

## ***Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)***

### *Meeting Minutes*

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**Date:** Thursday, January 28, 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, Susan Jones, Jeff Marino and Craig Shonkwiler

**Staff Present:** Kevin Garcia

**Members Absent:** Michele Guerra, Cynthia Hoyle, Audrey Ishii

**Others Present:** None

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

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Roll call was taken and it was noted that a quorum of members was present.

Chairman Bowersox-Johnson mentioned that Karie Brown-Tess had tendered her resignation from the Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board. He pointed out that with Ms. Brown-Tess's resignation; there were two vacancies on the board: one was an at-large seat; the other was an Urbana School District representative vacancy. He asked that anyone interested in either position contact the Mayor's Office. Mr. Bowersox-Johnson recognized Jeff Marino, who was recently appointed to the Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission.

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

Susan Jones moved to approve the agenda for the January 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Jeff Marino seconded the motion.

The motion was approved.

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

Craig Shonkwiler moved to approve the meeting minutes from the September 15, 2015, October 20, 2015 and December 3, 2015 meetings.

James Roedl seconded the motion.

The motion was approved.

The recording secretary mentioned that the 2016 meeting calendar was included in packets.

#### **4. PUBLIC INPUT**

There was no public input.

#### **5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

##### **a) 2015 Bicycle Master Plan Update**

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson mentioned that the 2015 Urbana Bicycle Master Plan could be found by going to the link listed on the City of Urbana's website. He said that the comment period was open until February 1, 2016.

Craig Shonkwiler said that since the time of the Joint Commissions meeting in December, there had been very few comments made about the plan. Mr. Shonkwiler highlighted information about the Green Loop and the recommended bicycle network. He noted that the Green Loop included trails discussed with the Urbana Park District that would provide a bicycle network that could connect the parks within the City of Urbana. He mentioned that wayfinding signage would guide people to the parks within the Urbana Park District's system and existing bicycle facilities and eventually incorporate the proposed bicycle facilities.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson appreciated the concept of connecting the park system with bicycle facilities being a priority.

Susan Jones stated that she was not as interested in connecting the parks to each other as she was interested in travelling by bicycle from where she lived to one of the parks within the park district. She mentioned that there were many routes not yet completed.

Jeff Marino pointed out that from a recreational standpoint it was a good idea to have destinations as part of the bicycle network.

Elsie Hedgspeth informed that group that connectivity between parks within the City of Urbana was listed as a top priority by Urbana residents. She felt the master plan addressed that request.

James Roedl said that many people who became interested in bicycling and hiking did so because a route was created that took them to a destination. He added that there were many people who would like to see more facilities that connected with the Boneyard Creek, Urbana and Champaign, and the Rail to Trail project.

Mr. Marino asked how any potential new growth would be incorporated into the plan.

Mr. Shonkwiler said that he could see the plan would expand facilities as new development occurred. He said that since the area in Urbana was flat, the addition of the Green Loop would be an added feature in the community and the bicycle infrastructure would appeal to the 60% of cyclists. He said that the wayfinding system might increase use of the infrastructure by letting people know about places of which they were previously unaware.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson asked if there would be any special wayfinding signage to indicate the Green Loop network.

Craig Shonkwiler said that the decision was yet to be made. He informed that commission that wayfinding signage was a component of the plan and staff was researching the routes to determine what type of signage to use and where to direct bicyclists. He added that staff wanted to make sure that the signage plan included a process for maintaining the system once installed.

Mr. Shonkwiler discussed the topic of removal of on-street parking as related to the installation of bicycle infrastructure. He said that most of the on-street parking removal had already occurred when installing the bicycle infrastructure recommended in the 2008 Urbana Bicycle Master Plan.

Based upon a question asked by Mr. Bowersox-Johnson at the December meeting, Craig Shonkwiler reviewed three possible locations where on-street parking may be removed to install bicycle infrastructure.

