

Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee Meeting
November 19, 2012

**Discussion Regarding Changing The Bikeways Blue Ribbon Committee To A City
Committee.**

Commission Item C4F, October 24, 2012

(Requested by Mayor Mattie Herrera Bower)

Fred Beckmann, Public Works Department Director

ITEM #13



MIAMI BEACH

City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee

FROM: Kathie G. Brooks, Interim City Manager

Date: November 19, 2012

SUBJECT: **DISCUSSION REGARDING RECONSTITUTING THE MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON BIKEWAYS COMMITTEE AS A CITY COMMISSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

This item was referred to the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee for discussion by Mayor Mattie Herrera-Bower at the City Commission meeting on October 24, 2012. This item is being requested on behalf of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Bikeways Committee.

BACKGROUND

The Mayor's Blue Ribbon Bikeways Committee was established originally by Mayor David Dermer and subsequently continued by Mayor Mattie Herrera-Bower to promote the use of bicycles as a viable and sustainable mode of transportation in the City and to review, coordinate and promote better and safer bicycling and bicycle facilities throughout the City for residents and tourists alike. Initially, the concept of a Bicycle Committee was brought forth by residents and bicycle advocates in the City that felt that the City of Miami Beach was in dire need of bicycle infrastructure coupled with the need to foster the well-being and quality-of-life of residents and communities through the development of a progressive bicycle plan.

The Mayor's Blue Ribbon Bikeways Committee is comprised of neighborhood activists, business owners, and City staff. The Committee has systematically convened on the third Wednesday of every month and its objectives have been to provide input on the City's bicycle infrastructure plans/projects and to ensure the safety and mobility of bicyclists traveling in the City, both for recreational and commuter purposes. In the last few years, however, there has been diminishing interest from committee members as well as cooperation from City departments involved with the implementation of bicycle infrastructure improvements in the City.

Notwithstanding, the City has recently made great strides in welcoming bicyclists by providing safe accommodations for cycling and encouraging people to bike for transportation and recreation. For example, the DecoBike bicycle rental program has recorded over one million bicycle trips since inception with a majority of those trips being commuter bicycle trips by residents. This statistic is substantiated by new census data which has revealed that the City of Miami Beach is the number ten (10) city in the country where people are more likely to use bicycles to commute to work. The City of Miami Beach registered an estimated 6.3% of total workers using bicycles as their mode of transportation to reach their workplace. These are astonishing statistics given the country's average for commuter bicycle trips is 0.56% and the figure is even lower for Miami-Dade County. The City's mode split percentage is a clear indicator that Miami Beach is well on its way to becoming a more

livable, bikeable, sustainable, and healthier City.

ANALYSIS

It is important that the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Bikeways Committee build upon the City's recent success and national recognition and continue to advocate for cycling as a sustainable and safe mode of transportation throughout the City. However, this can best be achieved through a reconstituted Bicycle Advisory Committee serving in an advisory capacity to the City Commission on all matters pertaining to bicycle transportation in the City.

A charter for a new or reconstituted Bicycle Advisory Committee should foster and require collaboration and cooperation of all City departments whose projects affect the public rights-of-way and mobility. All new projects and transportation improvement plans, public or private, should be coordinated and presented to the Bicycle Advisory Committee in a timely manner, particularly if the project or plan in question will affect or have an effect upon existing or planned bicycle facilities in the City. The recommendation of the Bicycle Advisory Committee should be forwarded to the appropriate City staff, City Commissioner, Mayor, or County staff for appropriate review and action.

The short-term goals of new or reconstituted Bicycle Advisory Committee will include the following:

- Interacting with schools, business entities, communities, and residents to raise bicycle awareness in the City.
- Promoting annual Bicycle Day and coordinating family-friendly bicycle events throughout the year, such as Bike Miami Beach, Bike Rides, and other events.
- Becoming more engaged in the ongoing update of the Atlantic Greenway Network (AGN)/Bicycle Master Plan to promote the use of alternative and sustainable forms of transportation throughout the City.

In addition, the new Bicycle Advisory Committee would work closely with the League of American Bicyclists. The League of American Bicyclists is a non-profit membership organization which promotes cycling for fun, fitness, and transportation through advocacy and education. The League is one of the largest membership organizations of cyclists in the United States and provides incentives, hands-on assistance, and award recognition for communities that actively support bicycling. It is crucial that the City, through the Bicycle Advisory Committee, engage and foster a partnership with the League.

In summary, by serving in an advisory capacity to the City Commission, the Bicycle Advisory Committee can accomplish the goals set forth by the City Commission and make a difference at the local level by advocating, at a regional and national level, for a more bikeable Miami Beach.

RECOMMENDATION

The above information is being presented to the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee for discussion and further direction.

 
JGG/FHB/JJF/RWS/JRG