we saw some areas that we had not seen
526 before in Newark. How do you become a bicycle friendly business?

527 Mr. McBride: There are many questions to ask and answer. We haven't focused on that because we
528 spent so much time focusing on the bicycle friendly city application and it was monumentally long you
529 know it took three staff people and about 8 volunteers to complete this thing. And I don't know how
530 many weeks.

531 Planner Fortner: The business though, is a lot simpler.

532 Mr. McBride: It is simpler.

533 Planner Fortner: So, you go to the League of American Bicyclists, their website, and you'll see a badge for
534 a bicycle friendly community program or something like that, you'll go there, and it'll list the different
535 types of bicycles friendly, so you go on the business, and it'll give you information about the criteria and
536 then you can look at the applicant. But some of the things that make for a bicycle-friendly business are
537 like you have bicycle parking, places where maybe people can take a shower and change from their
538 bicycle clothes, maybe with a shower as a big bonus. There are other types of incentives you offer for
539 employees and bicycling.

540 Mr. McBride: Some businesses give back transportation vouchers and they don't usually do that for
541 bicycles, so they're encouraging people to do that for bicycles.

542 Planner Fortner: Incentives, any type of incentive you might have, or if you charge for parking, that's
543 probably applied.

544 Commissioner Stine: Does that go toward your report card?

545 Planner Fortner: Well, having more bicycle friendly businesses would help the community, yes. So, it's
546 something we do report on when they ask how many we have, and we'd say one.

547 Mr. McBride: We only have one formal one, yeah. So, I think they do look at the ratio of businesses that
548 have bicycle friendly status.

549 Planner Fortner: Number and ratio sure so the more we have the better it would be.

550 Commissioner Stine: That seems like low hanging fruit.

551 Mr. McBride: Right and I'm hoping that's what The Newark Partnership will help with, because we're
552 supposed to be doing work with individual businesses.

553 Commissioner Stine: Great. And then on the public bikeshare program. To make a bicycle friendly
554 university, they could adopt a bike-share program at the university level or city level.

555 Mr. McBride: They could do that. We were recommending in all of our deliberations that they make a
556 program for the city not just the university, it makes no sense of course to make it just for the university
557 because the city surrounds the university and also people coming to the university are coming from
558 other places. Hotels, train stations, other schools, so it's a benefit to the community to have bicycles
559 circulating in the city and the university campus rather than cars.

560 Planner Fortner: So, the actual report card says that the city should consider doing it too and so we
561 could. And so, it would be like, you've seen a lot of urban areas like Newark, you see they have these
562 little bikeshare programs and whether it would work for Newark or not, what kind of scale or where we
563 would put it.

564 Commissioner Stine: They seem like they're, when I've seen them, they look to me like they're private
565 companies that are doing it.

566 Planner Fortner: A private company yeah.

567 Mr. McBride: Most of them are.

568 Commissioner Stine: Do you have to give them licensing or?

569 Mr. McBride: Well, they're two models, one as a completely private service, they come in on a contract
570 with the city, let us operate, we'll bring in our units and put them here, here, and here and you know just
571 give us an operating license. There are others like Pittsburgh where the University of Pittsburgh Medical
572 Center basically runs the program, sponsors the program with their fees and subsidizes it, it's not
573 completely free but they subsidize it dramatically. There are very few places where the city or county
574 government runs the program, there are a few, there's a county in Massachusetts that runs their
575 program, but that's a community with 4 colleges in it. So, it made sense for them to run it as a county
576 wide program. So, they just happened to have 4 campuses within the county. And it's in Massachusetts,
577 and I don't know how they do it in the winter, but they run it all winter so it's something that's been
578 done.

579 Commissioner Stine: Do they make money?

580 Mr. McBride: I don't think they make money, but I think they cover their costs. Maybe the
581 transportation budget for the county or the cities is part of, they kick in part of the cost, and part of the

582 cost is the fees, the membership fees, it's kind of like a cooperative into which you buy a share, and you
583 can use the bicycles for the period that you're a member. We have a local organization that already exists
584 that could manage bicycle maintenance and part of the whole thing, the Newark Bike Project. So, we're
585 hoping that we can run a local organization rather than bring in an outside group to do all of the work if
586 we go with the bikeshare. Because they could use the work and it's a local business, a nonprofit
587 business, but it's a business and it gives everybody a chance in town.

