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**Date:** Tuesday, February 16, 2016

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** City Council Chambers, City of Urbana, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL

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**Members Present:** Brandon Bowersox-Johnson, James Roedl (Stacey DeLorenzo), Elsie Hedgspeth, Cynthia Hoyle, Audrey Ishii, Susan Jones, Jeff Marino and Craig Shonkwiler

**Staff Present:** Kevin Garcia

**Members Absent:** Michele Guerra

**Others Present:** Gabe Lewis, Rita Black, Charlie Smyth, Jeff Yockey

### **1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Roll call was taken and it was noted that a quorum of members was present.

### **2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Bowersox-Johnson announced that Cynthia Hoyle had made a request to amend the agenda by adding "Report on Sidewalk Snow Removal Committee Update" to Unfinished Business.

Susan Jones moved to approve the agenda as amended for the February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

James Roedl seconded the motion.

The motion was approved.

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Jeff Marino moved to approve the meeting minutes from the January 28, 2016 meeting.

Craig Shonkwiler seconded the motion.

The motion was approved.

#### 4. PUBLIC INPUT

Charlie Smyth presented observations from a recent trip to Davis and Berkeley in California. In his discussion about Berkeley, California, Mr. Smyth mentioned that the community had bike boulevards in some areas to discourage motor vehicles from travelling in residential areas. He added that traffic circles were used as traffic calming devices. He also mentioned that some streets were blocked off to reduce motor vehicle access. Mr. Smyth pointed out that the community lacked bike signage, which made it difficult to know how to reach destinations. He stated that Berkeley was working toward a diamond status Bike Friendly Community designation.

Mr. Smyth discussed the bicycle culture in Davis, California. He said that the community had embraced bicycling as a mode of transportation since the 60s. He said that there were many overpasses and underpasses that reduced the conflicts between motorists and bicyclists. In addition, he mentioned that the wayfinding signage was very welcoming and reflected the community's support of public art and bicycling along bicycle routes. He stated that no box stores were allowed in the community and yet the downtown area was thriving. He said that the bicycle facilities were located both on and off street and that routes to grade schools had no more than one grade crossing. Mr. Smyth offered suggestions that he gave to the community to help them with their endeavor to reach diamond status.

Mr. Smyth discussed the bicycle infrastructure at University of California-Davis. He said that the University of California installed protected lanes and those lanes were used by skateboarders, those who used rollerblades, and bicyclists. He mentioned that some signaled intersections with designated signals for bicyclists did not allow motorists to make right turns on red lights. He added that Davis had a bike loop that all riders of all ages were comfortable using.

Charlie Smyth asked to include comments on the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan. Mr. Smyth asked that the goals listed in the end of the document be moved to the Executive Summary. He expressed concern that the bike mode share target was too low and asked that the goal be over 10% with a one percent per year increase. He said that he wanted to make bicycling in Urbana as safe as possible, which could be done by making a few tweaks to the plan. He asked that the Commission not make any rash decisions about the plan. He said that he would like the plan to be more visionary and move Urbana forward toward platinum level.

Jeff Yockey addressed the Commission. He focused on the goals and objectives and stated that the goals and objectives listed in Section 9 needed to be clarified and actionable. He mentioned that the goals and objectives were only twelve pages in length. He said that he would like to see the bike mode share increased to 20%, increase bicycle safety, make roadways inconvenient for cars, lower the stress of riding a bicycle, increase the number of kids riding bicycles to school, set a goal to reach platinum status in five years and be the best bicycle community in Illinois. He recommended making the bicycle infrastructure an asset for growth. He stated that there were many intersections with conflicts and encouraged engagement with the Illinois Department of Transportation to review the intersection at University Avenue and Wright Street, University Avenue and Lincoln

Avenue, University Avenue and Cunningham Avenue, and Cunningham Avenue and Interstate 74. He would like priorities mentioned on page 293 ranked instead of listed.

Mr. Smyth added that Vision Zero needed to be included to reduce fatalities to zero. One way to do that, he suggested, was to reduce traffic speeds throughout town. He urged the inclusion of equity in the plan to make sure that all areas would be well-served by the bicycle network. He also asked that the ten items listed as goals be listed by priority.

