



# Spring 2008 Newsletter

*Our Mission is to promote bicycling and walking in West Windsor Township and neighboring communities, emphasizing access, education, mobility, and safety.*

Founded as a 501(c)(3), private non-profit corporation in January 2006

## Advocacy

### WEST WINDSOR WALKS

#### **BEAR BROOK ROAD AT ALEXANDER ROAD** **MAY 13**

The first "West Windsor Walks" event of this year will take place on Tuesday May 13th during the evening rush hour to point out the difficult conditions that pedestrians and cyclists encounter along Bear Brook Road and at the crossing of Alexander Road at Bear Brook Road/Vaughn Drive. The walk will begin at the Estates at Princeton Junction, proceed along Bear Brook Road through the Windsor Haven community and will end at the intersection of Bear Brook and Alexander Roads.

Elected officials and local residents will join us as we observe existing conditions, talk to local residents who commute on foot or on bicycle from the train station and brainstorm about potential improvements. We will meet at 5:30 p.m. at the intersection of Bear Brook Road and Winthrop Way (the closest street in the Estates to Windsor Haven). Please park on Devonshire Drive (just off Winthrop Way).

#### **BLACKROCK GRANT** **THANKS!**

As part of its efforts to support local charities, BlackRock – a NY-based money manager with a large office in Plainsboro – awarded the WWBPA \$500 for safety programs and signs.

### **CRANBURY/WALLACE ROAD AT ROUTE 571**

### **UPDATE**

For many years, the intersection of Cranbury/Wallace and Princeton-Hightstown Roads has been a nightmare for residents, especially those who walk and bicycle through



this intersection on their way to the train station. Over the years, many residents have complained about this intersection, only to be told that the multi-jurisdictional nature of the roads and intersection (township, county, and state) precludes anything being done to improve the intersection.

The good news is that bicycle and pedestrian improvements are coming to this intersection. The improvements are based on a series of recommendations the WWBPA put together after we led an educational walk of this intersection in late October. Local residents, elected officials, and the Mercer County engineer joined us. We presented our recommendations to the township administration and council, the county and the state, making it clear that, despite the multi-jurisdictional morass, safety improvements have to be made to the intersection.

According to the Mercer County engineer, the NJ Department of Transportation has crafted a plan of improvements, which the county and township will review. A meeting is planned in April, when a timeframe for improvements will be established. From what we understand, the improvements will include crosswalks across each of the roads, pedestrian-activated signals and signage.

#### **'BICYCLE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY' APPLICATION**

Together with West Windsor Township, we submitted the first part of an application to the League of American Bicyclists ([www.bikeleague.org](http://www.bikeleague.org)) to be a Bicycle-Friendly Community (i.e., one that provides safe accommodation for cycling and encourages its residents to bike for transportation and recreation). The Bicycle Friendly Communities Campaign ([www.bicyclefriendlycommunity.org](http://www.bicyclefriendlycommunity.org)) recognizes municipalities that actively support bicycling.



## Upcoming Events

Event	Date
<b>Bikeability/Walkability Map Demo</b> West Windsor Municipal Bldg, Rm A	<b>May 8</b> see article in Advocacy
<b>Be Green &amp; Be Seen</b> Hinds Plaza, Princeton Public Library	<b>May 10</b> 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.
<b>West Windsor Farmers' Market</b> *every other Saturday through fall	<b>May 17, 31*</b> 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
<b>West Windsor Walks</b> Bear Brook Rd. at Alexander Rd.	<b>May 13</b> see article in Advocacy
<b>Bike-to-Work Event</b> Princeton Junction Train Station	<b>May 19</b> see article in Encouragement
<b>Global Volunteer Day</b> McGraw-Hill in East Windsor	<b>May 22</b> see article in Advocacy
<b>BikeFest</b> Community Park	<b>June 7</b> 7:30 a.m. – afternoon
<b>National Trails Day</b> Zaitz Preserve	<b>June 8</b> see article in Engineering
<b>Bicycle Safety Session</b> Twin Rivers Branch Mercer County Library	<b>June 10</b> 7 – 8 p.m.
<b>Pedals for Progress Bike Drive</b> West Windsor Farmers' Market	<b>June 14</b> 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

## Contact Us

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Blog:	<a href="http://wbpa.blogspot.com">http://wbpa.blogspot.com</a>
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## Advocacy (continued)

### McGraw-Hill Global Volunteer Day MAY 22

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

GLOBAL VOLUNTEER DAY

We are partnering with The McGraw-Hill Companies, which is sponsoring its fifth annual Global Volunteer Day. Our project is promoting Safe Routes to School, Transit and Work.

Volunteers will document infrastructure gaps in our community and log details to our [Bikeability](#) and [Walkability](#) maps. We will use this inventory to set priorities for improvements and identify safe routes to be used in various programs to promote bicycling and walking. This event will serve as a model for neighboring communities interested in similar programs. [E-mail](#) us for info.

