

## Charlottesville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

January 5, 2017

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

NDS Conference Room, 2nd floor City Hall

### Meeting Participants

Stephen Bach

Brian Carr

Michael Corbett

Michelle Corbett

Frank Deviney

Chris Gist

Jake Fox

Jim Herdon

Peter Krebs

Jerry Leon (RMC Events/UVA  
Ambassadors)

Josh Mandell (*Charlottesville  
Tomorrow*)

Peter Ohlms

Scott Paisley

Amanda Poncy

Ben Rexrode (UVA Police)

Carl Schwarz

Lena Seville

David Stackhouse

Ruth Stornetta

### AGENDA

#### 5:00 pm Ambassadors & UVA Police

Ben introduced the Ambassadors program at UVA, which is administrated by RMC Events. It's an innovative way to have a friendly presence in the area near (but off Grounds) that is not the police. They do not have law-enforcement power. Their main purpose is high visibility. Their beat is bounded by Rugby, Preston, University, West Main and is concentrated around the Corner. Coverage map at <http://www.virginia.edu/uvapolice/AmbassadorZoneMap.pdf>

They rove and have predictable fixed positions and strive to be responsible presences. They can report illegal activity or call in situations that don't seem right. They should be highly engaged, talking to people. Their scope is about a safe public environment—not reporting individual traffic infractions.

Ruth asked Ben if they have a role of educating the public. He responded that they have basic scripts about how they respond to common situations and educating people on basic safety tips.

She followed up by specifying that UVA students often ride bikes in unsafe ways—ignoring stoplights, etc and wondering if the Ambassadors could have a role in educating new student cyclists. Ben responded that yes—it's an important role for them but also for

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the University Police.

Jake sees a role for them in documenting issues that are not captured by official police reports (such as bike/ped conflicts or minor accidents) but that might be in the Ambassadors' call logs. Ben said that all safety-related issues are called in to the police. So that means that minor issues that were unreported are now seen but also makes crime numbers seem elevated. There is a difference between more crime being seen and more crimes happening. A new baseline will need to be established with the increased surveillance.

Ruth asked about sidewalk clearing after snowstorms, and lack thereof, which is unsafe and would be a helpful reporting item. Jerry mentioned that would also include areas that have been technically cleared but are icy or slippery. That can be both addressed in the moment and recorded for future planning.

Ben emphasized that UVa police oversees the program, RMC manages, but there is daily reporting and communication.

Jake asked about the relationship between the Charlottesville Police Department and UVaPD. Ben said it's quite seamless, with personal relationships going back to the Police Academy. There is much communication between the two departments. There are areas of overlap between the two departments where both jurisdictions patrol—the Corner for example.

Carl asked about trends where the City can help to make the area safer or better. Jerry said directional information is a big issue (and so signage would be helpful). Many people, especially new students and parents wonder how to get downtown, to the Downtown Mall in particular. It's probably the most frequently-asked question.

Jake asked if there is there a way for the UVaPD to enforce distracted driving. Ben said that it's more of an area for CPD because there are few drivable roads on Grounds. They do Click-it-or-Ticket campaigns on Grounds but perform do not typically handle traffic issues off-Grounds, which are in other departments' jurisdictions. They're careful about operating on other departments' jurisdictions.

Brian asked how one can obtain the nifty reflective stickers or lights for a wheelchair. Ben said that they run out quickly and have done so already.

Dave asked about calls for escort. Jerry said that they are frequent for short walks. Longer rides are referred to Safe-Ride. Most calls originate near the Corner.

To learn more or to give feedback, go to the UVA Police website (<http://www.virginia.edu/uvapolicy/>), or visit the public safety substation at 1413 University Avenue.

## 5:45 5:35 pm Goals for 2017

(Potential Subcommittees)

- Signage?
- Code Audit?
- Education?
- Sidewalk impediments?
- Vision Zero?

Amanda and Jake distributed a printout of the Bike/Ped Plan status update.

### Policy

Ruth mentioned that the bike lane closures on West Main are inconvenient and dangerous. She says that in big cities, pedestrian connectivity must be maintained throughout construction, even ADA standards.

The group discussed how it (BPAC) could even address that kind of regulation. Is it a Standards of Design question? Code Audit? Scott pointed out that it might/should be part of a Traffic Engineer's job. Amanda confirmed this, but added that staff shortage in that office has limited its effectiveness.

Dave asked about the broad question of connectivity. Amanda said that it is one of the main goals of the Bike/Ped Plan. Ruth added City/County connectivity. Frank mentioned some kind of heat map about connectivity. Amanda said that the City has not been able to produce a Network Connectivity analysis.

Dave asked whether there is a systematic set of priority areas. Amanda and Jake referred to the Bike/Ped plan, the purpose of which is precisely that: to identify priorities. There is a list of priority projects and maps that show existing and missing infrastructure.

