

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)
Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, November 15, 2016

Time: 7:00 p.m.

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

Members Present: Annie Adams, Kara Dudek, Cynthia Hoyle, Audrey Ishii, Jeff Marino, Susan Jones, Craig Shonkwiler and Lily Wilcock

Staff Present: Kevin Garcia

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Charlie Smyth

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

Cynthia Hoyle called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Roll call was taken. It was noted that a quorum of members was present.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Craig Shonkwiler moved to approve the agenda for the November 15, 2016 meeting.

Lily Wilcock seconded the motion.

The motion was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Jeff Marino moved to approve the meeting minutes.

Susan Jones seconded the motion.

The motion was approved.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

Charlie Smyth stated that he appreciated the incorporation of changes suggested to staff last February 2016. However, he felt there were two issues that still needed attention and strengthened in the document. Mr. Smyth requested a reduced residential speed limit of 25 mph, which follows the Vision Zero concept, to be mentioned more prominently within the 2016 Urbana Master Bicycle Plan (UMBP). Mr. Smyth also had one criticism of the plan and that it was not ambitious enough regarding bicycle mode share. He had pushed for 9-18% bicycle mode share in ten years. Mr. Smyth read the change to the bicycle mode share and believes it to be less ambitious than the original numbers.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) 2016 Urbana Bicycle Master Plan – Kevin Garcia

Kevin Garcia outlined the up-to-date revisions to the Executive Summary and draft UBMP (see attached memo and draft). Kevin Garcia reiterated the purpose of the update was to request that the Plan Commission and City Council adopt the 2016 UBMP as an amendment to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. Kevin Garcia explained that the UBMP would replace the current plan that had been adopted back in April of 2008.

Kevin Garcia outlined briefly the history of the UBMP and explained that the UBMP had been prepared by the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) which had been guided by a steering committee over a couple of years. RPC brought the UBMP to a joint meeting in December 2015 and then released the UBMP for public comment at that time. After public comments, an Executive Summary had been added and sections of the plan had been revised. The steering committee reconvened in October 2016 to address the suggested changes. However, prior to bringing the updated UBMP to the RPC on December 8, 2016, Kevin Garcia requested comments and an endorsement from the Commission on the updates that had been made. He also added that if the Commission endorses these updates and RPC agrees to move forward, then the UBMP would be presented to the Committee of the Whole on December 12, 2016 and then City Council for final approval on December 19, 2016.

Kevin Garcia reviewed the revisions with the Commission as outlined on third page of the memo. Kevin Garcia explained that the Executive Summary had not been previously presented to the Commission after its addition to the UBMP and the reason for the current revisions made to the initial draft plan were done to make the plan more action oriented.

Following the memo, Kevin Garcia stated that Chapter 4 had minor text edits, Chapter 1 included added City Council and Mayor goals to Table 1 and Chapter 5, the section on facilities, had minor edits based on the 2012 AASHTO Bike guide. Further, Kevin Garcia explained that in Chapter 9, a major change had been done to reorder goals to have safety first with vision concepts and implementation towards the end. He added all dates were updated throughout the plan. In Chapter 10, he stated that they clarified the description of bicycle level of service and added a section on level of traffic stress.

Lily Wilcock asked for clarification regarding what streets were included on University Avenue as problem intersections. Kevin Garcia found that the only problem intersection included was at University Avenue at Main St./Beringer Circle and no other intersections along University Avenue. He agreed that many of the intersections along University Avenue were problem areas. In response, Cynthia Hoyle added that the Illinois Department of Transportation is conducting a safety study of the University Avenue corridor that would address those locations. She also added that most of the incidents along University Avenue had been pedestrian related, not bicycle.

Audrey Ishii asked whether or not Vision Zero concept would be added to this version of the plan. Kevin Garcia commented that it was added to the Chapter 9 Goals and Objectives under the Visionary Concepts section and it was also mentioned in the Executive Summary.

Audrey Ishii also asked whether Councilman Smyth's suggestion regarding the 25 mph speed limit had been incorporated. Craig Shonkwiler reminded Kevin Garcia that it was mentioned in the body of the document, just not specifically stating a speed. Kevin Garcia recalled same and located it within the section that would have city staff explore traffic calming policy as well as a neighborhood speed reduction policy. Cynthia Hoyle stated that 25 mph speed limits should be considered for residential streets. Craig Shonkwiler stated that for the most part Mr. Smyth's suggestion were added and that the committee discussed not limiting the speed limit to a certain number until speed tests were done to accommodate for possible areas being less than 25 mph. Further, Craig Shonkwiler explained that the state law in Illinois would be 30 mph in urban areas unless marked otherwise. Therefore, the speed limit cannot be reduced unless lobbied with the legislature. He stated that one approach would be to do a speed limit study from neighborhood to neighborhood and include a traffic calming policy.

Audrey Ishii commented that she had seen similar sized towns that had the 25 mph speed limit postings. Craig Shonkwiler replied that he had done research regarding same and found that City staff would be aware of the state regulations unlike some communities that might not. He compared the speed limit posting of 25 mph in the University District which had been done under the gauge of the Campus Area Transportation Study (CATS), to lower the speed limits in that certain zone. Craig Shonkwiler added that all streets in Urbana within the University District had been changed to 25 mph.

The Commission agrees that it would be a good idea to add the consideration of the 25 mph speed limit for residential streets. The language was added as followed in Chapter 9 "V. Have City staff explore the development of a Traffic Calming Policy and Neighborhood Speed Reduction Policy to reduce vehicle speed. And consider 25mph speed limits in residential areas."

Lily Wilcock moved to add the consideration of the 25 mph speed limit in residential areas.

