



**Ross Valley Task Force
Meeting Notes
September 7, 2012
Ross Valley District Office**

Present (21)

Wendi Kallins – Program Director for Safe Routes to School; Laura Kelly – Volunteer Liaison for Safe Routes to School; Eileen Rohan – Superintendent of Ross Valley School District; Billy Cameron – Brookside Principal; Kristi Fish – Hidden Valley Principal; Annelise Bauer – Ross Valley School Board; Carey Lando – Senior Transportation Planner, County of Marin; Lori Lopin – San Anselmo Town Council; Nancy Vernan – Aide to Supervisor Katie Rice; Bret Joyner – Director of Maintenance and Operations for Ross Valley School District; John Reed – Fairfax Town Council; Ted Fehlhaber and Helen Badger – Wade Thomas Team Leaders; Karl Vavrek – Cascade Canyon Team Leader; Mark Howlett – Fairfax Police Department; Shelley Flint – San Domenico School; Kristy Marksbury – San Domenico School; John Ferguson – Manor School Parent; Debra Merten and Jennifer Langfield – Brookside School Team Leaders; Kathleen Cutter – St. Anselm’s Team Leader.

National and local funding updates for Safe Routes to Schools, Marin County

Wendi shared that Congress recently passed a new transportation bill: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). Unlike the previous legislation, MAP-21 does not provide funding specifically for Safe Routes to School. Instead, SRTS activities will be eligible to compete for funding alongside other programs, including the Transportation Enhancements program and Recreational Trails program, as part of a new program called Transportation Alternatives. All walking and biking programs have been lumped together with other national transportation initiatives. What does that mean for our SR2S program in Marin County?

Wendi said the good news for Marin SR2S is that we still have strong local and state funding sources. We have our own transportation funding for infrastructure, non-infrastructure and crossing guards through the local sales tax. On a state level, CalTrans has had its own state program since 2000 and our national and state advocates are asking it to retain the federal funding at the same level. On a national funding level, national groups will continue to lobby for money even though it’s

more competitive to do so, than in the past. Lori asked what an example of non-infrastructure funding is? Wendi said Task Force meetings, educational classes, and encouragement – basically anything not being built.

White Hill Construction Update

White Hill Middle School is now undergoing major construction. Bret shared that the White Hill Student Safety and Travel Committee continues to discuss traffic disruption issues and recommends strategies to assist the community in coping with the disruptive project work.

A decomposed granite pathway to promote more biking was installed this summer. The path allows students to bypass traveling on Glen Drive, which is heavily used by car drivers, buses and walkers. The path is granite, which will alleviate the mud factor during the winter rain season for bikers. White Hill parents promoted the pathway when school started by standing at the entrance to the route to help create awareness, diverting bikers from using Glen Drive.

John Ferguson lives on Glen Drive and shared that he has noticed the number of children biking **on the Glen Drive sidewalk** has decreased by roughly 90% due to the new pathway. The granite pathway is primarily for bikers, but walkers can use it too especially if traveling to school from the west of Fairfax.



New White Hill Bike Pathway 2012

Bret shared that the problem of a long bus line “backed up” in the Golden Gate Bus Transit area near Cascade Canyon School while they wait for school to be released has been resolved this month. The Redwood trees next to the bus line up area have been trimmed. The bottom section of the trees were trimmed to allow more room for the buses to move up (west) on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (closer to the Glen Drive entrance) when lining up. Fairfax

Public Works talked with the owners of Cascade Canon Condominiums to seek approval to trim the trees. Karl shared that he hasn't seen a single bus backed up this school year, and the action taken to get the Redwood trees trimmed was appreciated.

Obstruction of bus line up before tree trimming



After tree trimming on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, Fairfax 2012

Eileen shared that the White Hill Safety and Travel Committee which was created because of the anticipated White Hill renovation construction has been a successful collaborative between many entities: Chief Moran, Katie Rice, Michael Rock, John Reed and neighbors. The focus of the committee has been on transportation and safety, and as a result many great ideas have surfaced from this initiative. The White Hill Student Safety and Travel Committee will outreach to the Manor School community in efforts to expand the program, and directly work with the principal, Jason Richardson.

