

## **Charlottesville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee**

November 2, 2017

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

NDS Conference Room, 2nd Floor City Hall

### **Meeting Participants**

Stephen Bach

Carl Schwarz

Frank Deviney

Peter Ohlms

Sarah Littlefield

Zack Lofton

Lena Seville

Niko Test

Amanda Poncy

### **Action Items:**

- Amanda to send BPAC distribution list to establish total number of active members
- Carl will send the streetscape chapter of the ADC Guidelines
- Carl will contact Will and Chip regarding BPAC participation as non-voting member of the Regional Transit Partnership.
- Niko will set up Facebook page for group to review at Dec. meeting
- Carl will condense the meeting rules and send to the group. BPAC members should share any additional rules to be considered and these will be voted on in Dec.

### **Meeting Agenda**

5:00 PM      Being a Better BPAC - Lessons Learned (other organizations, report)

The question about whether the group should be an advocacy vs. advisory group was further explored. The group discussed what is meant by “advocacy” and identified the following potential roles for the committee:

- Attending events to talk about safety issues
- Community/Political advocacy
- Making demands for more money for bike/ped projects
- Evaluating whether the city is spending enough to achieve the plan.
- Advocating for projects outside of the plan

Peter noted that the resource on “how to be a good BPAC” specifically says that an advisory group is not an advocacy group. Frank suggested that evaluation of how the city is doing is a role of an advisory committee. Lena suggested that approach is reactive and stated that she prefers the group to be more proactive by reviewing plans before they are implemented.

Amanda raised the example of Ragged Mountain to demonstrate the difference between advisory and advocacy. The BPAC was involved in writing a statement in support of creating accessible, multi-use pathways and offered suggestions on how to achieve that. But the group was not front and center at the council meetings advocating for the adoption of the plan.

There was discussion about how individuals can become advocates outside of the group if they are not happy with the consensus statement of the group. Generally, members of the group felt

like that that is not encouraged as it dilutes the statement of the group. The group had previously agreed that votes for written statements should be unanimous, but if there are dissenting votes, those points of view should be explicitly stated in the group statement. If a member of the group does not agree with a statement and wishes to advocate a personal position, they should identify themselves as someone who bikes/walks, not as a member of BPAC.

Lena was curious about whether this has become a problem. Stephen responded that the issue is about how much time are we willing to devote to the multitude of issues that surround people who bike/walk and the facilities for them. Time is limited, so we are trying to set boundaries on the group's time and how it can be more effective.

Stephen felt that the group's effectiveness could be based on how widely we are spreading efforts. His inclination is to restrict efforts and be as effective as possible within those limits.

Lena respectfully disagreed. She felt that it was useful to have a conversation about where to focus time/energy so that the group is effective. Her concern with restricting efforts was that individuals might drive interests while alienating others who are not interested in those specific topics.

Frank and Peter both agreed that there is a need to have an advocacy group in Charlottesville, but this committee might not be it. The BPAC should focus on reviewing site plans, implementation, policy issues, etc. Sub-committees can form to take on more focused topics. There was a feeling that the subcommittees have not done a lot because there is too much to do at meetings and not enough time. There was a recognition that maybe all of the subcommittee topics were overly ambitious and they need to be more focused on topics that someone is passionate enough about to make happen.

Peter suggested that the main focus of the BPAC should be on advising the city on the things only the city can do (like building stuff in the right of way). There is not a separate advocacy group that can build bike lanes. However, there could be a separate advocacy group that runs events, does encouragement, works for education, etc. Lena agrees that meeting time should be focused on the types of projects that Peter describes.

Amanda reminded the group about another reason why this is being discussed. There are times when people come to meetings with specific neighborhood issues and they try to use the BPAC as a way to get action and implementation on those projects. These items take up time that detracts from the meeting agenda. Frank raised concern about where you draw the line – could one argue that Belmont Bridge is a pet project? Amanda noted that the Belmont Bridge is a city led project that is part of the Bike/Ped plan, so this is the type of project that BPAC should focus on.

