

Churchmans Road Trail Study
Public Workshop – January 15, 2013
William Penn High School 5:15 PM to 8:00 PM

On Tuesday, January 15, 2013, the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and the City of New Castle County conducted a public workshop for two multi-modal trail projects within and near the City of New Castle. The Route 273 Multi-Use Trail Facility project proposes to construct a bicycle and pedestrian trail along Route 273 (Frenchtown Road and Delaware Street) from the New Castle Farmers Market to near 10th Street in the City of New Castle. The proposed improvements will connect to the existing New Castle Heritage Trail and the existing Industrial Track Trail.

The Churchmans Road Trail Study will examine alternatives for extending the existing trail along Churchmans Road (near Airport Road) farther east along Churchmans Road and Route 273 and connecting to the SR 273 trail near the New Castle Farmers Market.

There were a total of 27 attendees who were presented with display plans that demonstrated existing conditions and proposed improvements for each project. There were a total of 12 comment forms received and one letter, which was written in advance of the workshop. In general, the public attendees supported both projects. Several attendees voiced concern about crossing US 13 and indicated that crossing at School Lane would be preferred over crossing at SR 273.

Following the workshop, DelDOT will complete final design plans for the SR 273 Trail, which could begin construction as early as April 2013. A final concept design report selecting a preferred alternative for the Churchmans Road Trail is anticipated by June 2013.

The public survey response summary is listed below.

Question – Do you have any general comments or suggestions about the Churchmans Road Trail Study?

- I was opposed to the paving of the trail to Wilmington. I do support a ped/bike trail along Rte. 273 as opposed to riding/walking along the shoulder as it is always helpful. The impact to the natural situation is too great here as it is and my get worse with this trail. I have seen a heaving negative impact already. I walk, bicycle, ride, etc., and feel most people are not courteous. This project helps a few special interest groups. Most cyclists and walkers need to use what is available and usually will! Education as to exercise and obesity is a better key than to just do this project. Please consider the impact to the environment, animals, wildlife, etc. Additionally, there are many others who feel this way! Thank you.
- When a pedestrian/bicyclist presses the crosswalk button, could a visible response (button blinks, time to safe crossing) be visible? At most crossings, there is no way for the p/b to know if the button is even connected to the crossing system. That

“encourages” the p/b to take a chance crossing against the light and the crossing lights when finally activated annoy drivers when there is no one using the crossing.

- I like the grass barrier between the shoulder and bike/ped trail.
- (273) Looks very encouraging! A key part of the plan is connecting to existing paths/e.g. Industrial Track Trail, so cyclists and pedestrians don't have to face awkward crossing transitions. (CRTC) Having bike this area and faced some challenges with traffic, a trail would be welcome, especially in crossing Rt. 13.
- Both are well-planned and very welcome.
- (Rte. 273) Yes, add subdivision links to Industrial Track. Work on linkage to historic district and Battery Park..Important! (CRTC) Good idea.
- (Rte. 273) Clarify enforcement responsibility for traffic violations, speed, reckless driving, etc. County Police vs. New Castle City Police which I consider preferable. (CRTS) Provide way finding and security enforcement. Are there plans for lighting and call boxes?
- (Rte. 273) Looks like a great plan to me, but I think I would prefer riding on School House Lane. (CRTS) Churchmans Road trail looks like a pleasant idea also.
- (Rte. 273) I am pleased that this is happening. It is something that I have wanted since moving to New Castle in 2007. (CRTS) I like the Churchmans Road trail.
- (Rte. 273) Great idea – will provide good connection from Industrial Track to Farmers Market. Encourages more walking and biking from New Castle. (CRTS) Hopefully, you will create a safe crossing of Basin Rd. – make sure pedestrian light switch is longer!
- (Rte. 273) Go for it. Looks great.
- (Rte. 273) Very supportive of the project. Think it is very important to be able to connect City of Wilmington and City of New Castle. Are there alternatives to proposed crossing of Christina River especially with estimated costs/timing? Interested in proposed connection to Battery Park. (CRTS) Good idea.

Question – Please indicate your preferred alignment for the Churchmans Road Trail Study. Why?

Alternative #1 = 2 votes

Alternative #2 = 8 votes

- There are pluses and negatives to both it seems to me.
- Alt. #1 - The New Castle Town Center will attract traffic from NCFM even though the crossing at 273 could involve 3 sequential crosswalks.
- Alt. # 1 with improvements to the Hare's Corner Crossing.
- Alt. #2 – I prefer riding in less noisy traffic (School Lane) and riding along the airport as more interesting. On a bike, a rider can enjoy the “scenery.”
- Alt. #2 – Straight across route – no zig-zag.

- Alt. #2 – Much safer. Consider on Old Churchmans (off 13) to join Churchmans and avoid busy Rte. 273. Maybe developer would consider bike traffic lane at the back. Tie to Lewden Park trails nearby.
- Alt. #2 – Safety concerns for traffic vs. pedestrian and bicycle.
- Alt. #2 – Hares Corner intersection is very dangerous. It seems a lot safer to cross U.S. 13 at School Lane.
- I prefer the # 2 crossing because it is a less complicated area.
- Hares Corner is too busy and dangerous! School Lane is a safer road. I would also prefer being able to use Old Churchmans Rd. for biking and accessing Churchmans Rd. and eventually hook up to Lewden Park’s trail (in Ivy Ridge).
- Alt. #2 – Safer?

Question – Would you be likely to use either of the proposed trail alignment alternatives for the Churchmans Road Trail Study?

- Yes.
- Maybe, but it would have to wait until I retire.
- Yes.
- On occasion, for recreational riding. I live in Hockessin.
- Yes.
- Yes.
- Yes, if demonstrated to be safe for pedestrian and cyclists.
- I prefer alternative # 2.
- Yes, I would use # 2. I bike and hike.
- I would use # 2.
- Yes.
- Yes.

General Information

Question 1 - How would you describe yourself and/or your affiliation?

Resident11
 Adjacent property owner..... 0
 Community/civic organization 9
 Business owner 0
 Institution (church, school, other) 0
 Media 0
 Other 3
 No comment 0

Other (please explain):

- Historic New Castle Alliance
- New Castle Bike Rangers – casual group.
- Member New Castle Bike Rangers

Question 2 - How did you hear about this workshop?

Notice in the mail.....0
Road sign.....0
Neighborhood/friend.....4
Newspaper8
No comment0
Other2

Other (please explain):

- On the DeIDOT e-mail list for NCC notices.
- E-mail – Delaware Greenways.

Question 3 - How helpful and informative were the DeIDOT facilitators?

Very helpful.....12
Moderately helpful0
Not at all helpful0
No opinion.....0
No comment0

Question 4 - How effective were the display materials at explaining the project?

Very effective11
Moderately effective1
Effective0
Not at all effective.....0
No opinion.....0
No comment0

Question 5 – If you have any additional comments relating to tonight’s workshop:

- Good idea having several tables with the same material to spread the crowd.
- Looking forward to the Rte. 273 trail to Hares Corner.
- Thanks for providing the information – opportunity for community input.
- The consultants were knowledgeable and courteous.

- Project heading for historic New Castle Alliance, New Castle Way finding project. Project includes trail maps, signage.
- Include Route 9 byways.
- It was nice to network.
- Please reference letter from Michael H. McGrath, AICP, recently retired from DE Dept. of Agriculture.