

## Charlottesville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

NDS Conference Room, 2nd floor City Hall

### Meeting Participants

Stephen Bach

Chris Gist

Scott Bandy

Peter Ohlms

Brenden Duncan

Scott Paisley

Claudia Elzey

Amanda Poncy

Jake Fox

Lena Seville

### Items for Action or Follow-up

- A BPAC co-chair will email all members with information on BPAC Appreciation Award to be presented to one or all Council members during Bike Month, with a vote to be held at the next regular meeting (May 5<sup>th</sup>).
- “Other Business” will become a standard agenda item. 10 minutes will be allotted to allow enough time to raise a given issue for future discussion.
- Items for the May 5<sup>th</sup> agenda will include a West Main Street bike count data report, discussion of Bike Month activities & the BPAC award, and a STW Code Audit discussion of bicycle parking and sidewalk widths.
- Jake Fox and collaborators will complete wayfinding signs for the Streets that Work Demonstration on April 16<sup>th</sup>.

### Meeting Agenda

#### *5:00pm Pedestrian Lighting Study—Brennen Duncan*

Brennen Duncan, Assistant City Engineer, introduced himself and described his role in the Pedestrian Lighting Study. He is currently the project lead, since the City does not have a traffic or assistant traffic engineer. RK&K, the consultants who are conducting the study, are scheduled to meet with City personnel next Friday, April 15.

The study’s objective is to develop citywide standards for lighting that developers need to comply with when they’re building new streets. Currently, the City code asks for certain aesthetics and lumen levels etc. but cannot compel compliance. The consultants were also

tasked with giving recommendations for the Downtown and University areas to improve the City and UVA's lighting there.

Jake Fox asked why those areas were chosen for study. Mr. Duncan said it was based on safety—incidences on the Downtown Mall in particular. The University has been proactive and did not wait on the results of the study to increase lighting, probably even overlighting. They did 60' spacing wherever possible rather than determining where more lighting was needed.

Ruth Stornetta asked if the standards included dark sky provisions. Mr. Duncan said that those standards are in the code and will not be altered, despite any issues they create for pedestrians.

Mr. Duncan next highlighted some aspects of the study. Consultants measured lighting both at foot level and face level. They also measured uniformity of light coverage—i.e. the height and depth of peaks and valleys of brightness and darkness. Standards will set maximum and minimum “whiteness” or temperature of light (from brown to blue). It will set spacing, height standards, etc. with respect to context—leaving plenty of flexibility for developers as to how to meet the standards.

Jake Fox asked about the arrangement with City lights attached to Dominion-owned poles. Mr. Duncan said the City pays rent to use the poles, as well as a \$500 up-front cost to install the light.

Lena Seville asked about neighborhood lighting—do local streets have to have them? Brennan Duncan said he would prefer to see them on every street, especially where there are sidewalks, but respects community petitions to the contrary. Mr. Duncan said the problem lights are Dominion-owned; they are high up and have a large spread. The City will aim for lower, dimmer lights on rural neighborhood streets (but would not add pedestrian streetlights where Dominion lights exist).

Jake Fox asked about Barracks Road, which is poorly lit, yet is a major transit route and an arterial. Brennan Duncan said that there had been neighborhood backlash and it was something that would have to be decided once a general standard was established. If the road was “redone” (a new development was built on a given street and sidewalks had to be built or moved), the City could require developers to provide adequate pedestrian lighting.

A final version of the study will be posted online later this spring.

### *5:30pm Position on Sharrows Policy*

Ruth Stornetta said that if there was no possibility whatsoever for adding a bike lane to a street with traffic volumes above 3,000 AADT, sharrows should be considered as a last resort. Scott Paisley suggested, however, that the City might be exposed to legal challenges or liability if it very egregiously violated NACTO standards in this way. The same situation is occurring on Hillsdale Drive Extended, where there are 10,000 cars per day and bike lanes *could* be designed in but have not been. Sharrows give an implied message of safety, so if it is misleading, this

could expose the City to lawsuits. Stephen Bach suggested, however, that not providing any sharrows would result in a situation even more dangerous for bicyclists.

Chris Gist said a lawyer was needed to weigh in, but added that there are sharrows now on roads with high traffic volumes and 35+ mph speed limits (e.g. Ivy Road).

Scott Bandy proposed adding yellow warning signs to protect bicyclists using sharrows. Jake Fox asked about “super sharrows,” which are green stripes with sharrows down the middle of the road. Amanda Poncy said they were no longer allowed under the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD). Ruth Stornetta pointed out that “Bicyclists May Use Full Lane” signs were proven most effective of all.

### *5:45pm Streets that Work/Code Audit*

The group talked about priority topics for study. Consensus topics were bicycle connectivity and facilities; sidewalk and street widths; accessibility; street furniture (including bike parking); block size (and prevention of super-blocking); location and number of entrances; density; massing and scale, setbacks, and step-backs; transparency; and affordable housing.

Scott Paisley added that density itself is not so important for bike/ped purposes, but rather how density is designed and what it is used for—for instance, affordable or workforce housing versus student housing. This affects commuting patterns and how people experience traffic within the city. Ruth Stornetta agreed, saying there must be stricter affordable unit requirements.