588 Commissioner Stine: Thank you, and thank you for all of your work, I really appreciate it.

589 Chair Hurd: Thank you. Commissioner Tauginas?

590 Commissioner Tauginas: Are we on? There we go. I just had a couple of thoughts; I did live in New York
591 City for over a decade, so I was there when they installed city bikes. Apparently, I was just looking, is
592 powered by Lyft and they just charge like a monthly fee. Just as a person that was living in the
593 community on the upper west side, I noticed, and I'm not sure how you address this, but it's just
594 something I've thought about. But the motorized E-Bikes that can go at incredibly high speeds at times
595 when traffic could be completely stopped and whatnot. As this program and biking get more popular
596 because you've laid down the infrastructure, I just foresee, I mean at least once a week I see someone
597 get smacked into a bike. And when you get into dense, highly populated areas where there's a lot of foot
598 traffic, a lot of car traffic, and a lot of bike traffic all trying to coexist, it's just how do you safely regulate
599 that situation. And I don't think that, just based on my opinion, that they did a very good job of that in
600 New York because there's just so many people.

601 So, Newark in the summer, relatively empty right, not a lot of people. But once the students come back
602 and the traffic increases, and the foot traffic increases, and as the word gets out that we're this bike
603 friendly community and more people come here and that becomes an attraction to attend the university
604 like what's happening with Mr. Fortner's kid, how are we going to handle that as a community? Because
605 it is going to be a safety concern and anyone who thinks that it won't be is in denial. Especially, for me, it
606 wasn't necessarily the people riding the city bikes, because those just, those didn't seem to be electric.

607 Mr. McBride: They're restricted, yes.

608 Commissioner Tauginas: Yes, exactly. So you know, but it was really like the motorized and E-Bikes that
609 you could really get to high speeds on, not to mention again, making sure you have clear signage for
610 people, I mean, I had a friend of mine that smacked into, they had just put up some construction at
611 some place that wasn't there the day before and he was going on his bike full tilt and hit it, and flew. So
612 just things like that, making sure that it's well thought out, and that we're not like, getting all the way to
613 95% done and then realizing well oops that was a mistake. So those are just my overall thoughts.

614 Mr. McBride: Thank you, and I agree with you, my daughter lives in Brooklyn and it's a difficult time
615 when there's a lot of people and E-Bikes delivering food. One of the things you can do is restrict the
616 speed of the bikes, there's already model legislation for communities to do that. The bikes when they're
617 sold can be qualified as various speeds, so that's one avenue that we have, we could say, you can't ride
618 the bike except on speed limit 1, which is about 15 miles an hour, I think. So, those do exist, and we
619 could put those into legislation. Both the University and the Newark Police Department both have
620 bicycle officers already trained so they'll be able to step right in if it becomes something that they want
621 to do, so that's another positive that we have going for us now. And the rest of it, I just don't know how
622 we can see. The number of bicycles in the University population doesn't seem to be increasing. So, they
623 don't know if there will be more bicycles in the future as they will get more students or whether it'll stay
624 the same. It seems odd that they weren't increasing, that there weren't more bicycles coming into the
625 university, but it doesn't seem like it's happening.

626 Commissioner Tauginas: Well considering the parking situation I hope that they decide to, just saying.

627 Chair Hurd: Thank you. I just have a few things as a relatively new bicyclist in the city, I appreciate all
628 your efforts, especially the Delaware Avenue bikeway, because I use that all the time. And I think I agree
629 that enforcement would be an important piece of this as we get more bikes out there. When we're
630 talking about like bicycle parking, I haven't been down there but do you know if the new train station has
631 bike lockers? Or is it just outside storage?

632 Mr. McBride: I believe there are a few bike lockers there, very few, doesn't look like enough to me, but
633 they do have rather extensive bike parking almost completely un-utilized at this point.

634 Chair Hurd: Yeah. Because it's not operational.

635 Mr. McBride: Not really a fully operational train station yet.

636 Chair Hurd: Because that's the kind of thing that would encourage people to bike to then take transit and
637 I think the same for the businesses that want to be bike friendly. You know you basically need a locker or
638 internal storage for the bikes.

639 Mr. McBride: Or they can participate in a public system.

640 Chair Hurd: Ok.

641 Mr. McBride: So, you know they give a person a voucher to park their bike at the parking garage at the
642 university which is one possibility.

643 Chair Hurd: Yeah, I would just not that what I've observed for the university at least, they've already got
644 a fairly extensive you know remote parking and bus system which may be what's keeping the number of
645 bikes down, is that there's already an alternate method of transport that's free for the students. Yeah, I
646 don't have a lot to add, I think you guys' kind of got it. Are there any other items that they pointed out to
647 you that you think would be particularly easy to achieve? Or do you think is there, from what they
648 suggested?

649 Mr. McBride: Bicycle friendly business is probably going to be the easiest part of it, the rest of it is going
650 to be kind of hard because you know we talked about the difficulties of getting education in for young
651 people or even adults and it's just not part of our culture in the United States at this point, everybody
652 learned how to ride a bike as a 10 year old, 11 year old and they haven't had any instruction since but it
653 doesn't mean they don't need it.

654 Chair Hurd: I would agree, I think it was a year or so ago I got an email newsletter about how Delaware
655 had adopted the Idaho STOP for bicycles. I'm like cool, then looked it up and mentioned it on Facebook
656 and people are like no, bikes can't do that, you can't do that, no get off my road.

657 Mr. McBride: People still yell at me when I do that.

658 Chair Hurd: So, there's both sides. Cars need to recognize that a bike on the road like, I get 3 feet and
659 people aren't willing to do that. Well, best of luck and we look forward to seeing it when it shows up.
660 Wait before you leave, Katie, do we have any submitted public comment?

661 Ms. Dinsmore: Online and in the chat no.

662 Solicitor Bilodeau: Chairman I had a quick question if I could. Last week when I was going home from a
663 Council meeting I don't usually go Delaware Avenue I go 896 but a couple of times 896 has been closed
664 and then I was kind of surprised by those lights for the bikes. How long have they been there?

665 Mr. McBride: They were part of the original design, it took a whole extra 3 months to get those built and
666 approved by the federal people that have to approve these things.

667 Chair Hurd: The traffic lights?

668 Solicitor Bilodeau: Yes, the traffic lights.

669 Mr. McBride: Bicycle traffic signals.

670 Solicitor Bilodeau: I was a little confused at first, and I was just curious what the general reaction was.

671 Mr. McBride: We see pretty good, I mean I ride it once a week I did it mostly during the off season. But I
672 saw pretty good numbers of people holding to the rules on that but they are confusing. And as Alan
673 pointed out a terrible oversight that nobody had thought of about the emergency vehicles.

674 Chair Hurd: My favorite part of those and I don't know if it's a sensor or not, but at some intersections
675 the bike gets the green light before the traffic does so I get like 10 seconds to clear the intersection
676 before the cars start going and turning left and all and I love that.

677 Mr. McBride: That's the Dutch engineer's suggestion that we worked that into it.

678 Chair Hurd: That's the Dutch for sure.

679 Commissioner Silverman: Does that lighting system even appear in the motor vehicle handbooks?

680 Mr. McBride: Not at the moment, I don't think it does.

681 Commissioner Silverman: Which makes it even more confusing.

682 Mr. McBride: Because it's unique in the state so I'm hoping that someone at the DelDOT project has said
683 hey we got to put this stuff in the driver's manual somewhere.

684 Commissioner Silverman: Because we have the legacy of the flashing green light.

685 Mr. McBride: Yeah.

686 Chair Hurd: So back to the question of public comment, no one?

687 Ms. Dinsmore: No, I did two comments if I may?

688 Chair Hurd: Absolutely, so you can go ahead.

689 Ms. Dinsmore: First, I like the educational aspect, I'm all about education, you did mention that it was
690 difficult to get into the schools and I understand that so this might be a little ways off. But in my
691 experience I have volunteered in a fire department, and a lot of times they'll go into the schools and do a
692 fire safety day with the kids, like stop drop and roll, how to dial 911, it would be great if maybe you could
693 work with the fire department at some point and maybe get in there and do a bike safety day, that might
694 be beneficial for the kids.