**When:** Thursday, May 22 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Where:** McGraw-Hill South Building employee parking lot 148 Princeton-Hightstown Road, East Windsor

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

### **RTE. 571 AT SLAYBACK DRIVE/BERNT MIDLAND BLVD.**

We made a series of recommendations to both the county and the township for bicycle and pedestrian improvements to the intersection of Route 571 and Slayback Drive/Bernt Midland Blvd. The improvements were initiated by two events: 1) the WWBPA learned that the county was conducting a re-striping program of county roads, and 2) residents who are using the Trolley Line Trail or accessing the community park are negotiating this intersection without the benefit of a crosswalk.

We shared our recommendations with the township and county administrations and township council, including: 1) in the short-term, installing a crosswalk across Route 571, Walk/Don't Walk indicators at the west side of the intersection and a crosswalk across Slayback Drive and 2) in the long-term, installing a crosswalk across the east side of the intersection, with a connection to a proposed sidewalk along Bernt Midland Blvd. allowing safe bike/ped access to the community pool, dog park and skate park. The county installed Walk/Don't Walk indicators on April 11, and will paint a crosswalk across Route 571 by the end of April.

## UPDATES

Township officials appear hopeful that a traffic study underway will support the need to put Canal Pointe Boulevard on a "road diet" (to reduce travel lanes from two to one in each direction, with a middle turning lane and bicycle lanes) by 2010. This year's capital budget proposal includes funding for a study to install traffic signals at the intersections of Canal Pointe Boulevard with Meadow Road and Carnegie Center Boulevard.

The township plans to make bike/ped improvements to the notorious Alexander Road "S" curve (near the D&R Canal) this year, including bike lanes on both side of the road from Canal Pointe Boulevard to the D&R Canal, and a macadam sidewalk on the Obal's side. This was the site of our first West Windsor

## UPDATES (continued)

Walk in the fall of 2006 and we have continually lobbied for bicycle and pedestrian improvements in this location.

The county will install a pedestrian refuge island, a clearly marked crosswalk and a pedestrian-activated signal on Clarksville Road at Avalon Watch and the Village Shoppes by spring. The township has already installed street lighting.

All of these improvements came from our recommendations!

## Encouragement

### BIKE-TO-WORK EVENTS MAY 16 AND 19

May is National Bike Month. We are co-sponsoring a Bike-to-Work Day with the Greater Mercer Transportation Management Association (GMTMA). Both organizations will have information tables at the east and west sides of the Princeton Junction Train Station on Monday, May 19th from 5:30 to 7 p.m. We will provide information about safe bicycling and walking. The GMTMA is also hosting a Bike-to-Work Day on Friday, May 16th in the parking lot next to Kopp's Cycle in Princeton from 6:30 to 8 a.m. We will also track bike-commuting miles by members of our community during the month. Please [e-mail](#) us with your weekly mileage for May (and any interesting bike-commuting stories) and we will post the results on our [blog](#). For other ideas about how to celebrate National Bike Month, please see this list from the League of American Cyclists: [www.bikeleague.org/programs/bikemonth/pdf/50\\_things\\_for\\_bike\\_month.pdf](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bikemonth/pdf/50_things_for_bike_month.pdf)

### CYCLING FOR A CAUSE: ANCHOR HOUSE JULY 12 – 19

Twelve West Windsor residents (six of them WWBPA members, including three trustees) will be joining 200 other cyclists in the 30th Anniversary Anchor House Ride for Runaways. This seven-day, 500-mile ride is an important fundraiser for Anchor House, a multi-service agency for runaway, homeless, abused, and at-risk youth and their families. If you are interested in being a sponsor, please [e-mail](#) us.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

**THANKS!**

At our Annual Meeting, we acknowledged three volunteers for their contributions to community service with the WWBPA:



- Ben Tufford (left with Chris Scherer), for his important early contributions in developing the first [bicycle/pedestrian map](#) of West Windsor Township, created by the WWBPA in 2007.
- Giuliano Chicco (center with Susan Conlon), for his work in designing and managing our Web site ([www.wwbpa.org](http://www.wwbpa.org)).
- Roger Alig (right with Ken Carlson), for his participation in building recreational trails in the township.

## BIKEABILITY AND WALKABILITY MAPS **Now ONLINE!**

We recently added [Bikeability](#) and [Walkability](#) maps that allow the public to participate in identifying existing bike/ped infrastructure and needed improvements in our community. We will use this information to set priorities and advocate for improvements.

**JOIN US FOR A DEMO:** We will demo our Bikeability and Walkability maps before our next monthly meeting on May 8 from 7 to 7:30 p.m. (West Windsor Municipal Bldg, Rm A).

## SHARE THE ROAD WITH BICYCLISTS same roads – same rights – same rules

### Bicyclists

#### **Obey the Law, Signs and Signals:**

- Bicyclists have all the rights and duties of motorists.
- Use hand signals before turning or changing lanes.
- Obey all traffic control devices.