Scott Paisley expressed interest in permeable bike infrastructure and bike infrastructure that doubles as stormwater filtration or bioretention. Lena Seville mentioned that she is working with the city on a test green infrastructure project for this concept. Jake Fox mentioned that his firm, Siteworks, has just completed a set of weirs filtering water off a bike/ped path at Dawson’s Row behind Clark at UVA. All the money for the project was part of the South Lawn project budget.

Amanda Poncy said that in places like Philadelphia, it’s much cheaper to do green infrastructure than reconstruct grey infrastructure due to a combined sewer overflow decree. Charlottesville does not have combined sewers.

### *6:05pm STW Live! Wayfinding Signage Demonstration*

Jake Fox presented the demonstration wayfinding signs he made for the Streets that Work Demonstration Project (April 16, 2016, 10am-2pm). They will be printed on 11” x 17” sheets and laminated. Suggested signs to include: Lee Park, UVA, JMRL Library, Downtown Belmont, IX Art Park.

### *6:11pm Bike Month*

A Bike Month Proclamation should be given at City Council's first meeting in May, suggested Amanda Poncy. BPAC agreed.

Scott Paisley said he would reach out to J.M. Stock and Albemarle Baking Company to provide food for the Bike to Work Day tent on West Main Street; but any local business interested in participating, donating samples, or tabling at the tent (which will be located at the Main Street Market, 7-9:30am and 4-7pm on May 20<sup>th</sup>) should be invited to do so.

The Family Bike Event will happen on Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup> 10am-2pm. Joe Hoskins will bring out a strider course. Amanda Poncy thought that collaboration with Nneka Sobers at UVA, who is interested in teaching Bike 101 crash courses for adults, could also be valuable. Amanda Poncy suggested providing helmets and fittings, and getting the police and Diamond Walton (Injury Prevention at the UVA Children's Hospital) to do helmet fitting.

Jake Fox suggested videotaping 5-minute segments of bike mechanic instruction and posting them to the BPAC webpage via YouTube. The actual event could be an evening at Community Bikes.

Chris Gist said there would be a weekly ride every week of May—the day to be determined. There will be a Tour de Coup and a Tour de Solar (possibly). There will be bike-in movies at Champion Brewery. Chris Gist said that everything would need to be posted online somewhere, either BikeCharlottesville or Community Bikes' page.

Scott Paisley said that the Monday (this year, the 16<sup>th</sup>) of Bike Week has in past years been the BikeCharlottesville award in honor of community service. Paisley said the award could go to Kristin Szakos or Michael Signer or to the entire City Council for West Main contributions. They last was determined preferable to reduce any potential for animosity/favoritism. A small engraving would be \$100 at the engravers shop at Ivy Square with presentation in front of City Hall. "BPAC Award for Improving the City Dynamic." The award could also be a shoe or bike helmet painted gold. Press should be invited to record the celebration. The award could be given at City Hall with a ride to West Main. The event has traditionally been at 1pm, with the ride at noon.

There followed a discussion led by Ruth Stornetta about the blurry line between BPAC and a citizen advocacy group like BikeCharlottesville. Members wondered whether BPAC was limited by its character as a City institution. They felt there should be one group for bicycle and pedestrian advocacy, rather than having BPAC members being split between multiple groups. Members also agreed that there should be an institutional BPAC website, and it should be the focus of all bike/ped advocacy in the community, in order to provide continuity as people come to and leave Charlottesville. Having the group be affiliated with the City provides this continuity. The main challenge with website maintenance is providing content, however. The problem is that no one in BPAC is a City employee, and therefore cannot populate a City webpage without going through an intermediary.

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Chris Gist pointed out that BPAC has no Facebook presence and suggested creating one could be a place to start.

### *6:45pm Updates from Committee Members*

Carl Schwarz gave an update on BAR (Board of Architectural Review) matters in an email sent prior to meeting. He said although the agenda had not been posted, the April BAR meeting would include Bill Atwood's latest presentation of his project for West Main – between Atlantic Futon and Eloise. Some of his ideas include a connector walkway between West Main and Commerce Street, and there will be a good amount of discussion on making the Commerce Street elevation pedestrian friendly. Carl Schwarz encouraged BPAC members to [look at the agenda](#) when it became available in case they feel any of the projects could impact them.

Carl Schwarz also said that BAR members had been directed to get feedback on the board's design guidelines from all city boards and commissions. While there would likely be a formal process for this, he also encouraged BPAC to look at BAR guidelines if they are so inclined; he would be happy to accept comments to compile and and share them with Mary Joy Scala.

Stephen Bach said that the West Main/Commerce Street connector should be bike and ped friendly, with at least a bike ramp on the stair if the grade is too steep to provide a bike path.

Belmont Bridge still cannot be discussed, as negotiations continue.

### **Upcoming Events**

- April 16, 10-2PM: Streets that Work LIVE! Demonstration Project
- April 17, 3PM: Public Art Bike Ride, beginning at Lee Park
- April 20, 3-4PM: APBP Wbinar—"Shared and Off-Street Paths"
- May 5, 5-7PM: Bike/Ped Advisory Committee Meeting
- May 15, 10AM-2PM: Family Bike Festival, IX Art Park
- May 16, 12-2PM: Bike Kickoff Event, City Hall Plaza
- May 18, 3-4PM: APBP Wbinar—"Aspects of Equity"
- May 20, 7-9:30AM Bike to Work Week Event Table at Main Street Market  
& 4-7PM: