

Charlottesville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

August 4th, 2016

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

NDS Conference Room, 2nd floor City Hall

Meeting Participants

Stephen Bach

Jake Fox

Rashad Hanbali (guest speaker)

Peter Krebs

Peter Ohlms

Amanda Poncy

Carl Schwarz

David Stackhouse

Ruth Stornetta

Items for Action or Follow-up

- Nomination and election of presidents (via email)
- Brainstorm for goals and vision statement discussion next time
- Enlargement of membership, employ of social media
- The committee will explore a sub-committee on safety education/ communication
- Liaison reports (PLACE, STWCA, CAT)

Meeting Agenda

5:00pm **Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety – City Traffic Engineer Rashad Hanbali**

Rashad introduced himself to the committee. He apologized for missing the last meeting. He's been an engineer for more than 30 years in several localities around the country. He advocates for all modes of transportation. He has a PhD and has taught at two universities.

David asked about his responsibilities and authority. Rashad said that his role is defined in the city Code ([Section 15-4](#)) including monitoring via devices and safety. In addition to the standard duties he's also responsible for parking.

Ruth informed him that this committee was formed by Rashad's predecessor (Jeanie Alexander) as a pedestrian safety committee. It has evolved to incorporate both bikes and pedestrians. Some of the areas BPAC has advised/worked on include development of an ap, the Bike/Pedestrian Plan, Walk/Bike/Play JPA, way-finding for cyclists, West Main, Belmont Bridge, Rose Hill Drive, University/Ivy, climbing lanes on Cherry, contraflow lane on South Street and others.

Rashad asked about BPAC's involvement in education programs. Carl noted the Tom Tom Festival.

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Peter O observed overlap between BPAC, which is an advisory body to the City, with Bike Charlottesville, which is an advocacy organization. David noted the bike/pedestrian map that we've been working on as an education tool. Ruth mentioned updates to the website.

A committee member noted that VDOT funds some educational programs and supports a statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (which Peter O attends); Eberhard said that VDOT does little to help cyclists but often lectures them.

Rashad clarified with an example from California where cyclists are classified in categories from A-C. "A" users are proficient users for major roads; "B" recreational; "C" casual users like children. Each group receives targeted outreach.

David highlighted a huge user group—UVa students—who defy the scheme. They use the roads frequently, and with purpose, but not in the routine way that commuters do. Because they're not as organized, they are not always as safe. They require a special type of outreach

Eberhard feels strongly about getting the infrastructure right, then the users will follow, then education will be needed.

Rashad noted that Charlottesville is not unique in having a disconnected system and that education—especially for the University—is important and an appropriate role for this body. There's a lot going on at the University—education, trainings, their bikeshare. It's complicated by the fact that UVa is not part of the city.

Peter O noted that the committee's biggest accomplishment is to get a staff bike/pedestrian planner.

Rashad said that in other areas, a body like BPAC would report to the MPO instead of the locality because that's where the planning power resides with respect to transportation funding and regional planning.

David asked how the connection between the body and MPO took place.

Rashad replied that it's through advocacy, and it needs to be strong both in terms of persistence and numbers.

Stephen was on the advisory body for the local MPO (Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission) for fifteen years. He found that the bureaucracy at that level moves very slowly. There was progress—but it was difficult. He found with respect to the University, it's difficult to know who is even designing the roads with results that are unfortunate and difficult to negotiate for cyclists.

Ruth finds that the University seems disinterested, the County lacks planning capacity and the MPO is slow. On the other hand, she has found the City to be quite responsive—encouraging

and listening and making effort—and has felt positive about how it has been to work with the City. It's a great contrast to other partners like the MPO and therefore a more useful partner.

Rashad closed by saying that BPAC's work is having visible results out on the streets of Charlottesville. He reiterated that he does not favor any mode of transportation—all are equal. He says that as a professional, he will only work according to standards: not emotions or perceptions.

But he'll have an open mind and be fair. He has not set up a formal process for fielding inquiries yet and wants to be settled first and understand the City better. For now he'll handle them case-by-case. An offer has been extended to an assistant traffic engineer, so hopefully Rashad's capacity will soon be up to speed. For now, he's working through a big backlog. He would like to meet with BPAC again.