695 Mr. McBride: We did that at Downes this year.

696 Ms. Dinsmore: Oh great!

697 Mr. McBride: It was a bike safety review, and that took two years to get organized. And I think they did it
698 because a principal was retiring and she wanted it to happen before she left. But we'll keep trying.

699 Planner Fortner: We have it pretty good, especially with Downes and elementary, it's the middle school
700 and high school.

701 Mr. McBride: The middle school and high school, one of the problems is that they're outside of the city
702 and most of the students who go there go by bus. So.

703 Planner Fortner: We have Newark Charter Middle School now.

704 Mr. McBride: I guess that's true, Newark Charter's in the city now.

705 Chair Hurd: And it's right on that Elkton Bike Path so they could directly access it.

706 Mr. McBride: That's true.

707 Chair Hurd: So no one else on public comment?

708 Ms. Dinsmore: No.

709 Chair Hurd: Alright we'll close public comment, any final comments from the commissioners before we
710 close this item? Alright.

711 Mr. McBride: Thank you very much.

712 Chair Hurd: Thank you guys.

713 **4. Review and discussion of an amendment to Chapter 27, Subdivisions, to update addressing**
714 **standards for buildings in the city and formalizing the role of the Addressing Committee in the**
715 **process**

716 Chair Hurd: Alright item 4, review and discussion of an amendment to Chapter 27, Subdivisions, to
717 update addressing standards for buildings in the city and formalizing the role of the Addressing
718 Committee in the process. Director Ramos-Velazquez are you taking this one?

719 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: I will be taking this one. So for the record, this is Jessica Ramos-
720 Velazquez, the Planning Deputy Director for the department. So, tonight you have a report in front of
721 you, I'll summarize that. Regarding the amendments to Section 27-23 Subdivision and Addressing names
722 and the assignment to create an addressing standard. This was addressed originally back in 2013 by the
723 Planning Commission regarding the Director receiving numerous reports both from the Police
724 Department as well as Aetna regarding subdivisions being named or addressed without proper signage.
725 At the time there was the section that you have in front of you which is the current section that was
726 written in addition to 27-24 which basically addresses the request of changing a subdivision name or

727 street or address. As you can see by the verbage in front of you the code is very vague in addressing
728 what we have currently have with developments here in the city and in the nation. So, we have taken
729 that and working with the Addressing Chair which is the Newark Police Department and have developed
730 an addressing standard in the sense. The methodology behind that while implementing did help
731 alleviate some of the issues regarding the addressing around subdivisions and street names but it did not
732 address specific unit addressing. This leads to buildings using different unit assignment methodologies
733 which resulted in confusion for emergency response. The planning development process changes in
734 renaming section 27-23 to Addressing Standards. This will provide a clear and exact addressing standard
735 for all properties in the city both redeveloped and new development.

736 The amendments are outlined below in the Planning Report on pages 2 and 4 and you also have a draft
737 of the standard in the back. I will note I did receive a request from the Newark Police Department as
738 well as a representative from Aetna who is here with us tonight to do two quick changes. Under
739 administration, so line 97 we will be addressing who the members of the committee are which currently
740 composed of Newark Police Department, University of Delaware, the United States Post Office, the
741 Planning and Development Department as well as Aetna. Those are the formal members of the division
742 in addition to a correction to line 114 just basically adding the verbage “to address the addressing
743 committee” in terms of anyone who is applying will directly contact the Addressing Committee. So,
744 those are the two additional changes that have been made this afternoon prior to the meeting so I didn’t
745 have a chance to...

746 Chair Hurd: That was line what? 114 applying for addressing?

747 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Yes. To the Addressing Committee. The other thing to note as you go
748 through the standard you will see that we addressed the majority of the structures that we currently
749 have in the city and the ones that we have coming in that are being recommended for either site plan or
750 subdivisions it’s always something that we can add any additional. One of the things we had discussed
751 is if we do this inclusionary zoning or accessory use that would be verbage that we could add to the
752 addressing standard as those become a legal use in the city.

