

2021.12.13 BPAC Minutes
Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Virtual meeting

Attendees:

BPAC Members: Zack DesJardins, Josephine Liu, Ken Notis, Mike Derby, Mary-Jane Roth, Mike O'Neill, Eldon Boes, Erin Meter, David Bouk, Bob Hartt, Dave Levy

Guests: none.

City Staff: none.

Meeting called to order – Zack DesJardins at 6:33 p.m.

Alexandria Police Department – Lt. Jason North

- Lt. North is on paternity leave. If you have any questions about APD's work, he's still answering emails. Or send your questions to Zack, who can forward them to Lt. North.
- APD just charged someone in the pedestrian crash from Saturday on Four Mile Run Drive. Zack will ask for more info.

Proposed Complete Streets five-year work plan

- City staff briefed the Transportation Commission on the proposed five-year work plan. The hope is to generate clear expectations for what Complete Streets improvements will be done. The plan to consider crash data and equity along with the Vision Zero program.
- What do you think this Complete Streets plan should do? It's still being developed. It'd be good for us to figure what we want in it and give some thoughts on what should be prioritized.
- Also, what initiatives would you like City Council to pass? The incoming Council may be more receptive than past Councils.
- Ken: I had initially thought about suggesting specific geographic priorities, but it seems like staff already plans to look at priorities listed in the 2016 Bike and Ped master plan.
- Ken: another issue is that they haven't defined "enhanced bicycle corridor" – is it a paint-only bike lane, protected bike lane, neighborhood bikeway, or something else?
- Zack: six proposed bullets – how should we prioritize?
- Ken: T&ES says they can maintain a two-way PBL, because it's wide enough, but not a one-way PBL.
- Eldon: the plan is all focused on infrastructure – making sure it's built out and useful. But lots of trips are under 3 miles, and many are 5-10 miles – all of which are practical for walking or biking. Should Complete Streets focus on ensuring that car trips become walking and biking trips, or should that be somewhere else?
 - Ken: doesn't that live in the Transportation Demand Management shop? I.e., Thomas Hamed's office. Also, the issue we encounter over and over again is funding. We need to hit very hard that you can have a plan, but without resources, it's meaningless.
 - Zack: but when you evaluate a Complete Streets project after it's done, shouldn't one of the evaluation measures be whether it diverted trips?
 - Eldon: maybe we should put more focus as BPAC on working with Thomas and that program as well.

- Zack: Out of these six priorities, what should be the top priority?
- David: what's an enhanced bicycle corridor?
 - Mary-Jane: is the problem that they use the term but it's not defined, so that you get what you get? People should know what it means, so that when City staff puts out a plan, people know what to expect.
 - David: plan for Arlandria seems to leave this unexplained.
 - Ken: that's a small area plan, not a transportation plan. But I think they should look back at the things they've said in 2016 should get an enhanced bicycle corridor. If some of those places only got a painted bike lane or sharrows, they should realize that's not an enhanced bicycle corridor.
- Eldon: the two things we should care about most are filling the gaps and expanding the network. Nothing in these six bullets expressly calls this out.
 - Zack: one of the thoughts behind the "street by street or cross-city approach" bullet was that the current approach is piecemeal. London has biking corridors that go across the city. Maybe this plan could do one east-to-west route per year.
- Mary-Jane: where do sidewalk gaps fall into this plan? If they're going to be doing a complete route, it should be not just for bicycles but also for pedestrians.
 - Bob: I agree with that. Maybe they could focus on completing one route for both pedestrians and cyclists.
 - Mary-Jane: maybe phrase it as completing options for alternative transportation – i.e., everyone not in a car.
 - Ken: I don't think it's realistic to develop one cross-city route per year. We could still recognize that projects will be completed in phases, but the end-goal would be to complete a bike lane and sidewalks for a complete route across the city.
 - Mary-Jane: maybe they'll need to prioritize specific things like an emergency repair where the sidewalk is falling apart, but I still think the overall goal should be a complete route.
- Eldon: we ought to set the goals pretty high. Other City Commissions (Transportation, Environmental Policy, Planning) are setting aggressive climate change goals. A large part of that should be reducing car trips and shifting to walking, biking, and transit trips.
 - Bob: that makes me think of the plans for the Duke Street corridor.
 - Ken: the \$75 million for that corridor is for transit, and for bike/ped access to get to the bus. It's not money for a Duke Street bike lane.
- Mike O: it seems like the City places too much emphasis on getting grants. How can the City have a five-year plan of its own if it's hoping to have the federal or state government pay the cost? You become dependent on the other entities' schedules. If this is a priority for the City, they're going to have to spend the City's money on these improvements.
 - Ken: they're actually fairly good at getting grants. People have objected, saying they're locking certain treatments in. Example: upper King Street. I agree with Eldon, but let's be realistic: there's going to be a lot of money spent on stormwater improvement, a lot of money spent on the police and fire departments.
- Zack: one of the challenges is public outreach. Should it be street by street, or approval all at once? If Council approves it once, why should people be able to veto individual projects?
 - Eldon: the piecemeal approach doesn't make sense. In addition to the Commis-