Debra asked about the White Hill safety issue regarding parents drop off at the end of Glen Drive and then turn around? Bret said this issue has been

addressed and discussed by the committee. Eileen said there were many ideas to resolve the problem, but solutions are costly. There is a crossing guard present, but the guard is for the Sir Francis Drake crosswalk, not Glen Drive. Debra asked if we could post signs for drivers to slow down and be aware of bikers when they take the right turn onto Glen Drive. Wendi suggested the Street Smart Campaign signs, which encourage drivers to slow down for pedestrians. Eileen agreed that drivers need to be reminded to slow down especially around school start time. John Reed said he would take care of obtaining the signs. It was also suggested to ask David Finanne to publish a paragraph in the White Hill e-newsletter to alert parents.

On a final White Hill note, it was shared that there is no eloquent solution for kids to travel from Bolinas Road to White Hill. John Reed shared that an underground tunnel was proposed and well received by the community because there is no easy solution above ground. Fairfax has many narrow roads with little parking above ground.

Fairfax Bike Spine

John Reed shared that Phase One of the “Fairfax Bike Spine,” a school bike route project, has been completed. Specs have been created and all school route details are on the Town of Fairfax website for public comment. Signage and street markings to identify the bicycle routes to school will be installed. The overall goal of the project is to improve the safety of the Town’s streets for student bicyclists, as well as increase awareness of motorists who share the road with them.



Wendi added that corridor programs are the next phase of the Main SR2S program, so the Fairfax Bike Spine is a great role model for the rest of our county. The new school route runs through the central residential areas in Fairfax. The first phase of the route will run along Bolinas Road, Park Road, Spruce to Arroyo and Sequoia Road, Scenic to Manor Road, Marin Road to Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, and Oak Manor Drive. The bike route will connect

much of Fairfax with Manor Elementary, Cascade Canon and White Hill Middle Schools. A potential route along Olema Road will be considered in the future.

John Ferguson shared a concern about using thermoplastic pavement markings on roads that are not improved. Reed said the town does not have the funding to repave roads before all of the thermoplastic markings are installed. Ferguson said thermoplastic markings have been known to be slippery when wet. Reed said there are different kinds of thermoplastic compounds to paint the street markings. Some are better than others to prevent slippery conditions when wet.

Phase Two of the Fairfax Bike Spine will commence pending funding from the Transportation Authority of Marin. Engineer David Parisi has been working closely with the Town of Fairfax to move the project along.

Town of San Anselmo Project Updates

Road improvements are underway on Brookside Drive (from Berkeley to Broadmoor), Sunny Hills Drive, Valley Road, Foss Avenue, Raymond Avenue, Woodland Avenue (Cedar to Crescent), Greenfield (from Sir Francis Drake to Spring Grove), Madrone Avenue, and Butterfield Road. All road improvements will be completed by the end of 2012 and posted on the Town of San Anselmo website.

Public Works Director, Sean Condry, could not attend today's Task Force meeting. Lori Lopin shared a few updates:

Butterfield construction is almost completed on the west side from Woodside to Rosemont. The Woodside sidewalk was needed to get around the house on the corner of Butterfield. Funding did not allow for the sidewalk to extend all the way up Woodside.

Alameda and Berkeley are non-town maintained roads and hard to improve.

There has been talk about moving the Brookside school fence back to widen the drop-off pick up lines, but this is a preliminary proposal.

Greenfield Avenue construction (Exercise Row) – The parking slots are “back in” spots. That will help the bikers with visibility.

Bolinas Road – There is a flood issue on this road because the creek was diverted. Wendi said SR2S funding is being used to help correct this. There is a public meeting in Ross coming up soon. Wendi will forward the details. Kristy said that cars parking in bike lanes continue to be a problem. Bret said the bike lanes are clearly marked. Carey shared that the County is looking into what options are available to address this issue. Measurements have been taken and they will be making recommendations.