753 Chair Hurd: Ok, thank you. And we will begin with Commissioner Kadar.

754 Commissioner Kadar: We’ll get used to it. Provided that fire, police, and the mail service are together on
755 this standard, I don’t have any issues with it. I do have however one question. Is there any requirement
756 within the city of Newark for homeowners, business owners, to visibly display their address either on
757 their mailbox in front of the house or on the house itself proper? I ask this because while it’s very easy
758 for the fire, police to find the street I think we’re pretty good with streets, you could drive down some of
759 these developments and go 5 or 6 houses and never see a single address.

760 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So, currently under the Property Maintenance Code under the city
761 there is a standard for the actual size and the way it needs to be displayed. I know as recently as about
762 an hour ago one was issued to a property because they don’t have the numeric on the property so it
763 does exist and it’s already in our property maintenance code.

764 Commissioner Kadar: So, there is a standard that requires homeowners to display their address?

765 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: That is correct.

766 Commissioner Kadar: Well it’s not enforced let me tell you.

767 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Like I said we enforced it an hour ago though, because I did see the
768 violation come in.

769 Commissioner Kadar: Ok. I have one on my house just in case anyone wants to ask. That’s all I had no
770 further questions, thanks.

771 Chair Hurd: Thank you, Commissioner Silverman?

772 Commissioner Silverman: I’m working on an earlier draft that came out of the packet so I’m going to
773 have to do some translating here. So the Postal Service is included in the committee?

774 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Yes, they are.

775 Commissioner Silverman: The other group that needs to be recognized in here, this is also serviced for
776 the now multiple consumer to house delivery services It also facilitates delivery services as well I did find
777 one typo and I don’t know if it continues, looking at line 16 under applicability, it should be the word

778 “structures”. Like I said I’m working off an earlier draft it says section 27-23 addressing standard, there’s
779 paragraph B, applicability, there’s...

780 Chair Hurd: So in this version on line 93 that is spelled correctly.

781 Commissioner Silverman: Ok, so somebody picked that up. And let’s see, there’s a reference to
782 performance regulations at the Delaware Department of Transportation I don’t know where that falls at
783 the draft we have at our table, again it’s under the adminsitration section. Signage on my earlier draft.
784 Has anyone found that?

785 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: It’s line 104...in the report.

786 Commissioner Silverman: So just to save future changes it should be the most currently adopted
787 regulations and that way this is always updated every time. It changes with whatever they’re doing. Ok,
788 learned about visibility from the cartway. And just a side comment. If an applicant, an engineer
789 particularly somebody from out of state, does their own addressing and submits it, or they go to the post
790 office prior to coming to the committee. Under what authority do you have the right to simply reject
791 everything they’ve got?

792 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So currently we do not, this would give us the right to do so.

793 Commissioner Silverman: Ok, so that’s implied in here.

794 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Correct.

795 Commissioner Silverman: Ok, thank you. Those are my comments.

796 Chair Hurd: This has authority over subdivisions, so.

797 Commissioner Silverman: Ok. We’ve had instances from time to time where an out of state engineering
798 firm has done their template for numbering bring it in then become very upset when they have to redo a
799 whole lot of things.

800 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Absolutely.

801 Chair Hurd: Alright thank you. Commissioner Stine?

802 Commissioner Stine: I have no comments, thank you.

803 Chair Hurd: Alright, Commissioner Tauginas?

804 Commissioner Tauginas: Pretty self explanatory, no questions or comments.

805 Chair Hurd: Ok, thank you, Commissioner Bradley?

806 Commissioner Bradley: Thank you. No talk about any existing property addresses being changed with
807 this regulation correct?

808 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Correct.

809 Commissioner Bradley: It’s just anything newly permitted going forward?

810 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Correct.

811 Commissioner Bradley: As part of the permit process for new construction, are they required to obtain
812 an address before a permit is submitted?