sions, there's a climate change task force due to give a report in the next 12 months. There are a lot of others we should be working with to be aggressive about climate change goals. The new Council ought to be amenable to that.

- Zack: any other legislation that Council should pass?
 - Eldon: it might make sense to have someone from the Transportation Commission talk about where they see this issue going with respect to ped/bike issues.
 - Zack: or maybe City staff who works with the Transportation Commission?
 - Ken: maybe Melissa McMann?
- Mike O: Casey was gathering input for bike map, which identifies places that are difficult to bike. Maybe that's a place to start.

Project/Event updates

- BPAC Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) update – Mary-Jane Roth
 - Last scheduled meeting was Thanksgiving, and we didn't meet. We're working on a document to go out to a variety of organizations that says where we're going and what help we could use.
- Recent and Upcoming Walks and Rides – Josephine Liu
 - Holiday lights ride + walk this Friday and Saturday. Nearly sold out for the Saturday walk, others are nearly full as well.
 - Mary-Jane: CHIP representatives have been promoting to their groups. Please find out if people are hearing about the event through this.
- Subcommittee Reports
 - Infrastructure – Ken
 - Arlandria small area plan going to Council soon
 - Old Cameron feedback: they've come back with 60% design. Our idea was to have temporary facilities while they wait for development to be done, but they seem to be waiting for development. City wants feedback. CTC also is looking for ideas on things to push.
 - Mike O: lighting on the trail is going to be one of the issues.
 - Education – Eldon Boes
 - BITS is being taught later and later into the winter. One school is planning to do bike classes in January.
 - Ped ed program – SRTS people have done an outstanding job teaching to second graders, possibly other grades as well. SRTS's current team is maybe the best yet. ACPS support is increasing. This year, for the first time, ACPS is including funding for the SRTS coordinator. Past years' funding has come from VDOT grants. ACPS might be more willing to pick up costs of bike fleet and maintenance. Money will continue to be an issue. SRTS funding at the state level is gone. Whether that'll come back through some of the federal bills isn't clear yet.
 - They've been polling kids on how popular BITS is, and we'll want to help them publicize that.
 - Boards and Commissions Updates
 - Environmental Policy Commission – Eldon. The Commission is working

aggressively on energy and climate change issues.

- Treasurer's report and financial update – Erin
 - About \$15,000 in bank account. Three transactions since last meeting: \$30 to file annual report, \$1600 check received from VDOT, \$50 fee for VBF membership.
 - Insurance renewal should be coming up in January/February.
 - Does WABA have nonprofits as members?
- New business or public comments
 - November minutes were approved.
 - Bob: City finished installation of HAWK signal at Braddock Road near N. Early. Some people from the City staff came out. Really nice to have this complete. My wife and I have used it several times. With the new school being planned to replace Minnie Howard, I think it'll get used even more. Had a nice ribbon cutting. A nice achievement that we thank the City for.
 - Ken: the old office buildings at Park Center and Ford are about to open. They've widened some of the sidewalks, put in nice bus shelters, put in sharrows on Ford. Councilmember Jackson asked why they painted sharrows without community outreach, which maybe indicates misunderstanding of what sharrows do.
 - Dave Levy: given that Braddock will have pedestrian protection, has there been any talk of lowering speed limit?
 - Bob: they're now allowed to put speed cameras near school zones.
 - Zack: they did just lower the speed limit on the west side of Seminary, but that was more in response to a pedestrian crash.
 - Dave: D.C. has lowered speed limit to 20 MPH, but they haven't changed all the signs yet.