### **Review Charter/Establish Meeting rules**

Lena asked if we are changing bylaws to include meeting rules about how to propose agenda topics. Carl doesn't want to stop people from suggesting ideas, but there is a better way to suggest it. He recommended typing up a statement about the proposed agenda item and sending it to BPAC for consideration. Lena also suggested having a space at the end of the

agenda – maybe the last 10-30 minutes - where individual issues could be discussed. There was general agreement that this would be a good idea.

Peter noted that there is a general process people should follow if there are location specific concerns. He suggested that spot issues should be raised with staff for resolution before coming to the BPAC. Only if there has not been resolution, should BPAC consider the item. For example, if staff says they won't clean glass in the bike lane, then should it be brought to BPAC.

Lena asked about the status of the meeting rules that were sent via email. It was noted that the meeting rules were never vetted with the larger group.

Carl asked how many active members are on the BPAC distribution list since the bylaws say that 7 minimum is needed for quorum. This is important because if there is a vote (either email or text), a certain number of people need to respond in order for the vote to be valid.

Most agreed that the bylaws should not be written with a specific number of people and it should be changed to reflect majority.

Carl suggested reviewing the bylaws and charter line by line to see what needs to be changed.

- I. Those present agreed that it's ok for the BPAC to be voluntary. It's easier to get people involved.
- II. Purposes – Stephen liked Peter's previously discussed suggestion that the committee should be involved with issues that concern the city. There was discussion about whether to be involved with county issues. The group agreed that the primary mission is city focused - those projects that the city is uniquely positioned to do. The intent is not to limit discussion to physical facilities and exclude things like enforcement BUT there was mixed reaction about whether the committee should participate in events. Carl was in support of keeping the language since it doesn't require members to participate. Stephen thought it should not be a group activity, but suggested that individuals could participate. Niko thought BPAC's participation in events was important. The group generally agreed that keeping the language as "may include" is ok. Peter does think that another advocacy group could facilitate events, but since we don't have that group, BPAC is appropriate.

Frank suggested aligning the BPAC mission with the goals in the Bike/Ped Plan. Lena suggested it should be a subcommittee task to figure out how to align the two. They can write it up and bring it back to BPAC. There was discussion about Lena and Frank working on it, but no consensus was reached. Carl didn't feel like the goals fully aligned. Stephen felt that everything in the Bike/Ped Plan is not necessarily something that BPAC should address. He felt the group should focus on the projects within the plan. He doesn't want to exclude anything, but it doesn't mean that the committee should spend time on all of these.

Coordinate subcommittees, reps to other groups. Group agreed.

Everyone felt comfortable with regional tie in.

Carl – First read, they don't fully align in the same way.

- III. All agreed to keep this section.
- IV. Membership – There was agreement that the current membership does not “represent a cross-section of the bike/ped community” as stated in the charter, but they agreed that this should still be a goal. Lena suggested that a good use of time would be to reach out to underrepresented groups. Carl suggested the following modification - “Committee shall strive to represent a cross-section of the community.” All agreed with the term.
- V. Organizational Structure –
  - o Officers – ok
  - o Subcommittees – ok
  - o Active members – The group discussed how someone would be removed or how votes would be taken. Lena suggested reviewing the list once a year to review who is staying/going. There was discussion about removing the 50% threshold? The group generally agreed that the list would be reviewed once a year and anyone who hasn’t attended is flagged.

Lena expressed concern about where to put the rules about discussing special projects. Carl suggested that it could be put in procedural section.

- VI. Procedural Rules - Lena requested that if the group decides to write a statement in support/opposition of a project/issue it should be a consensus vote with dissenting views expressed explicitly in the written statement.

The group agreed to remove the reference to “7 members present” and change to majority vote. Amanda and Carl will review the member list to confirm who is on the list. “Simple majority of active members is required for quorum.”

Lena would prefer to have open meeting rules. While they don’t technically apply to BPAC, Lena felt like it is a good idea. For example, she felt voting by email is ok, but only if it’s on an agenda (either before or after, but preferably an agenda item before the vote is taken). She reiterated that it’s important for the group to have a public record of the voting process. Peter suggested that any email votes should be included in the minutes of the next meeting. The group agreed that email votes should only be used for time sensitive or for agenda items and a call for vote needs to come from the acting chairperson.