Mr. Shonkwiler discussed part of the MCORE project which would involve the replacement of pavement, the removal of on-street parking on Green Street between Busey Avenue and Race Street and the addition of bicycle lanes. He said that Engineering staff had conducted a parking study and noted that most of the parking in that section of Green Street was commuter parking since there were no cars observed late at night or early in the morning. He mentioned that staff had been in contact with the two churches located in that section to discuss options for the removal of parking. He added that the Urbana Traffic Commission had asked that those on Green Street receive at least two weeks' notice before any discussion about the removal of on-street parking was discussed before the Traffic Commission.

Mr. Shonkwiler stated that another location where on-street parking was scheduled for removal to install bicycle lanes was on Amber Lane between Philo Road and Myra Ridge Road. He explained that there were currently restrictions on the south side of the street and that there was not enough room on the north side for vehicles to park. He mentioned that the pavement needed repair before the lanes could be installed.

The last area referred to in the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan for the installation of on-street bicycle facilities was Oregon Street between Mathews Avenue and Goodwin Avenue. He indicated that the bicycle lane could possibly flow in the direction opposite the flow of vehicular traffic. He indicated that the installation of the bicycle lane would require resurfacing.

Mr. Shonkwiler reviewed comments sent to Mr. Gabe Lewis regarding the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan. As a result of many previous opportunities to provide input about the plan, he felt that many thoughts had already been included in the plan. He said that most of the comments were positive. One comment requested that the plan not include specific plans within the parks. There was a comment from someone who would like the City to maintain its existing facilities before adding any more lanes. He said that the person mentioned that there were potholes and debris on some of the lanes. Mr. Shonkwiler mentioned that the street sweepers clean the streets on a monthly cycle. He asked that citizens contact the Public Works Department when they see debris or potholes. He added that the City tries to keep the bicycle facilities in the best possible condition.

Another comment Mr. Shonkwiler addressed was the request to add a buffer between the motorists and the bicyclists. He said that the person did not feel that a painted buffer was safe and would like the lane physically separated from vehicular traffic. Mr. Shonkwiler mentioned a previous presentation about the Bradley Avenue bicycle lanes. He said that a

buffer could be added to the project if the space was available. He polled the commissioners to ask if they favored a separation between the bicycle lanes and the vehicle lanes.

Susan Jones said that probably half of the 60% of bicyclists want separate bicycle lanes and the other half would be willing to ride on the street.

James Roedl agreed. He said that protected bicycle lane could be problematic at intersections where the buffers end. He added that plowing snow and repairing streets were more difficult with the separate bicycle lanes. He felt that improving the width of the bicycle lane and the quality of the pavement would be a better solution than separating the bicyclists from the motorists. He mentioned the bicycle infrastructure on Sixth Street between Armory Drive and Peabody Drive as an example of where bicyclists could ride to the far left of the lane without fear of dooring and busses had sufficient room to safely pass bicyclists.

Craig Shonkwiler asked if there was on-street parking in that area.

Mr. Roedl said there was some on the west side of the street.

Mr. Shonkwiler explained that before road diets are installed, traffic simulators were used to see which design would work. He mentioned that the current road system was overbuilt in some areas. He said that staff had analyzed traffic needs and designed systems to best accommodate all modes of transportation. He said that the road should feel right if designed correctly. He mentioned that designing bicycle lanes was challenging since design recommendations were constantly changing. He encouraged citizens to provide feedback if they had concerns or comments about streets.

Susan Jones stated that bicyclists and pedestrians should be a priority. She expressed concern about intersections where separate facilities were in conflict.

Jeff Marino asked for information about the raised bike lanes on Green Street.

Craig Shonkwiler explained that the raised curbs were mountable, but that the design was recommended based upon studies that indicated that bicyclists felt less stress when the path was slightly above the roadway. He added that studies had shown that the bicyclist felt safer and more visible. He mentioned that there was concern about the ability to remove snow on a raised bicycle path, but that the path would be pitched so the plows could move the snow.

James Roedl asked about enforcement. He felt there was animosity between motorists and bicyclists. He stated that he would like to see more education and more enforcement of parking restrictions in bicycle lanes and anti-harassment laws for motorists and bus drivers.

Mr. Shonkwiler stated that enforcement would be a good topic for discussion at a future meeting.

Jeff Marino suggested that training be incorporated into driver's education for motorists and grade school curriculum for bicyclists.