Audrey Ishii seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The Commission discussed the revisions to the bicycle mode share. Kevin Garcia stated that the current bicycle mode was at 9% bicycle mode share. It was confirmed by Cynthia Hoyle that the RPC did not do a Pedestrian and Bicycle Survey (PABS) prior to last year's survey rather they used the US Census American Community Survey Data (ACSD) to obtain the bicycle mode share. Kevin Garcia stated that the current revision would include a 50% increase over ten years, where the initial goal of 9-12% or a 33% increase would be over five years. The commission discussed the goals of the bicycle mode share and agreed that setting a goal at a shorter period of time that can then be revisited and adjusted would be most ideal.

Susan Jones moved to have the following changed in the UBMP “increase bicycle mode share in Urbana for all trip purposes from 9 to 12 (14) percent by 2021 (2026).

Annie Adams seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously by voice vote

Jeff Marino moved for endorsement of 2016 UBMP and make recommendation to City Council for approval.

Lily Wilcock seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously by voice vote

- b) Transportation and Wayfinding Infrastructure in downtown Indianapolis, IN –
Annie Adams

Annie Adams presented on the transportation and wayfinding infrastructure of downtown Indianapolis, IN and her experience as related to the City of Urbana’s current wayfinding goals. Annie Adams found that the community included plenty of space, however for eight miles of infrastructure an estimated of 63 million was spent by the City of Indianapolis. She described a cultural trail created by the city to explore Art throughout the city. Ms. Adams reviewed the availability of public seating. She showed and described pictures that depicted her experience. Ms. Adams stated that she looked for simple, clear and straight-forward signs. She described maps that were located along the trail and how the bike share worked. However, she found that some of the signs were traditional and needed updating. She stated that the signs talked more about what you could not do, rather than what you could be doing. She also used other examples such as Chicago’s 606 trails and Wisconsin’s marked path as models and ideas for the City.

- c) Snow Removal Volunteer Program – Cynthia Hoyle

Cynthia Hoyle gave an update on the progress of the snow removal volunteer program which they would be moving forward with since her initial presentation in December 2014. In July 2015, she had given an update to the Commission who at that time suggested she form a working group to come up with additional ideas and information. The working group met in February 2016 and proposed a pilot program which had been presented to the Commission. Since that time, Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (MTD) and the Urbana School District worked in conjunction to create a program and would be ready to launch the program with a public website in December. The program would be important to the community since 25% walk, bike or use public transportation and are impacted a great deal when it snows. Ms. Hoyle showed pictures of problematic areas specifically in commercial areas where they are required to shovel and areas where a number of assisted living facilities and schools were located and ramps were covered with snow.

Cynthia Hoyle described the program in more detail stating that they would be calling the volunteers Snow Angels. She stated the volunteers would assist in clearing sidewalks,

driveways, entrances and pathways from snow. She described the ideas proposed by the working group, which included the creation of a volunteer placement system based on maps of priority locations using the sidewalk inventory recently performed by CUUATS. The working group suggested using interns and staff to help create the website, maps and sign-up forms for the program. The group also proposed an outreach program to encourage the community to participate and help encourage landlords of the importance of clearing sidewalks for their tenants. Another idea would be to model the City of Chicago's award program for businesses and organizations who shovel. Finally, the working group suggested a program that would be linked with the Urbana litter-free street program where those could participate in both.

Cynthia Hoyle stated they used the CUUATS Sidewalk Inventory to determine priority locations such as schools, transit connectivity, a combined priority score that showed a high priority area at Lincoln Square and at the South Philo Road business district and areas where people were transit-dependent. Cynthia Hoyle explained that the Urbana School District suggested that the Interact Club, a high school student group associated with the Rotary, be involved in assisting the priority locations. They suggested possible initial funding of shovels by the Rotary. The group would also be ideal because high school juniors and seniors would be able to drive themselves to the needed locations. Ms. Hoyle displayed the various priority area maps which included people with disabilities, transit connectivity, schools and public facilities. The priority maps were overlaid with the Champaign-Urbana Safe Routes to School (SRTS) maps to create a snow removal area, which consisted of seven zones with 169 sections. Ms. Hoyle demonstrated how the map would be interactive with the snow removal program's sign-up form located on the SRTS website.

Additionally, Cynthia Hoyle stated that the snow removal encouragement program had already been established which provided schools with educational materials and recognize neighbors who remove snow from sidewalks and driveways. SRTS had already provided yard signs, postcards and flyers to schools and/or volunteer organizations to distribute and manage.

Lastly, the launch would initially start internally at MTD who would also be running the bus boards for free. Cynthia Hoyle also informed the Commission that a grant application would be submitted to America Walks.

Craig Shonkwiler asked to clarify what would be the long term vision of the program. Cynthia Hoyle hoped that the city would had a culture of clearing sidewalks and one providing assistance in priority areas and to individuals in need. Ultimately, we need a snow removal ordinance, but even if we had a snow removal ordinance we would still need an encouragement program. Discussion ensued regarding the change of the snow removal ordinance. Craig Shonkwiler offered an explanation that the Commission, which is an advisory committee, could make a recommendation to send a representative to City Council regarding the snow removal ordinance to speak to the City Council during the public comment period. Further, he stated that the topic had been discussed with the Mayor and City Staff under the safety task force. He explained that the Mayor stated that she would not be willing to pursue the expansion of the current snow removal policy at this time.

7. ANNOUNCEMENT

- UIUC Bike Donation to Tanzania Program collection of 360 bikes
- MCORE Bids opened November 4 – Bids received 10% over in Urbana and 15% over in Champaign

8. FUTURE TOPICS

- Snow Removal Ordinance
- Wayfinding
- Lincoln Ave/Iowa Ave Intersection Bike Path
- Bike Share Program

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie Cross
Recording Secretary