813 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So at the current time no, when they come into Planning for any
814 subdivision or major subdivision, it is caught by our planner. Once the permit is done, it is caught by the
815 Code Enforcement Division. Unfortunately it’s not matching what addressing has already addressed. So
816 we have had incidents where the inspector shows up to the actual site and realizes what the Addressing
817 Committee has decided is not what is being retained at the property. Or we’ve had applicants go to the
818 post office and give an address that is not. So currently there is no formal way to do that.

819 Commissioner Bradley: And I guess was my follow up question, if they’re coming to you with an address
820 where are they getting that address from? And that’s the postal service?

821 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So some of them have just chosen their own addressing.

822 Commissioner Bradley: But regardless, during the permit process that's all flushed out so by the time I'm
823 assuming the CO, the Certificate of Occupancy inspection the building number has to be on for that
824 inspection?

825 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: That's correct. So they will be getting formal exterior addressing at
826 subdivision phase and they'll be getting internal addressing prior to permit or they must submit it with
827 the permit application as their final.

828 Commissioner Bradley: Internal meaning like an apartment complex?

829 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Yes.

830 Commissioner Bradley: Size of the numbers is that a requirement?

831 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So, the size and the numbers are a requirement due to the building
832 property maintenance code so we're going to keep it there because ICC does manage that at the moment
833 and we have not chosen to change that.

834 Commissioner Bradley: That was all I had, thank you.

835 Chair Hurd: Alright thank you. So based on Commissioner Bradley's comments I have a question or
836 suggestion. So the only one I think that might slip through the cracks are single residential structures.
837 Single family residential, you know, one lot one buildings because I don't know if that would fall through
838 as a subdivision. I think it would just be a building permit with just lines and grades. And so I don't know
839 if we have in here the enforcement needed for assigning it an address along the street where it is, and
840 enforcing that as part of the granting of the Certificate of Occupancy.

841 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So that addressing would be handled at the permitting phase. Do
842 you have that one off construction and more than likely that's already been a subdivision if we're
843 dividing the parcel itself or if the parcel's already been addressed and we have a demo of the property.

844 Chair Hurd: Ok. Commissioner Silverman?

845 Commissioner Silverman: If we are successful with our ADU program, is there enough flexibility in what's
846 being proposed that when I build my ADU behind my house there's a system in place to assign a postal
847 drop to it?

848 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So, we do have the ability to update this to address ADUs when that
849 does become a legal use in the city but we do already have a mechanism and certain guidelines
850 throughout the country that would address that and that would come in front of you again for an
851 adjustment.

852 Commissioner Silverman: Ok, thank you.

853 Chair Hurd: Alright which does raise a question, you do have duplexes, triplexes, and you know blank-
854 plexes which you know isn't currently a legal use in the city.

855 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: We are seeing more applicants for it.

856 Chair Hurd: Ok, interesting. Ok, alright if you're comfortable with that, because I know there's a couple
857 of different streets that have single lots, if you're comfortable that we can get the right numbers on
858 those, and enforce that and not have them make stuff up then I'm ok. Alright do we have any public
859 comment submitted for this?

860 Ms. Dinsmore: No, but we have someone present I believe wishes to speak.

861 Chair Hurd: Alright, then we will take public comment in, yes please come up. And just identify yourself
862 for the record please.

863 Mr. Eldridge: My name is Paul Eldridge, I work with the city and I have for the last 50 years doing this
864 addressing. One question I have and unfortunately I have a hearing problem, the question I have is, on
865 what I sent you, a request for further information on addressing can be obtained by who?

866 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So I did, I mentioned it earlier, but on line 114 of the Planning
867 Commission report that's been added.

868 Mr. Eldridge: Well I don't have the lines so I can't tell.

869 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So, Lieutenant Truman came and saw me with that comment. And
870 that's been added to the language where it says "applying for addressing must be in writing" and it
871 clearly states "to the Addressing Committee". So, it is addressed now.

872 Mr. Eldridge: Well the copy that I had it says that it must be in writing but there's no recourse for the
873 person to ask, to inquire, the proper way to do it. And that's why I added this, contact the Planning
874 department or Police department, whichever but there should be some method for them to inquire.

875 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Correct, and that's been added.

876 Mr. Eldridge: Ok.

877 Chair Hurd: I'll just say it sounds like you either here in the code or when this is enacted on the website
878 or something, it should have a listed point of contact.