## **5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **a) 2016 Bicycle Master Plan Update**

Craig Shonkwiler stated that since the last BPAC meeting, the suggestions of the Commissioners had been incorporated into the 2016 Bicycle Master Plan. He said that the thirteen major concepts had been expanded upon in the Executive Summary to provide more information about the plan. He said that there was more description about emerging and future bike treatments and those would be considered in the future as projects were being designed and implemented. Mr. Shonkwiler stated that the number of comments received during the most recent comment period were minimal and those were incorporated into the plan. He asked that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission approve the plan. He reviewed the stages that the bicycle master plan update had been through adding that the budget of \$38,000 for the plan had been expended and the plan had two years of input and updates. He informed the Commission that if any more updates were needed, staff would need to go to Council for an additional funding request. He also mentioned that there were various periods where input was sought through public meetings, from the Bicycle Plan Steering Committee, from City staff, and then during the public comment period. He said that comments received during each of those opportunities had been incorporated into the current plan. He continued that the plan was at a point where it needed to be finalized and staff was seeking approval of the plan. He mentioned that during the most recent comment period, only six comments were received. He added that the plan was flexible enough to allow staff to evaluate new bike treatments as projects are designed. He said that the plan needed to be finalized at some point and moved on to the Urbana Plan Commission.

Gabe Lewis reviewed the changes made to the plan since the presentation last month. He pointed out that the Executive Summary had been drafted and that the plan had been changed from the 2015 Urbana Bicycle Master Plan to the 2016 Urbana Bicycle Master Plan. He continued by stating that most of the changes occurred in chapters 11 and 12. One change that he mentioned was the addition of adding a bike boulevard on Main Street east of Goodwin Avenue. Mr. Lewis said that more information was included about enforcement and education, which included a recommendation to enforce parking restrictions in bicycle lanes. He said that the plan encouraged City staff to develop a City ordinance which would prohibit parking in bicycle lanes. Regarding the addition of new and emerging treatments, Mr. Lewis added language about creating a living lab similar to one in Boulder, Colorado. He defined the difference between bikeways and greenways and explained that while it was possible to consider bicycle lanes with environmental considerations, the bikeways recommended in the plan were not considered greenways. He said that recommendations to explore traffic calming policies and programs were added, along with hyperlinks to resources cited in the document, a listing of bicycle friendly communities, and the public comments submitted about the plan. He further explained that education would primarily fall under the responsibility of the school district, public

health department and Safe Routes to School; he said that enforcement would primarily fall under the authority of the Police Department.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson requested that a paragraph be added to the Executive Summary recommending that the reader see the section titled Goals and making it clear that there were big goals within the document. He asked that information about the bike mode share be included along with information about where to find more information.

Jeff Marino mentioned that he liked how the Executive Summary highlighted parts of the document but would like a specific list of the goals.

Cynthia Hoyle said that the City's vision should be outlined at the beginning of the Executive Summary. She recommended, "The vision of this document is to create a community where the casual, less competent bicyclist can bicycle for everyday trips." She asked for language that stated that the City of Urbana was a Gold Level Bicycle Friendly Community. And she recommended that the Executive Summary include language stating that the City wanted to improve its status to Platinum Level and that this was the vision of the plan and what the community wanted to be accomplished.

James Roedl asked to include language about the bicycle mode share and Vision Zero in the plan. He asked that with the understanding those items would be included, the Commission approve the master plan that night and stop going over budget.

Cynthia Hoyle said that the plan should be approved with the understanding that it would be reviewed and updated annually to determine what needed to be added, then amend it and not have to hire anyone. Ms. Hoyle recommended that adopting the Vision Zero goal not be included in the plan since the Police Department needed to be involved in that program. She said that the plan needed to be approved, but she would like to have a process to update it.

Craig Shonkwiler asked if she was requesting frequent, smaller updates. He cautioned that funding and staff time was limited. He said that the City was trying to complete an update every five years and this update took two years to complete partly because of State budget issues. He stated that the current plan was a guide and did not mean that staff could not implement new ideas such as Vision Zero. He continued that if the Council were to ask staff to look into Vision Zero, they would do so since it was a Council goal. He added that staff had looked into traffic calming techniques and neighborhood speed limits. Mr. Shonkwiler said that plan was at a point where decisions needed to be made as to where to go. He said the options would be:

- \* Keep revising the plan and ask Council for additional funds to continue making revisions,
- \* Stop and accept the plan as is. If there are items that need to be added, consider those during the next update.

He reminded the Commission that there were only six comments offered during the thirty-day review period. He said that the comments were good and were incorporated as best they could be. He added that there were many outreach opportunities provided to solicit comments from the community.

Gabe Lewis stated that the six comments were good comments, and there were numerous opportunities to provide input.

Mr. Shonkwiler stated that infrastructure work would be fiscally constrained over the next few years. He said that City policy was to add bicycle lanes only when a street had been resurfaced. He continued that most of the City's work would be focused on the MCORE project. He said that the City could have ambitious goals, but the money would not be available to implement very many of them. He suggested that the comments from Brandon Bowersox-Johnson and Cynthia Hoyle be added to the Executive Summary. He cautioned against any significant changes since the consequences could jeopardize the completion of the update.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson thought that the addition of a couple of sentences within the Executive Summary could be made to incorporate comments from Charlie Smyth and Jeff Yockey.