Carl will summarize the meeting rules that were previously proposed via email. People can add to it via and we’ll vote at next meeting.

### **Belmont Bridge Statement**

Peter prepared a statement in support of keeping the at-grade crossing at Graves Street. Carl suggested via email that the statement should mention typical block lengths for downtown blocks. The bridge is an extension of downtown context and 200’ block lengths are context sensitive. All were in favor of the change to include 200’ context sensitive block lengths to item #1c.

There was a discussion of legal “unmarked” crosswalk vs. marked crosswalk.  
<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title46.2/chapter8/section46.2-924/>

Frank brought up the example where a pedestrian was struck near Dirty Nelly's, but was charged with the accident.

Carl moved to vote on the statement with the proposed changes provided via email and with Peter's additions. Lena seconded. All were in favor. Peter will address to staff and council. Peter will resend to BPAC for everyone to say yes and will include all names from those present. Carl will send the letter to staff and council.

Niko mentioned that she is not yet on the email list. Amanda agreed to add Niko Test, Sarah Littlefield, and Zack Lofton to the BPAC email list. Amanda will also change the email address for Frank.

6:15 PM      Project Updates

- PC – Brandon Ave, Hydraulic Small Area Plan

Peter flagged these items on the November PC agenda. Peter described UVA's plan to redevelop the properties along Brandon Ave that includes a request to take over the street. Peter noted that Brandon is part of the Bicycle Vision Network and the closure does not address the plan to connect both sides of the RR tracks specifically. Amanda noted that the staff report does mention the Bicycle Vision Network and requests pedestrian access easements along Brandon.

Lena is in favor of whatever is written – “you don't have to get my vote.”

There was discussion of the Hydraulic Small Area Plan. It is largely land use based, but shows bike/ped connections at Angus, Hydraulic, and Zan Road. The details of how the crossings will work out have not yet been resolved, but there is a need to pay attention to this project. With the Kmart site being redeveloped there is talk of multi-use path (as opposed to the protected bike lane that's recommended in the plan). Carl asked if Amanda was comfortable with what is being proposed in the plan. Amanda said yes, but expressed concerns about defaulting to improved access at Angus and Zan as the primary bike/ped connections. Peter asked if it's useful to differentiate between bike/peds for the crossings – suggesting that perhaps Angus/Zan are appropriate bike/ped connections, but Hydraulic should still have pedestrian accommodations if bike/ped accommodations cannot be provided at all three locations. Those present agreed that this is a reasonable approach. There was concern that there is not enough detail to comment at this phase, but it was suggested that the group keep tabs on the design to ensure that the proposed grade separated interchange includes bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. The group will review the plan and decide whether or not to write a statement.

Niko suggested that we should have maps available so we can better review projects. Amanda noted that we do typically have graphics to review, but because the last few meetings have been process oriented, we haven't had the visuals.

- PLACE - Scott not present to provide update.
- Belmont Bridge – no further updates
- BAR – Carl mentioned that BAR is reviewing the design guidelines (albeit slowly). Amanda noted that there are a number of items in the Streetscape Section that relate to bikes and peds. Carl noted that things like green markings, flashing beacons, bollards, etc. are not currently included in the design guidelines. Lena would like to talk about raised crosswalks. Carl will email the chapter about streetscapes.
- TJPDC Regional Bike/Ped Plan

There will be a kickoff on Nov. 8 for the Bike/Ped Plan. Peter explained that there is the Regional Bike/Ped Plan and the Greenways Group that Peter Krebs is leading. Peter Krebs's project/role is public engagement and implementation for the TJPDC's Plan.

- Standards and Design/Code Audit Update

Amanda explained that Toole Design/RKK are under contract to do the Standards and Design Manual update. Staff had a kick-off a few weeks ago and will be meeting again with staff and developer group Monday/Tuesday of next week. Lena asked if the meeting was public. She expressed concern that CADRE would be invited to a meeting without the public being involved. Amanda noted the public will be invited to participate, if not this visit, in the near future. Lena felt BPAC should be one of the key stakeholders. Amanda clarified that the meeting was for the SADM, not the code audit. The developer group was invited because they are direct users (including design consultants, attorneys) of the SADM and can provide details about some of the challenges with using the manual.