Kristy also shared that parents are parking along Butterfield and walking part way to school with their child. Kathleen suggested parking beyond Hidden Valley School and not park before the Hidden Valley entrance area. The school will encourage parents to do so. Posting signs was also suggested. The Sherriff is coming on Monday to take a look at the situation.

Kathleen asked if we could move the bus stop position of the one located on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard near San Francisco Boulevard. Lori said the timing of the lights has been changed to help the situation. Kathleen said the light change has made a significant difference. Lori said she would bring up changing the bus location at her next meeting.

Back-to-School Activities

Laura shared that SR2S has launched with the Patch a countywide contest to gather memories from parents of when they were young and biked to school. Click on the Patch logo below for more details about the “live” blog contest:



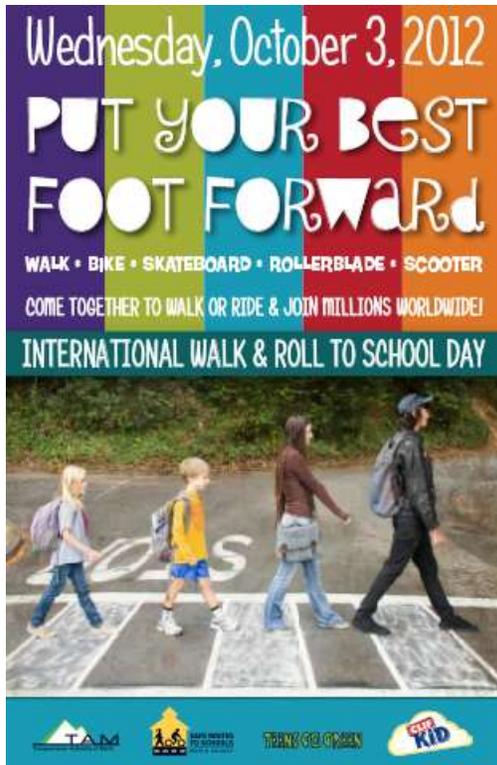
Do you remember walking and biking to school when you were a kid?

All parent Team Leaders are encouraged to set up a table on Back-to-School night and use our new SR2S sign-up form to rally volunteers for the school year. Many hands make light work, and Back-to-School night is an ideal venue to build a SR2S team at your school.

International Walk and Roll to School Day – October 3, 2012

All parent volunteer team leaders have been supplied with:

- 1) Posters to hang up this month



2) Magnets to distribute on the morning of October 3rd to all green travelers



3) Clif Kid snacks to distribute on the morning of October 3rd

A kick-off parent Team Leader luncheon was recently hosted in San Rafael. All systems are “go” for a kidical mass green travel day in Marin County on October 3. Please contact laura@marinbike.org for additional coordination support at your school.

Report Cards

Wendi shared that Marin SR2S now has results for our school Report Cards, which are a new evaluation tool to let each of our schools know how they are

doing in increasing the number of green trips to school (walk, bike, carpool or bus). Team Leaders and Principals were recently forwarded their SR2S Report Card.

The new Report Card evaluates each school based on the percentage of green trips from our student surveys, plus extra credit is given for their level of involvement in the program. This allows each school to strive to achieve a Green status or higher through regular walk to school days, and other encouragement techniques.

Ted suggested creating a green certificate for school to hang in their front office (for schools that were recognized by SR2S for their green travel).

SchoolPool

SR2S is working on setting up a pilot SchoolPool program for the Butterfield Road schools, Brookside and Hidden Valley. Part of this means recruiting neighborhood captains. A neighborhood captain coordinates a group email list of parents to get together to walk/bike/carpool to school. Maps for each neighborhood have been created for these two schools. Wendi said once the system is in place, it is hoped to become a self-sustaining program which bonds neighborhoods.

Wendi also mentioned that SR2S now has a trip-tracking program available to Team Leaders, which provides a scanner tag to all students that clips to their backpacks. Debra expressed interest in the program for Brookside and will work with SR2S to implement.

The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for January 25, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. at the Ross Valley School District Office in the portable room.