

Charlottesville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Virtual Meeting

November 4, 2021
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Nikolai Braun
Kevin Cox
Amanda Poncy
Carl Schwarz
Peter Krebs
Beth Carta

Kyle Rodland
Peter Ohlms
Lena Seville
Stephen Bach
Derrick Elder

Action Items:

- Committee members encouraged to send 2022 agenda topics to Carl and Amanda for discussion at the Dec. meeting (review incomplete list from Bike/Ped Plan).
- Amanda to confirm rules for virtual meetings for non-appointed groups

Meeting Agenda

October Recap + Moving Forward

Carl explained that there was some misunderstanding about the purpose of October's meeting. He provided an overview of how the October agenda item "Enforcement" came to be and described the work put into the google doc that was sent in advance of the meeting. He asked the committee "Do we still want to evaluate those topics or do something different? What type of community engagement do we want for these types of topics?"

Lena expressed concern that the topic quickly went into the details without a more transparent public process, which raised the question "What is BPAC's role and is this an appropriate discussion for the committee to be having?" given the differing views on enforcement. She felt there should be some initial conversations about agenda topics before the meeting agenda is finalized. She also felt that the specific topic went too far beyond what BPAC should be participating in.

Peter Ohlms advocated that it's important to use meeting time to dig into disagreements.

Peter K suggested that the committee set up some parameters in advance of the discussion. For example, use a google doc to frame discussion in second meeting. However, regarding the topic at hand, he supported the idea that possibly too much work went into laying out a program without enough input to define the problem. There needs to be some sort of consensus on the topic to be prepared before it is researched.

Lena is concerned that there is a problem with doing work via online virtual documents. It limits who participates and crosses a line of a virtual meeting. She is also concerned about the lack of diversity in the group and compared our group to those that are appointed and are required to have representation from different viewpoints.. Amanda agreed to get additional information about the rules for virtual meetings for a non-appointed committee.

The committee was supportive of being more strategic and intentional about prioritizing/setting agendas at the beginning of the year. Members were encouraged to think about possible topics and email Amanda and Carl in advance of the Dec. Meeting. Peter O. suggested that the group review the list of incomplete items from the Bike/Ped Plan.

Code Audit + Sidewalk Policies

Amanda provided background on this agenda topic, which resulted from concern about a sidewalk that was not built in conjunction with a new development at the corner of Fairway and East Market. This particular development consists of three single family homes. The zoning code does not require that single family homes construct a sidewalk. All single family homes have the option to construct a sidewalk or contribute to a sidewalk fund. This particular development contributed to the sidewalk fund. All other developments that require a site plan (for example, commercial, mixed use, apartments), must construct a sidewalk or apply for a waiver.

The property at the corner of Fairway and E. Market had previously submitted a site plan for their development. Staff recommended that sidewalk be constructed, but the City Attorney's office disagreed citing City Code § 29-1182(j) since there are no existing sidewalks on either East Market Street or Fairway Street. The current ordinance simply does not require sidewalk construction or monetary contribution when developing on an existing street, unless that street has at least some sidewalk already in place. While ultimately this determination did not apply because the applicant withdrew their site plan, this "loophole" was brought to the attention of the committee and submitted to the consultants working on the Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Code re-write.

The group also discussed the example of the new affordable housing development at Park Street Christian Church. The developers are hoping to use the sidewalk waiver process to avoid building a sidewalk on Park Street. The rationale is that the sidewalk may have some impacts on critical slopes and will be expensive (which may affect their application for financing). The group agreed that we need BOTH the sidewalk and the housing being developed. Amanda explained that one of her arguments in favor of the sidewalk had to do with the Sidewalk Prioritization Ranking in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The Park street location currently scored an 8, but when you consider the additional density and the potential users (low-income, disabled, pre-school), the score increases resulting in the highest priority in the neighborhood.

The Stribling Avenue development is another, different example that highlights the importance of providing infrastructure concurrent with development. In that case, the neighborhood is trying to get a sidewalk constructed beyond the edge of the property being developed.

It was agreed that sidewalk construction needs to be discussed in more detail with a flow chart describing the zoning requirements. It's important to fix the zoning loophole, but also zoom out and think about pedestrian connectivity and future connectivity.

Stephen commented that not putting in sidewalks at East Market and Fairway is simply wrong. Need to build the segments to eventually get the connectivity.

5:55 Upcoming events/updates from committee members

Amanda announced that she will be leaving her employment with the City at the end of the year. Kyle has agreed to keep BPAC going until a replacement is found.

Kyle mentioned the efforts of SRTS, Community Bikes, and CAMBC to bring free neighborhood bike repair to low-income communities. The group has done two events so far. The next one is next Friday, 11/13 at Westhaven from 3:30-5:00. South First St. and Michie Drive are tentatively next. Visit the Community Bikes website for more information and to volunteer.

Peter K. talked about last week's Bike Cville Halloween Ride. Bike Cville Rides will resume in the spring – likely kicking off with a Mardi Gras themed ride. There is an Advocacy social on the 14th at Wegmans at 5pm. And the Active Mobility Summit will take place on Feb 28th.

Chat:

From Peter Ohlms to Everyone: 05:29 PM

I like the idea of intentionally sorting through and prioritizing topics, maybe at one meeting per year. An informal strategic plan. I have a vague memory of doing something like that.

From Peter Krebs to Everyone: 05:39 PM

I think it's a great opportunity for folks to canvas their neighbors or whomever they feel they represent about what issues are important to them. I think people come in here with some issues they'd like to discuss and find a pretty arcane agenda and don't come back. That's also a challenge to enlarge the circle of who we're talking to...

From Peter Ohlms to Everyone: 05:44 PM

PUD = Planned Unit Development

From Peter Krebs to Everyone: 05:47 PM

To be clear, PHA *wants* sidewalk but they don't want their LITC application to fail. So someone needs to square that circle.

From Peter Krebs to Everyone: 06:00 PM

Congratulations!

2021 BPAC Meetings

December 2

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