James Roedl said that the State had no law prohibiting parking in a bicycle lane. He said that State law instructs bicyclist to move to the side and not ride in the middle of traffic lanes.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson echoed the concern about enforcement, adding that enforcement should include enforcing rules for bicyclists and motorists. He said the parking in bicycle lanes and harassment issues should be addressed.

Craig Shonkwiler said that he would check to see if there was a City ordinance that prohibited parking in a bicycle lane. He mentioned that there have been some who do not like the signage, Bicycle May Use Full Lane. He further explained that Urbana Police Department had mentioned to him that some bicyclists had refused to move over to allow faster traffic to pass travelling very slowly at two to three miles per hour. In doing so, those bicyclists had created a negative impression by refusing to share the road. He said that all road users needed to be respectful to each other. He explained that the signage was used when the lane was less than fourteen feet in width.

Kevin Garcia said that Parking Enforcement would ticket vehicles in the City of Urbana if motorists parked in the bicycle lanes.

Jeff Marino asked if the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan had an executive summary that could quickly overview the contents of the plan.

Craig Shonkwiler said that there was not an executive summary. He said that he would discuss the drafting of an executive summary with the consultant.

Mr. Bowersox-Johnson stated that he liked the bicycle boulevard concept and asked if it was being considering in any other location. He noted that the location, Main Street between Goodwin Avenue and Harvey Street, was not in a neighborhood and he wondered if there was a neighborhood where the concept could be installed.

Susan Jones mentioned that she preferred the term, greenway, instead of, "boulevard."

James Roedl discussed the bicycle boulevard system in Guadalajara, Mexico, as it related to the concept of some streets being dedicated primarily to bicycles and pedestrians and other streets being dedicated to vehicular traffic. He mentioned that the roads alternated between bike boulevards and car routes. He said that residents seemed to know which road was for slower traffic and which one was for faster traffic.

Mr. Shonkwiler mentioned that the consultant had looked at many areas to determine where to locate the bicycle boulevard and that as the concept becomes familiar, it may be used in other locations. He said that the details for the bicycle boulevard were not complete, but that the location should work.

Mr. Bowersox-Johnson asked if it could be extended to the east of Lincoln Avenue where Main Street ended in downtown since it was a low traffic street. He mentioned that it would slow traffic. He asked how the feature would be signed.

Craig Shonkwiler said that as part of future resurfacing, on Springfield Avenue near Lincoln Avenue it might be included. Mr. Shonkwiler said that the signage had not yet been determined. He mentioned that crossing Main Street might be a challenge.

Elsie Hedgspeth agreed that the east of Lincoln Avenue on Main Street near the Phillips Recreation Center would be a good location as there were not many cars travelling in that area.

James Roedl said that he thought the bike boulevard would be a good feature for new developments since the residents would be aware of the feature when they move in.

Craig Shonkwiler said that it was not in the plan, but staff could look at it as a possible feature.

Kevin Garcia mentioned that he had looked at the intersection of Main Street and Lincoln Avenue with Steve Clark and that he felt that intersection would be a prime location for bicycle boulevards. He said that he would meet with Craig Shonkwiler about his thoughts on the plan at a later date. He felt that the language should be changed to neighborhood greenway instead of bike boulevard to make it sound as though people were being prioritized. He stated that parents would want to live on streets where their children could play in the streets

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson thanked all of those present for their input and recommended that this item be brought back to the Commission next month with the final comments.

Craig Shonkwiler said that he would talk to the consultant about changing the name of bike boulevard to greenway.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson said that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission would take an official vote on the 2015 Urbana Bicycle Master Plan next month. He thanked Gabe Lewis for his work on the plan.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

## **7. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Craig Shonkwiler mentioned that the Village of Savoy would hold a public workshop on February 4, 2016, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Recreation Center to discuss the Village of Savoy Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- Kevin Garcia announced that the planning for Bicycle Month, which will be in May, had begun.

## **8. FUTURE TOPICS**

- a) 2015 Bicycle Master Plan
- b) Urbana Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission Bylaws
- c) Enforcement of Traffic Laws

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Stiehl  
Recording Secretary