#### **Always Wear a Properly Fitted Helmet:**

- Wearing a helmet is the law under age 17.
- Teach by example: don't ride without your helmet at any age.

#### **Never Ride Against Traffic:**

- Always ride with traffic.
- Ride as near to the right as practicable.
- Move left: to turn left, avoid road hazards, pass slower vehicles and when traveling at the same speed as traffic.

#### **Be Predictable:**

- Ride at least three feet from car doors or the curb.
- Ride in a straight line and anticipate hazards.
- Use hand signals before turning or changing lanes.
- Scan the road ahead, especially at crosswalks, intersections, driveways and parking spaces.
- Take the lane if conditions make passing unsafe.
- Stay off sidewalks (walk your bike if necessary).

#### **Be Visible:**

- Use a white front light and red rear light in low light.
- Wear brightly colored clothes.
- Use reflectors and reflective tape/clothing anytime.
- Make eye contact with drivers, but expect them not to see you.

### Motorists

#### **Drive Cautiously:**

- Reduce speed when approaching bicyclists
- Anticipate hazards bicyclists face and allow space.
- Don't tailgate, especially in slick conditions (bikes stop fast).

#### **Yield to Bicyclists:**

- Bicycles are considered vehicles. Give the appropriate right of way to bicyclists (e.g., when turning left, yield to oncoming bicyclists).

- Allow extra time for bicyclists to traverse intersections.

#### **Be Considerate:**

- Scan the road for bicyclists in traffic and at intersections.
- Don't honk your horn in close proximity to bicyclists (it startles them and may cause an accident).
- Look for bicyclists before opening your car door.

#### **Pass with Care:**

- When passing, leave four feet between you and a bicyclist as they need space to avoid hazards.
- Wait for safe road and traffic conditions before you pass (bicyclists may take the lane if conditions are unsafe).
- Do not pass a bicyclist if you intend to turn immediately.

#### **Watch for Children:**

- Children on bicycles are often unpredictable and are harder to see because of their size.
- Expect the unexpected and slow down. Don't expect children to know traffic laws.

## Education

### SCHOLARSHIP

**MAY 30 DEADLINE**

We are offering up to \$1000 in scholarship awards to West Windsor-Plainsboro High School seniors.

Applicants should submit a brief essay (not more than 250 words) describing activities that they have undertaken or new ideas for improved bicycle and pedestrian mobility and safety in our community. Please read and complete all instructions (available at [www.wwbpa.org](http://www.wwbpa.org)) and return the application with "STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP" in the subject line to: [wwbikeped@gmail.com](mailto:wwbikeped@gmail.com). The deadline is May 30, 2008.

## Enforcement

### WANTED: YOUR CLOSE CALLS

As cyclists and pedestrians, we risk our lives every day. Many of us have had near-misses and other altercations that left us rattled, angry, and feeling vulnerable. Some of us have suffered physical harm and incurred medical expenses because of hurried drivers. Typically, the only people who ever hear about these incidents are our friends, families and cycling buddies.

When these incidents go unreported, the media, the police and our elected officials are unaware of the extent of the problem. This needs to change.

Although we've made much progress towards influencing local authorities to address gaps in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, we still have much work to do to address the behavior of people who use the roads...yes, bicyclists, pedestrians and, most importantly, motorists. Even the most bicycle and pedestrian-friendly network of roads, trails and sidewalks is useless if our community does not use it properly.

We **MUST** address **EDUCATION** and **ENFORCEMENT**. We've all witnessed some form of irresponsible behavior by motorists.

Now is your time to speak out. If you have had a near-miss incident, or other dangerous interaction with a vehicle while walking or riding your bike in or around West Windsor, please share your story by emailing us at [wwbikeped@gmail.com](mailto:wwbikeped@gmail.com).

In your comment, please include: 1) the date and time of the incident, 2) the nearest cross streets of your incident, 3) a short description of what happened (pictures are helpful, if available) and 4) where you live.

When we compile the results, we will draft a letter with all your comments attached and send it to the appropriate authorities. We will also document these incidents on our [Bikeability](#) and [Walkability](#) maps. If you're interested in helping further with this effort, please email [wwbikeped@gmail.com](mailto:wwbikeped@gmail.com).

### WANTED: VOLUNTEER TAX ACCOUNTANT

We're looking for a tax accountant familiar with non-profits to volunteer his/her time to prepare periodic filings.

### WANTED: USED BICYCLE DONATIONS

Bring your bicycle(s) and \$10 per bike to our Pedals for Progress used bike collection on June 14 (9 a.m. – noon) at the Farmers' Market. On average it costs \$28 per bike to fix it and get it to its new home. Pedals for Progress delivers the bicycles to the developing world. Visit their Web site at [www.p4p.org](http://www.p4p.org).





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