Carl noted that Lisa Robertson is working on building height, appurtenances, definition of mixed use, and a few other things that are problematic in the zoning code. The intent is to get these sections updated before the full code audit. See past PC agendas for full list of items.

- SIA/Form Based Code

Stephen previously emailed a summary.

Lena noted two additional projects that might be of interest to the group.

- Regional Transit Partnership – CAT, JAUNT

Voting members include 2 City Councilors, 2 Board of Supervisors, 2 Jaunt, and 1 person from VDOT. There are many non-voting members (8-10 non-voting?): school buses, CAT advisory, UVA, Martha Jeff, Hospital, big employers. Lena suggested that maybe there a need to have someone from this group be a part? If BPAC would like a representative, contact TJPDC (Will, Chip). Lena is participating as a non-voting member representing CAT

Advisory Board. The tentative meeting schedule is the 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. of even months at 4:00PM. Niko is interested. Carl will contact Will and Chip.

- Comp Plan

Comprehensive Plan Drafts have been online since the summer.

Niko asked how does the BPAC share info online? Would BPAC be interested in Facebook/Instagram? The main issue is who is going to manage any social media presence. Niko volunteered to develop a facebook page, but was looking for content. Amanda noted that when this topic came up a few years ago that Chris' Safe Cycling blog would serve as a repository for information. Bike Albemarle, Bike UVA, Bike Charlottesville, and City Hall currently have a facebook page. Someone suggested having a Bike/Ped event on facebook for our meetings. There were some questions about whether BPAC members could be administrators of a city page. Amanda noted that as long as there is no city logo on it, group members could create their own. If a city logo is desired, content should be funneled to Amanda to send to city Communications Dept. There was agreement that a facebook page should have a one way flow of information and a facebook group might be the way to start. There is also concern about the number of people who would join a facebook group. Carl and Niko volunteered to administer. Niko will set up for next month for the committee to review.

Old Business – increasing diversity, contacting council candidates, meeting appointments (SIA/FBC, Budget, strategic plan, small area plans, other?)

- Bikes and Bagels Event at UVA

Sarah Littleton gave an overview of the event that is part of the Fall Sustainability Days (corollary to Earth Week events). Parking and Transportation will buy bagels and coffee. BPAC, Community Bikes, University Police Department (bike registration), and Ubikes will participate. Event audience is students, faculty and anyone commuting by bike. The event will be held at Clark Hall Fix-it-Station. 9-11:30 on Nov. 16 (Thurs). Geared toward students, faculty, anyone commuting by bike.

Niko, Amanda, Peter (beginning) and Carl (maybe) volunteered to help. Sarah will have a table and Amanda will bring materials.

- Discussed Park and Bike
- Amanda mentioned an idea that was recently raised that would allow people to commute from farther distances, but bike within the city. See Boston's Park and Pedal for more info. <https://www.parkandpedal.org/>
- ADA Advisory Committee – Zack asked for input about how the BPAC and ADA Advisory Committee can work together on mutual interest. For example, with trees how does ADA, Tree, and BPAC work together to resolve. Should we hold regular meetings. Lena is interested in meeting with ADA re: sidewalk closures, block lengths, mid-block crossings. The two groups met once last year, but we haven't had any additional meeting. The ADA Advisory

Committee meets once a quarter. There is an opportunity to focus on pedestrian issues with the ADA Advisory Committee.

- Are there other areas where ADA is an issue that city doesn't control (ie. Utility pole stuck in the middle of a narrow sidewalk). Other things – city street, but VDOT controls the ped phase.
- Peter suggested sending the meeting dates to the group and if someone can attend, they will. The next meeting is first Thurs of Dec. at 10AM and Independence Resource Center.

### **Upcoming Events**

November 2: Next BPAC Meeting

November 8: TJPDC/PEC Regional Bike/Ped Plan KickOff, Jefferson School, 6-8PM

November 14: Planning Commission Meeting, City Council Chambers, 5:30PM

November 16: Bikes and Bagels, UVA Clark Library, 8:30-11:30AM

December 7: BPAC Meeting, NDS Conference Room, 5-7PM

December 12: Planning Commission Meeting, City Council Chambers, 5:30PM

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