

## **Starkville in Motion Minutes, February 13, 2006**

### **2005 in review (and a bit of 2004):**

1. Starkville in Motion was formed on November 12, 2004.
  - SIM was formed as a grassroots organization to promote sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails in Starkville and the greater Oktibbeha County community.
  - The impetus for this organization was a study and series of workshops held by the Carl Small Town Center, whose *project Bike Starkville...And Walk Too* identified critical non-motorized transportation needs throughout Starkville.
  - A name was selected.
  - Officer descriptions were developed.
  - Officers were elected.
  - On December 14, 2004, we held our first club meeting
  - On January 1, 2005, we had 2 paid memberships (although we had many more active members).
2. On January 29, 2005, we issued comments on the Starkville Comprehensive Plan, which was recently adopted by the City.
3. In early 2005, we developed a series of committees to tackle various aspects of our master plan. These committees include:
  - The University Drive Committee.
  - The Lynn Lane Committee.
  - The Safe Routes to Schools Committee.
  - The Rails with/to Trails Committee.
  - The Bike Rack Committee.
  - The Education & Outreach Committee.
  - We have recently added the Sidewalk Committee.
4. In spring 2005, we adopted our bylaws.
5. On Friday, September 30, we celebrated our first built path – the opening of long-anticipated bike lanes on University Drive.
6. During 2005, we installed 3 bike racks, and the university has install dozens more on campus.
7. We established and maintained our website. We also issued 6 press releases. We hosted Bike to Work day. We have given speeches/talks to several local community organizations about our organization and the community's needs for sidewalks and paths.
8. Today, we have:
  - 27 family memberships.
  - 26 individual memberships.
  - +/- 80 paid members.
  - \$575 in the bank.

## **New Business**

- Certificate for Outstanding Service. A certificate recognizing outstanding service to Starkville in Motion in 2005 was presented to Kathy Jacobs. (Thanks Kathy, for all your hard work on the website, brochures, posters, advertisements, press releases, Bike to Work day, education and outreach, and so much more!!)
- Development of a Presentation. Jimmy introduced Carol Ball, who will be working with others to develop a template for a presentation that SIM might give to community groups and others. The presentation would discuss the health benefits of walking and biking and how communities can take small steps to improve health by improving access to sidewalks, paths, and trails.
- Membership Renewal. With the beginning of the new year, all members are encouraged to consider renewing their paid memberships. Membership is intended to last only a year. Funds in our treasury will be used for education, outreach, programming, and trail/sidewalk development. By the end of this year we aim to have obtained 501(3)c status. Rob Roberson (an attorney) has promised to help us with this.
- Kenny Dill, former mayor of West Point, spoke about that city's development of a Rails to Trails project. West Point was once a central crossroads for railroads such as the Gulf, Mobile and Ohio Railroad, C & G, and the Mid-South Railroad. When pressure arose to build an overpass over rail tracks within the city, the city instead collaborated with several railroad companies to collaborate and to reroute the tracks around the city. Mr. Dill personally bought the railroad portions that ran through town. When a landscape architecture suggested making it into a trail, Mr. Dill donated the land, raised funds for the sidewalk, and soon West Point began to get positive attention for their trail. The city has since bought more pieces of abandoned railroad land, and in 2005 won an award from the National Park Service. The circular path is 3.4 miles long and is a lighted walkway. While there have been some problems with crime, fighting, and vandalism, for the most part the trail has been a major success for the city. He suggested that SIM consider making any trails we build (or portions of them) memorials in order to help raise funds. He also suggested that the C and G railroad which goes all the way from West Point to Greenwood is abandoned and might one way make a terrific Rails to Trails project. Finally, he said that the way to make things happen is to have a vision and begin planting seeds. While our big goals might not come to fruition immediately, if we keep putting our ideas out there, talking with legislators, donors, business men, the community, eventually those seeds may take hold and grow into terrific projects.

## Committee Reports/Goals for 2006

1. Sidewalk Committee
  - Co-chairs Randall McMillen and Whitney McMillen
  - 5 members
  - Established a priority list of broken sidewalks/gaps
  - Obtained the ADA compliance report of the city
  - Will soon present a ranked priority list to the Aldermen in the hopes they'll begin addressing these small-scale issues
  - Talked with Parks and Recreation department about some small areas that need paving/repaving at McKee park. Parks and Rec was pleased to have these brought to their attention and will likely address them when they are doing other concrete work at the park in the near future.
2. Outreach
  - Chair, Kathy Jacobs
  - New brochures are made
  - Working to build the visibility and membership of SIM and to have some publicity events this year
3. Bike Racks
  - Chair, Robert McMillen
  - This committee is rebuilding/rededicating itself and is seeking members
  - Will ask the city for help with the library rack installation (some tools are needed to attach the rack to the concrete)
4. Rails with Trails
  - A good idea and a commitment but still needs a chair.
5. Safe Routes to School/North South Route
  - Will soon focus on writing a grant to be submitted later this year.
  - Has a general outline for a route connecting neighborhoods with schools
6. Lynn Lane
  - The route has been designed and MC's husband has drawn up a schematic of the route.
  - The cost will be approximately \$2.4 million.
  - Committee members are meeting individually with aldermen, the university, and several stakeholders along the route (e.g. the Boys and Girls Club) in order to develop support, and will present a formal request of support from the Board of Aldermen in early March.
  - Our aim is to submit the total grant package with support from the city and university in the late spring.