Cynthia Hoyle said that best practices would require that the plans be reviewed annually and updated. She felt that doing that would not require a consultant nor require a lot of staff time.

Rita Black stated that performance measures had been included as part of the goals and those measures were objective so the plan could be evaluated. She said that CUUATS would provide the majority of the data to City staff so they could track and report on the progress of the goals.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson said that the Commission could have an annual conversation about how the City was performing and discuss any new ideas that could be put into the plan during the next update.

Jeff Marino said that a twenty-year plan with five-year updates was a good plan since it allowed for adjustments in the five-year update.

Rita Black stated that the plan was open enough that new treatments could be incorporated as part of the existing plan.

Cynthia Hoyle moved to approve the plan with the changes to the Executive Summary discussed. She added that the Commission would like an annual report and assessment of the progress toward the reaching the goals.

Jeff Marino seconded the motion.

Brandon Bowersox Johnson asked if during the public input or final comment period, one of the suggestions was to reduce vehicle traffic while increasing bike share mode. He asked if a way was mentioned to measure a reduction in vehicle traffic and would that question be appropriate.

Mr. Lewis stated that one of the goals was for a three percent increase in bike mode share by the year 2020. He mentioned that the baseline was for nine percent for bike to work and eleven percent for all other destinations based upon information obtained from a recent survey. He said that there was no mention of vehicle trip reduction in the plan.

Cynthia Hoyle stated that the vehicle trip reduction goal was listed in the Long Range Transportation Study.

Rita Black said that it would be difficult to measure vehicle trip reduction in the city since the community brings in employees, visitors and customers from surrounding

communities. She added that since gas prices were low, driving a vehicle was a desirable transportation option.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson said that to increase the bike share mode by three percent was a more realistic goal than decreasing vehicle use in Urbana. He pointed out the goal was for a three percent increase over the next five years. He mentioned that Vision Zero was discussed at the last BPAC meeting. He asked if it was necessary to mention it since it was already a Council goal.

Cynthia Hoyle said that Vision Zero involved more than the Bicycle Master Plan since it would include pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles. She felt that the Vision Zero goal should be more a part of the City's goals than have it as a goal for just the bicycle plan. She added that it would be for everyone using the roadways.

Gabe Lewis referred to the recently added Section 9.7 Visionary Concepts that addressed Vision Zero. He mentioned that the section defined the concept of Vision Zero. He said that the City of Urbana ultimately wanted to achieve zero bicycle fatalities and injuries. He stated that there had been only one bicycle fatality in the City within the last five years. He added the project would require many resources, but that it could be achieved.

Cynthia Hoyle said that the City had more pedestrian fatalities than bicycle fatalities.

Craig Shonkwiler pointed out that Vision Zero was officially mentioned in the document as were topics such as traffic calming and neighborhood speed reduction. He continued that specific direction to attain those goals would be vetted through a process where City Council would give City staff direction on where the Council and Mayor would want staff to go. He added that with traffic calming, Vision Zero, and speed reduction, the plan did not go into details but created the framework where specific details could be established by City leaders and staff.

Mr. Shonkwiler reiterated that the Commission did not have to approve the plan that evening if they believed that there was a topic that required more information. He said that at some point they needed to wrap up the project. He said that the Commission should weigh whether or not to do so considering the additional comments made at the meeting.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson stated that he wanted people to feel that their input was being heard and that they had an opportunity to comment. He preferred that comments be incorporated into the plan if possible. He asked the Commission what their preference would be regarding voting on the plan.

Susan Jones said that she would like the Executive Summary to be refined, but she recommended not going into all of the other details as they would entangle things.

Craig Shonkwiler said that the revisions to the Executive Summary could be addressed, but any substantive changes would require that the plan go back to the Steering Committee to be vetted. If just the Executive Summary was revised, Mr. Shonkwiler said that those items could be incorporated.

Rita Black stated that they could have the changes completed in time for the Urbana Plan Commission meeting on Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup>.

Jeff Marino asked about the process for obtaining public comment.

Gabe Lewis listed the resources used to draw public comment. He said that the comment period was in fact 41 days to allow for holidays within the period.

James Roedl said that he sent out a Bike Project newsletter and used their social media outlets to encourage comments.

Audrey Ishii stated her concern about being eligible for future grants without including equity as part of the plan.