879 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Another thing I will make note with the new EPL software this will be
880 a step that an applicant must take during their construction phase. So it will actually highlight the
881 contractor and let them know that this step must be taken on both sections, both at the subdivision
882 phase as well as the permitting phase and they will be able to add any documents that they need to
883 prove. One of the documents they will need to prove is a letter from the Addressing Committee stating
884 that that's what's been granted.

885 Mr. Eldridge: Of course we've had some problems in some of the newer constructions where the owner,
886 the contractor, with their addresses in the building and it's totally screwed up. So that's why we've done
887 this and gone thorough this. Thank you very much.

888 Chair Hurd: Alright thank you for your comments. Do we have anyone online that wishes to comment?
889 Ok, closing public comment. Do we have any further comments or questions from the Commissioners?

890 Commissioner Kadar: I have a question for Commissioner Silverman, were you recommending any
891 changes to the document specifically that need to be included in the motion?

892 Commissioner Silverman: No, I wasn't.

893 Commissioner Kadar: That's fine, thank you.

894 Commissioner Silverman: Yes, there was one change, in dealing with DelDOT standards, the most
895 currnetly adopted regulation.

896 Chair Hurd: That was line 103, yes. I think that's the only addition that's been added at the dais. The
897 other two were as expressed by the Deputy Director. We're good? Alright, we can move to the motion
898 Secretary Kadar please.

899 Commisssioner Kadar: I move that **the Planning Commission recommend that City Council adopt the**
900 **revised Section 27-23, Addressing Standard, as outlined in the August 29th 2023 Planning report with**
901 **the following additions; line 103 should read "current Delaware Department of Transportation**
902 **standards" line 114 "applying for Addressing must be in writing to the Newark Addressing**
903 **Committee".**

904 Chair Hurd: Thank you do I have a second?

905 Commissioner Stine: Second.

906 Chair Hurd: Ok, Commissioner Silverman does that edit match with you?

907 Commissioner Silverman: Wordsmithing, **"with the most currently adopted regulations"**

908 Chair Hurd: Most currently adopted, ok.

909 Commissioner Silverman: That's generally the phrasing that's used.

910 Chair Hurd: Ok, we can take that as a friendly amendment. Any discussion or amendments to motion?

911 Solicitor Bilodeau: One more thing, do we want to name the members of the committee as part of the
912 amendment or is that?

913 Chair Hurd: I mean we could, I mean it's on the record from the Deputy Director. Would you like to have
914 it?

915 Commissioner Silverman: Yes, it should be in there.

916 Chair Hurd: Ok, so if I remember hearing correctly this would be on line, is this a separate? Ok, so this is
 917 a new item A for line 102 pushing paragraphs A and B down to B and C. The committee members would
 918 be [the Newark Police Department, the University of Delaware Police Department, the United States](#)
 919 [Postal Service, the Planning and Development Department and Aetna Hose Hook and Ladder](#)
 920 [Company](#). Gotta get it right.

921 Commissioner Kadar: I second.

922 Chair Hurd: Ok, got a second, we're accumulating amendments. Ok. All good? Moving to the vote.
 923 Commissioner Bradley?

924 Commissioner Bradley: Aye.

925 Chair Hurd: Thank you, Commissioner Kadar?

926 Commissioner Kadar: Aye.

927 Chair Hurd: Commissioner Silverman?

928 Commissioner Silverman: Aye.

929 Chair Hurd: Commissioner Stine?

930 Commissioner Stine: Aye.

931 Chair Hurd: Commissioner Tauginas?

932 Commissioner Tauginas: Aye.

933 Chair Hurd: And I am aye as well, motion carries. Thank you and thank you especially Deputy Director
 934 Velazquez for this effort.

935 **5. Informational Items**

936 Chair Hurd: Alright that takes us to item 5, informational items and we will begin with the Planning
 937 Deputy Director's report in the absence of our Director.

