Montclair’s Complete Streets Experience

October 22, 2010

Presented by:

Hon. Jerry Fried, Mayor
Montclair Township
About Montclair…

- Six square miles
- Six commuter rail stations
- Four local bus routes (NJ Transit)
- Two private commuter bus routes
- Five business districts
- 97.7 miles of road (14.4 County)
Safe Routes to Schools - Demonstration Project

- **Seminars**
  - Educating parents, teachers and students about the benefits of walking and bicycling to school

- **Events**
  - Walking school bus
  - Walk or bike to school days
Advocacy groups played a role

Montclair Health & Wellness Partnership
Mission: to promote the physical, emotional, and social well-being of students, staff and families of the Montclair Public Schools through increased access to quality services, education and information.

Bike/Walk Montclair
Mission: To create a bicycle-friendly & walk-able Montclair through advocacy, education, and encouragement. Through these means, our aim is to improve our health, clean our air, make our streets safer and improve our overall quality of life.
Complete Streets make sense, but…

- It’s going to cost too much
- There’s too much emphasis on cyclists and not enough on pedestrian safety
Proposed bicycle lanes raised additional concerns:

• Liability
• Cost
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**Reasons to Support Complete Streets Policy**

- Benefits motorists and non-motorists alike.
- Improves safety, health, and environmental conditions.
- Visual cues: motorists expect to share street with other users.
- Streets designed for walking and cycling reduce risk.
- Most times, capital costs won’t change (but look & function will).
- Not radical, risky or new, but more & more routine.
- Adds to economic vitality, aesthetic appeal, & overall quality.

**How it makes a difference**

- **Design & Construction** + **Public Awareness** + **Increased Enforcement** leads to **Behavior Change**
- And over time, **Culture Change**
What the final policy says…

- All Township streets shall be designed and constructed to include accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit, and other motorized vehicles and their passengers.
- A bicycle plan shall be developed within 90 days
- Limited exceptions allowed as follows:
  - Facilities are not required where they are prohibited by law.
  - Public transit facilities are not required on streets not serving as transit routes.
  - Cost of ped/bike facilities exceeds 20% of overall project cost
What the final policy says…

- All Township streets shall be designed and constructed to include accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit, and other motorized vehicles and their passengers.

- Limited exceptions allowed as follows:
  - Facilities are not required where they are prohibited by law.
  - Public transit facilities are not required on streets not serving as transit routes.
  - Cost of ped/bike facilities exceeds 5% of overall project cost.
Effects on the Design Process:

1. Conduct Inventory

- Functional Classification
- Vehicular traffic volume and speeds
- **Number of pedestrians & cyclists**
- Area character (residential, commercial, mixed, etc.)
- Existing ROW width
- Existing pavement width
- Existing number of lanes
- Turn lanes and/or medians?
- Curbing (one or both sides)?
- Are there shoulders (one or both sides)?
- Parking (one or both sides)?
- Sidewalk (one or both sides)?
- Existing speed limit
- Rail grade crossings
- Crash history
- Emergency call boxes
- **Street furniture/lighting**
- Transit routes and stops
- Safe Route to School
- Bike route (signage, marked or unmarked)
Effects on the Design Process:

2. Design Review – Assess and note deficiencies

a. Horizontal Alignment
b. Vertical Alignment
c. Pedestrian Crossings (presence/absence of crosswalks and ADA compliant ramps)
d. Cyclist patterns/usage (proposed bike lane or shared roadway issues; impacts on parking, etc.)
e. Transit stops, waiting areas, shelters
Effects on the Design Process:

3. Design (Plan Development)
   a. General Safety/Security
   b. Pedestrian Amenities
   c. Bicycle Amenities
   d. Transit Amenities
Effects on the Design Process:

4. Design Reviews

- Open House with residents at 90% complete
- NJDOT, CDBG funded projects must be submitted for review/approval before bidding
- Council must approve Municipally-funded projects when new bicycle or pedestrian facilities exceed 5% of the total cost
Lessons learned…

- Make sure the agenda is focused and prioritized to tackle the most important things first
- Develop allies within the staff and community who are in a position to move the agenda forward
- Reach out to the governing body early in the process to flesh out any potential issues (no surprises!)
Challenges ahead…

- Assessing and making determinations regarding location and class of bicycle facilities to be provided
- Interlocal coordination of planning for pedestrian and bicycle route continuity between jurisdictions
- Changing land use and zoning laws that discourage provision of sidewalks
Challenges ahead…

- Paying for new sidewalks or acquiring additional land for bicycling facilities
- Re-allocating existing roadway space from motorists to pedestrians and/or bicyclists
- Addressing liability concerns so cyclists and motorists are fairly accommodated
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