

Charlottesville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

July 12th, 2018

6:00 PM- 7:00 PM

CitySpace Small Conference Room

Meeting Attendees:

Frank Deviney

Ruth Stornetta

Amanda Poncy

Peter Ohlms

Dave Stackhouse

Lena Seville

Carl Schwarz

Niko Test

Stephen Bach

Michael Barnes

Peter Krebs

New Business:

No new business.

Old Business:

Elections (Amanda Poncy)

BPAC attendees nominated Carl Schwarz and Peter Ohlms for the 2018/2019 year of BPAC chair positions. All voted in favor. Both Carl and Peter will continue serving their current roles for the next year.

CIP Budget Discussion (Amanda Poncy)

Amanda provided a summary of this past year's budget allocations. For the last 5 years, \$200,000 has been allocated annually for bicycle facilities and infrastructure. The majority of these funds are used as local contributions for grant matches, such as revenue sharing, federal transportation alternative grants and for Safe Routes to School. Parks and Trails Planner Chris Gensic received \$100,000 (up \$15,000 from last year) for trail projects and \$95,000 for land acquisition. The budget for improvements specifically to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) such as curb updates and modifications is \$150,000, with another \$240,000 for ADA improvements at signalized intersections. Neighborhood Transportation Improvements receives a small budget of \$50,000. The JPA Corridor is a project that falls under the Neighborhood Transportation Improvement scope. There is also a budget for sidewalk improvements for \$340,000. Dave noted that understanding the current budget is important for future outreach and BPAC recommendations. City staff will be putting together budget requests for the upcoming CIP budgeting process in August. Amanda explained that staff uses a certain amount of CIP funding to apply for state revenue sharing funds through VDOT. Revenue sharing is a method in which the state (VDOT) provides a match to local funds (to double up) and gives the option to have flexibility with projects.

Questions and concerns raised by attendees:

Frank inquired about what types of projects local bicycle CIP funds would be spent on and Amanda responded that CIP funds are used to construct gaps in bicycle networks, bike racks, and new bike lanes with restriping, and to fund design, among other things. A current example of a project is the current gap along Avon Street between Garrett/Levy, where the improvements from the Belmont Bridge replacement will stop, to Hinton Ave. Local CIP will fund design and it is planned to be constructed using revenue sharing funds. It was discussed that in order to obtain more funding, it would be beneficial to showcase projects (past, present, future) that the budget has been spent on. Amanda will update the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan project list so that all projects are portrayed in current status and distribute the list. The group also suggested a map showing all projects in the works.

Ruth Stornetta mentioned that funding has increased from \$25,000 to \$100,000 to \$200,000 since 2012. Dave Stackhouse noted that the past few years have remained at \$200,000, which implies a loss of funds due to inflation and increasing construction costs. The group agreed that the pace of progress needs to accelerate. Ruth expressed the importance of the 'big picture' projects, which help to stimulate imagination and help to keep the public involved and excited. Peter Ohlms suggested picking a big regional project such as the river bridge or crossing under I-64 towards Monticello and request funds to get started studying it.

Peter Krebs highlighted the fact that this is the season to advocate for capital projects and budget. His suggestion was that in order to reach for the larger project funding, you must request budget for specific projects. Ruth inquired if we should be asking for funding for another part time position to help handle grants and implementation. Both Peter Ohlms and Peter Krebs suggested seeking county support. Michael Barnes mentioned that it would be wise to not forget about UVA in the discussion of funding and projects.

Some members asked about plans for connectivity along 250 from John Warner Parkway to Pantops/Free Bridge. Amanda relayed that Chris has been working on that plan and that he has some ideas but there has not been a study conducted. The connection is in the bike/ped plan. Dave articulated that it may be an area we want to study and would want funding to begin a study. He highlighted that it is a major vehicle corridor but it is an impossible bicycle and pedestrian corridor that separates neighborhoods and the park.

Peter K mentioned that the County is looking at the possibility of the Pantops Shopping Center (at the bottom of the hill) being redeveloped in the future. Michael Barnes agreed that there are possibilities for a trail system, but that it would be a tough connection to make. Amanda suggested that talking about specific projects would be best at the next meeting.

Monticello Road Project (Brennen Duncan)

Brennen Duncan, Traffic Engineer, explained that this project involves making Monticello Road one way toward Belmont from Graves to Levy in order to facilitate left turns onto Avon Street (the left turn from Graves onto Avon is to be prohibited as part of the Belmont Bridge Project). Brennen mentioned that the last user counts the city had on these streets were from nine years ago. Recent counts show that traffic volumes are roughly the same (800-950 daily vehicles).

Neighbors are opposed to the reconfiguration due to concerns about more traffic being routed onto Levy and concerns about the ability to turn onto Levy with its current geometry. Brennen explained that this is a pilot project and that they are planning to test the proposal for a day to allow the public to experience the change and solicit feedback before finalizing plans.

Questions and concerns raised by attendees:

Members of the BPAC suggested that a contraflow bike lane on Monticello Road should be considered as part of this project. They offered two solutions – one method involves striping a bike lane and the other is to have a city wide policy where it's always okay for bikes to ride opposing traffic on one-way streets. Some inquired about whether the sidewalk could be used for bicycle travel and what implications may come with that. The main issue to not using the sidewalk as a bike path is that there is not enough space for safe passage of both cyclists and pedestrians, especially due to utility poles. Peter O. reminded everyone that the reason we are discussing a contraflow lane in this location is because it is the one flat, direct route from downtown to downtown Belmont: If you are a cyclist that does not want to go up a hill then it is the only route. The group also discussed the possibility of an advisory bike lane.

Debrief on Ridge/McIntire Ridge Public Meeting (Amanda Poncy)

Amanda explained that this was an opportunity for members to debrief on the Ridge/McIntire Open House in case people felt strongly about any of the project recommendations and would like a more unified statement on certain aspects of the design. Carl stated that he does not like the idea of a shared use path because they promote riding on the sidewalk. Carl explained that he would rather see the space used to create a buffer for bike lanes and that a shared use path next to the road is confusing. His preference is to keep pedestrians and cyclists separated in an urban condition. Others agreed that shared use paths should be implemented with an educational aspect with proper signage demonstrating options and encouraging proper use. Other comments in reference to the open house included suggestions that the median size should be reduced in order to allow for more space on the sides for biking and pedestrian facilities.

Upcoming Events-

July 25th: Social Bike Ride, Washington Park, 7pm

August 2nd: BPAC Meeting, City Hall, NDS Conference Room, 5-7pm

August 15th: E. High Streetscape Open House, City Space, 5-7pm