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ITEM #18  
BOMA  
06/12/2012

## MEMORANDUM

June 1, 2012

**TO:** Board of Mayor and Aldermen

**FROM:** Eric Stuckey, City Administrator   
Special Events Advisory Team

**SUBJECT:** Battle of Franklin Criterium Event Application

### Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to outline recommendations for the Battle of Franklin Criterium Event Application submitted by the Harpeth Bicycles Racing Team.

### Background

The Harpeth Bicycles Racing Team has submitted an application for a Cycling event in Downtown Franklin on July 21<sup>st</sup>. This is a first time request from this organization for a first of its kind event in Franklin.

A criterium is a bike race held on a short course. Race length is determined by the number of laps or total time. The proposed route would include Second Avenue South, Church Street, Fifth Avenue, and Main Street. This route would dictate the closures of those streets throughout the event as well as closures and/or limited access to surrounding streets. Our GIS and Engineering (Traffic) staff have worked on a map that details the closures and detours (included in the packet). The event is estimated to be over at 9 p.m. The streets would close at 6 a.m. for set-up and would not re-open until all clean-up is complete.

The event is also proposing a beer “festival” located in the Mellow Mushroom and First Tennessee Bank Quadrants of the Square and Third Avenue South.

Estimated attendance is 300 – 500 racers, 500 – 2000 festival participants, and 500-2000 spectators. Hard Bargain Association has been designated as the benefactor of the event.

Staff has met with the organizers several times in order to obtain more details on the event and how it would work logistically. We also made a few suggestions, such as shortening the course and avoiding the closure of Ninth Avenue and, if possible, Five Points. On May 31<sup>st</sup>, the organizers submitted more details and a revised course which is shorter and does not include Ninth Avenue. However, the closure of Five Points is still included.

### Recommendation

Staff has very serious concerns regarding this event. Those concerns include:

- Both downtown garages will be closed off to the general public. The organizers are proposing Park and Ride lots at the Old Farmer’s Market, Alexander lot, Silos property, and Harlinsdale Farm. These lots would not just be for those wanting to attend the event, but for anyone wanting to come downtown on that day.
- Although Main Street will be closed to vehicles, pedestrians will only be able to cross the street at the intersections, with the assistance of course marshals, when it is safe (racers are not present).
- Businesses in the downtown core will be cut-off from vehicular patronage and limited on pedestrian patronage.



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- We've received a letter from the Downtown Franklin Association stating their concerns regarding this event (included in packet). DFA also did an informal survey which was overwhelmingly against hosting the event (40 - 1).
- This request involves the closure of Five Points and part of Columbia Avenue which will have a major impact on traffic throughout the City.
- A few residential areas will be affected by the closures.
- The area would potentially be closed from 6 a.m. until midnight.
- Setting up the current closure plan would require close to fifty "Road Closed" signs and barricades. The Streets Department does not have these on hand.
- The route affects US 31/SR 6 & SR 246 (West Main St), SR 96 E (Third Ave South & Church St), US 31 (Columbia Ave) and US 431 (Fifth Ave North and Lewisburg. Each of these requires permission from TDOT to close. TDOT typically will not approve as the City cannot provide alternate state routes to detour traffic to. Other events only close Main St and we have the opportunity to re-route onto other state routes to move traffic.

The Special Events Advisory Team appreciates the effort the organizers have put into listening to our comments and trying to adjust their plans to our suggestions. Although this may be a worthwhile event for a worthwhile cause, staff does not feel it is a practical event for Downtown Franklin at this time and does not recommend approval.