938 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So we will start with the Land Use division. The Subdivision Advisory
 939 comment letter went out to the Newark Housing Authority on August 25th with a supplemental letter
 940 sent on August 31st to deal with some fire related issues, a subdivision letter also went out to 25 North
 941 Chapel on August 25th, we have received an application for the rezoning, minor subdivision, and special
 942 use permit for an automobile refueling station and work in the floodplain was submitted for 1110 South
 943 College to construct a convenience store gas station car wash on August 23rd. A new application for the
 944 major subdivision was submitted for 141 East Main to construct a 5 story mixed use building with retail
 945 parking on the first floor, 39 three bedroom apartments on the second through the fifth floors on August
 946 29th. The deadline to file for the 2024 CDBG grant money was August 23rd, applicants are being
 947 processed by the Committee and that meeting is scheduled for later on in September. Currently it was
 948 dated on the 25th but there was a complication with Council Chambers.

949 For Code Enforcement, we have received the initial permit application for the reconstruction of 3000
 950 Fountainview as of August 24th it is currently under review by the department and we're in contact with
 951 the contractor. The first charges have been filed for our nuisance property ordinance against the owners
 952 of 17 Hillside Road which has accumulated 14 points since the adoption of the code on November 14th.
 953 Five other properties have met the 8 point threshold and staff will be proceeding to make those charges.
 954 15 other properties have been labeled between that 5 and 7 points and warning letters have been issued
 955 to them. We actually have our first NAP going in front of City Council on September 11th for 87 Kells
 956 Avenue and that currently has 4 points that they are looking to have removed. The demolition of 134
 957 East Main was approved and the demolition has begun. An offer has been extended and accepted for a
 958 new Fire Protection Specialist position with a tentative start date of September 18th.

959 In parking currently we have 4 part time parking ambassadors that have left their employment with the
 960 City of Newark this week leaving us out of 15 total. This position has a rolling open posting position, so
 961 applicants were quickly chosen for a pool of interviews which will take place this week. Parking permit
 962 season is fully in swing, 100 residents have been permitted 35 guest permits issued for the residential
 963 parking permit program in the last 2 weeks. That's all I have for the department at the moment.

964 Chair Hurd: Ok, thank you. I'll close informational items.

965 **6. New Business**

966 Chair Hurd: Moving to new business, any new items for discussion for city staff or Planning
967 Commissioners for future agendas?

968 Commissioner Silverman: A question for the Deputy Director. When will we be seeing information on
969 EVs? Parking charging stations, locations, buildings, all that good kind of thing?

970 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: So, we currently are working on a draft. It has been sent out to all of
971 the department heads that will take part in some enforcement or regulations for it. We're also waiting on
972 some legislation to take place in the state down in Dover in order for us to kind of find out what the
973 requirements are going to be, if they're going to put a limit on how many you must have a locations
974 because they have started the EV ready conversation, not so much the EV total spots that you must have
975 in development. With that being said, hopefully we should be looking at that hopefully by the end of the
976 year to bring it to Planning Commission for discussion.

977 Commissioner Silverman: Ok good because this month the Delaware Volunteer Firefighter's Association
978 annual conference and education classes will have speakers coming in to discuss the issues with EVs and
979 lithium storage batteries. And it should be a very interesting session. New York City has had experience
980 with eith lithium batteries. So there's going to be a lot of information. Hopefully we'll come back and be
981 included in your discussion thank you.

982 Deputy Director Ramos-Velazquez: Absolutely, I would love that.

983 Chair Hurd: Ok, and I don't mean to rush it, but if anyone has any questions for the Deputy Director on
984 the informational items we could do that. We're good ok. So, no new business items other than that?

985 **7. General Public Comment**

986 Chair Hurd: That takes us to item 7 general public comments for items not on the agenda but related to
987 the work of the Planning Commission. Was there any general public comment submitted ahead of time?

988 Ms. Dinsmore: No Mr. Chairman.

989 Chair Hurd: Ok, do we have anyone present, or online that wishes to give general public comment?
990 Alright seeing none I'm going to close public comment and having reached the end of our agenda we
991 consider the meeting as adjourned.

992 **The meeting adjourned at 8:36 P.M.**

993 Respectfully submitted,

994

995 Karl Kadar, Secretary

996 As transcribed by Katie Dinsmore

997 Planning and Development Department Administrative Professional I