Carl asked about Rashad's feelings about the evolution of standards. Rashad emphasizes research: before and after, and the use of only objective measures. He only wants to do work that is based on actual (as opposed to perceptual) facts. He will follow data and research.

More information about Rashad's department on the [web site](#).

~~5:30~~ 6:00 pm **Updates from Committee Members**

- ~~PLACE (Scott Paisley, Representative)~~
- ~~STWCA (Eberhard Jehle, Representative)~~
- BAR (Carl Schwarz)

The plastic Downtown Mall tree grates are temporary while permanent/metal ones are being investigated. Not approved by BAR for permanent installation.

- ~~CAT Advisory Board & Tree Commission (Lena Seville)~~

5:50pm **Responsibilities of BPAC Representatives to other Bodies**

Tabled because Lena not here to present her views.

~~6:00~~ 6:05 pm **Election of New Co-Chairs (One Cyclist, One Pedestrian)**

A quorum (7) was not present so a vote could not be taken. Jake (bike) and Carl (pedestrian) were nominated from the floor and seconded. Jake will reach out for more nominees and give a deadline. There will then be a vote (by email) hopefully in time for the next meeting.

There was general discussion about expanding the membership. It is difficult to recruit specific pedestrians because everyone is one to a degree and there is no organized social media or social movement for them. They tend to be involved when an issue impacts them directly. . Further thought will be given and Peter K will reach out to some networks he knows about.

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Dave suggested adding a Goals and Vision line to the agenda for next meeting. People will only come if there is a compelling purpose. It was noted that a group brainstorm did take place recently. Results from that exercise will be shared with the group.

6:20pm Safe Routes to School Coordinator Update

We have received the grant for Safe Routes to School Program Implementation. The grant will fund a part-time (20 hrs/week) safe routes to school coordinator, plus \$30K for program implementation. The hire is going through the HR process but it will unfortunately not happen in time for the start of school. It's a one year grant; we have not received the Notice to Proceed from VDOT but that should happen soon. The programming for the upcoming year was established by a task force. The full list of activities can be found on the [web site](#).

There will be some interaction between the coordinator and BPAC.

6:30pm Back to School Bash—Safe Routes Table Help Needed

We'll be promoting Safe Routes at the Back to School Bash. We need volunteers to help. Carl volunteered.

David asked about having a bike rodeo or safety check. The Bash is incredibly crowded so it might now work there but Walk to School Day and Books on Bikes are great opportunities.

6:40pm Safety Campaign Brainstorming

Amanda has begun a calendar of opportunities for safety and education opportunities.

Carl mentioned seeing people (kids and adults) riding improperly on West Main and that those people will not be showing up to our organized sessions. It highlights the problem that it's most difficult to reach people who disregard (or are unaware of) the rules.

David asked about crosswalk etiquette and how education can happen there. There is a woeful lack of records and data on pedestrian injuries and incidents. Having a Facebook group or some kind of social media way to gather stories. But it's difficult to maintain continuity of ownership.

It would be good to find a non-City based pedestrian advocacy group. Reprise of the earlier conversation about this topic followed.

Ruth would like to know who the uniformed people on West Main are ("ambassadors?") and if they can somehow be recruited to perform educational roles. There were general complaints about the ill-designed road in front of the Flats and speculation of ways to educate people about how to share the road.

Amanda will follow up with the police about safety campaign ideas.

David brought the conversation back to wanting to focus on where the problems are and the need to get data to support those efforts.

Further agenda items not discussed

- Code Audit

Upcoming events

Aug 13, 11AM-1PM	Back to School Bash (Pavilion)
Aug 17, 3-4PM:	APBP Webinar—"Street Design in Suburban Contexts"
Sept 1, 5-7PM:	Next BPAC Meeting (City Hall)
Oct 1, 9AM-12PM:	Walk/Bike/Play JPA (<i>tentative date</i>)
Oct 5:	Walk to School Day