### Clear and Concise Rules of the Road.

What laws are priority for enforcement? It's difficult to track even looking at police records because some violations (such as running a stop sign) is actually a moving violation (not a bicycle infraction). There is likely to be an Education subcommittee.

Frank asked if BPAC is responsible for overseeing implementation of the Bike/Ped Plan—or if it is being handled by staff. Amanda said that it's both: staff is working on implementation but there is a major role for advocacy and the Committee actually has been an active part of implementation.

### Sweeping/Maintenance

Amanda said that the Snow Removal ordinance is on the next (1/17) City Council agenda—an issue that BPAC may definitely want to address.

There was general discussion about prioritizing the long list of goals from 2015. Maybe they can be collected into categories (such as those listed on this agenda) plus,

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perhaps, the connectivity issue. That connectivity issue connects with the Bike/Ped plan and it's a living document that needs to be constantly revised and developed.

Lena asked about safety. Jake (and others) responded that that is the purpose of Vision Zero (zero road fatalities) and it [V-0] has infrastructure *and* education components.

There was discussion about crosswalks, guidelines, standards and when government overrules engineer's standards, such as when City Council orders a crosswalk added in a non-standard—or even potentially unsafe—location.

Brian asked about standards for closing sidewalks on multiple sections of West Main with the result that completely disrupts pedestrian (and especially wheelchair) access. Jim Herndon said that the City doesn't have fine-grained control over when a project happens once it's approved.

Ruth reiterated that it's not about timing—it's about maintaining continuous service and connectivity. Now Charlottesville is becoming more urban and this is a fine example of an urban problem that now exists.

Chris pointed out that there is no incentive to get the sidewalk open again in a timely manner. Scott said that it should be part of the Standards of Design process (which is being reviewed). That needs to be very visible up-front so it can be part of the developers' contractors' bidding process. It will not be implemented otherwise.

Two possible routes: passing an ordinance that connectivity must be maintained throughout. Another approach is to charge much more for sidewalk closure.

Overall, it's a question for a sub-committee.

#### Sidewalk Impediments

Jake has created a Google Drive where he personally is keeping photos of impediments that he is finding. The subcommittee will want to create a protocol for recording items, use GIS mapping, survey protocols, etc.

#### 6:15 23 pm Meeting Format

- What's the most effective way to accomplish our mission?
- Subcommittees
- Monthly vs Bimonthly
- Separate Bike/Ped Committees

Carl asked about the best way to pursue its goals with some of the above structures.

Jake asked about changing the format of the meetings in a couple of ways. Alternating bike/ped, alternating guest meetings.

Ruth suggested using one of the two hours specifically for the subcommittees because

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members are already busy [and won't be able to add separate subcommittee meetings to their calendars] to facilitate scheduling, and to incentivize getting work done.

Lena pointed out that it prevents people from being on more than one committee. Ruth said that it's essential to focus.

Lena also expressed that the committee has a dual focus and it would be helpful for the committee to be able explore/express multiple opinions when the needs of cyclists and pedestrian are not the same.

Scott and Ruth both emphasized that it's important to bring in more pedestrians. Lena added that the group feels like a bicycle committee and it's not always welcoming. Carl, expressed desire to make the group more welcoming but it won't work as separate committees. Stephen asked for there to be nuance (including dissent) in BPAC statements.

There was discussion about whether separate bike / ped committees could bring the weight of the combined committee and whether official positions that openly contained internal dissent would be self-undermining.

The group next discussed whether a consensus approach would be a good way to deal with differing opinions yet ultimately issue unified findings. It would force the group to craft its findings in a way that is acceptable to everyone and would so keep everyone engaged and bring the full body's moral authority to its reports. Nuance would not have to be lost but positions that are strongly appealing to part of the group (but strongly objectionable to others) would not be possible—or would have to be up-front about their complexity in order to win consensus.

They proposed using a procedural consensus approach for difficult issues on a trial basis.

Motion (Carl): *BPAC will come to consensus about its statements, which may contain dissent.*

Vote: Yay (10)

Nay : (0)

There was an informal motion to implement Subcommittee working sessions for the first hour of meetings (except when there's a guest). It passed by General Consent.

-Submitted by Peter Krebs

**Items to discuss via email/keep moving:**

Market Street post-email summary/questions?

- Establish Subcommittees
  
- Tom Tom events:
  - Photoshoot – who, where, how? Maybe we include pedestrian and bus commuters?
  - Somehow piggyback off community picnic on the Mall?
- Bike Month events:
  - Try to get a special or some sort of event at a brewery?
  - Others?
  
- 2016 Accomplishments Recap – Amanda to send via email.
- Garnette Cadogan? Schedule for a future month
- Update from Scott on data collection and further discussion
- Ragged Mountain update – maybe ask Chris to send summary email?
- Policy Items for Council Consideration - What are the bike/ped state legislative items and how can BPAC/Council support (new subcommittee?)

**Upcoming Events**

February 3, 5:00PM: Next BPAC meeting, NDS Conference Room