Rita Black mentioned that equity was listed as one of the thirteen principles in the plan.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson asked if staff, Rita Black and Gabe Lewis could review the comments received and the discussion items from the meeting and incorporate any of them into the plan. He said that some ideas might have to go into a future bicycle plan.

Craig Shonkwiler stated that some of the items could be incorporated. He added that some of the comments were already part of the revised plan. He mentioned that whenever a serious crash occurred, staff reviewed the events of the crash to determine what could be done to avoid the recurrence of the situation.

Jeff Yockey said that he was confused about his role as a member on the Steering Committee and when he was to provide input about the plan.

Mr. Bowersox-Johnson said that the loop needed closure and that the work of the Steering Committee was done.

Cynthia Hoyle asked for a vote on the motion.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson asked about the process for the approval of the plan after it leaves BPAC.

Mr. Shonkwiler stated that if the Commission approved the plan with the minor tweaks recommended tonight, it would go to the Plan Commission to approval. He said that if the Plan Commission approved the plan, the document would become an amendment of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and the plan would go to the Committee of the Whole and then on to the City Council for approval.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson asked the Commission to vote on the motion on the floor.

The Commission unanimously approved the motion.

Mr. Bowersox-Johnson thanked all for their work on the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### a) Report on the Sidewalk Snow Removal Update

Cynthia Hoyle presented the Sidewalk Snow Removal Campaign Working Group Meeting report. She listed the members of the group as Brandon Bowersox-Johnson, Don Owen, Tony Herhold, Francesca Sallinger and Cynthia Hoyle. Ms. Hoyle discussed some problems encountered by pedestrians in Urbana as a result of snow not being removed from

sidewalks. She did mention that there was a sidewalk snow removal policy for downtown Urbana and South Philo Road business district.

Ms. Hoyle discussed some programs from other communities. She mentioned that she had looked at Columbia, Missouri where the city used federal funding to finance the program initially and that the staff at the city said no special funding was needed to operate the program. Volunteers are used to do the snow removal. Lincoln, Nebraska had a program for seniors who need sidewalks cleared. She informed the Commission that 57 volunteers were made available to seniors. City staff connected seniors with the volunteers. The community churches assisted with the program. When contacted the staff said the program is funded as part of the regular budget with no special funds allocated to it. In Gary, Indiana, Ms. Hoyle reported, youth and adults volunteered to remove snow from sidewalks for seniors and disabled residents as an activity designed to allow adults to mentor youth. The Be a Good Neighbor (BAGN) program in Fair Haven, New Jersey was a community volunteer operation with over 70 middle school students providing snow removal for the elderly. She added that the city provided a newsletter to promote the program, but it was coordinated by community volunteers. In Ann Arbor, Michigan, the Snow Buddy Program had 12 volunteer drivers who bought a tractor on a four-year plan and they provide snow removal for their neighbors. Chicago, Illinois had a volunteer program to assist those in need with sidewalk snow removal. She said that other communities had programs where they acknowledged businesses and individuals that provided services to keep sidewalks clear of snow.

Ms. Hoyle made recommendations for a program in Urbana. She suggested that the City of Urbana hire interns to coordinate the program with priority given to specific areas for removal, particularly on South Philo Road south of the business district. She recommended working with service groups and high school clubs (Rotary Club and Interact Club) to encourage volunteers to help with sidewalk snow removal. She wanted discussions with landlords to encourage them to remove snow from their sidewalks. She felt that a program similar to Adopt Urbana, where non-profit groups volunteer to clean City right-of-way, would work for sidewalk snow removal.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson felt that the Rotary Club working with the Interact Club would be a positive way to serve the community.

Cynthia Hoyle wanted City staff to work with other governmental agencies to encourage them to clear snow from their properties.

## **7. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Craig Shonkwiler mentioned that the Champaign County Forest Preserve was meeting on Thursday, February 18, 2016, at 5:00 p.m. at the Phillips Recreation Center to discuss the future of the Kickapoo Rail to Trail project.
- Cynthia Hoyle mentioned that there would be a League Cycling Seminar to train certified instructor from June 10 through June 12, 2016. She added that those who wished to attend would need to complete Traffic Skills 101 before attending the League Cyclist Training Seminar. She said that the Traffic Skills 101 would be



available in March. She mentioned that there was a \$300 registration fee and that scholarships would be available through Safe Routes to School.

## **8. FUTURE TOPICS**

- a) Cunningham Avenue (Perkins Road to Kenyon Road) Multi-Use Path Project
- b) Sidewalk Assessment in Urbana
- c) Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission Bylaws
- d) Enforcement of Traffic Laws

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Stiehl  
Recording Secretary