



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary
August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

NAME	REPRESENTATION
Rebecca Brouwer (RB)	City
Matt Engwall (ME)	City
Andy Lynch (AL)	Alamance County ETJ
Chelsey Morrison (CM)	Orange County
Patty Philipps (PDP)	City Council Delegate
Sylvia Sichi (SS)	City
Aaron Davis (AD)	Recreation & Parks Director
Cy Stober (CS)	Development Director
Chris Rollins (CR)	Assistant City Manager

Sarah Elder (City) had an excused absence.

Public Participation: Sean Ewing and Jason Smith joined the Zoom call.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 22, 2020, MEETING SUMMARY

AL moved to approve the minutes.

ME seconded the motion.

A unanimous vote supported the motion.

HOLT STREET GREENWAY UPDATE

RB welcomed CR to the BPAC meeting.

CR updated the BPAC on the Holt Street Greenway, which was included in the approved FY21 budget. The City has been working to reduce the cost of the greenway by considering routes that minimize stream crossings and wetland impact. CR shared his screen to show the BPAC maps of the proposed greenway, which includes an east-west (EW) connector and a north-south (NS) connector. Due to constraints related to the stream, wetlands, and the Duke transmission line, portions of the proposed NS connector were moved closer to existing houses, within 25-35 feet of a few homes. Staff considered a realignment onto one large parcel but received a “no” from the property owner and learned the property was previously a private landfill and had unstable dirt. The City has sent letters, maps, and illustrations to affected property owners. CR reflected that since then he has had good and not-so-good phone conversations with property owners. The City has been using the standard process to determine payment offers for easement acquisition, and CR anticipates affected



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

property owners may request property appraisals, which could drastically change the easement calculations.

RB asked if the City continues with the easement acquisition process if property owners are not willing to move forward.

CR responded this is the current consideration for the City. He remarked that it feels like the City would need to condemn property, which City staff and Council have never been interested in pursuing for projects. CR stated that staff feels it makes sense to not give up on a NS connector, but to make it less of a priority. The EW connector involves fewer property owners, and CR feels like this connector from Corregidor to South Third could come together. He expects delays for the EW connector if the City waits for movement with the NS connector. CR stated he believes it best to recommend slowing down on acquisition for the NS connector and suggested that once the EW connector is open, individuals may come to view other greenway connections more positively. CR commented that he does not see the NS connector coming together in the next two to four months. It may take six to eight months or a year, and the City could be in the same position of evaluating condemnation of property.

CM asked if there was a way to align the greenway more with streets and avoid properties. She commented that a path that leads to downtown may still be a success.

CR replied that staff has had a similar discussion. Giles St has a sidewalk and the proposed EW connector includes a dead end to Giles in a dedicated right-of-way, creating a pathway through the community to W Holt St.

PDP commented that one of her primary concerns with the greenway was connecting the West End community to City facilities, particularly the MACC. She does not want to delay an EW connection and does not want the entire greenway project shut down because of delays with a NS connection.

ME asked about using boardwalks, such as what exists at Gold Park in Hillsborough, to help with the wetland constraints.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

CR replied that the price of the project goes through the roof. The original design included more crossings and boardwalk. He reviewed the EW connection, remarking that this still ties into the West End community. CR suggested that a boardwalk may be considered again once the EW connection exists and highlighted the various conflicts that exist and the extra costs incurred with a boardwalk.

RB shared her agreement with PDP and feels the EW connection is 75% of the greenway project. She asked if the Duke power lines where the proposed Third-to-Fifth connector crosses are transmission lines.

CR replied they are transmission lines, but the property is large and the connector has not yet been designed. He also commented the property has not been evaluated for wetlands. CR mentioned discussions with South Mebane Elementary about extending the greenway along Third Street. He cautioned that preliminary design is still needed for the Third-to-Fifth connector. Funds saved by waiting on the NS connector could assist with moving forward with the Third-to-Fifth connector.

AL asked if the BPAC could ask for a study or some sort of investigation of the Third-Fifth connection.

CR replied City Council would be updated after the BPAC meeting, so a recommendation from the BPAC makes sense. He stated construction drawings and environmental permits are in hand for moving forward with taking bids for the EW connection, once the easements are finalized. CR reviewed the timeline, remarking on the necessary paperwork related to the easements and the loan. A February/March construction start date is realistic.

CS offered comments on the NS connection. He suggested developing Giles St as a bike boulevard as an interim solution that builds on a funded project along Jackson St. The right-of-way does not appear wide enough to accommodate bike lanes. A bike boulevard on Giles would be a functional connection and help accomplish the goals of a greenway, such as getting kids and others to the MACC and school by bike.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

CM asked about the width of the sidewalk along Giles.

CR replied it is likely 4' wide because it is an older sidewalk. The current standard is 5' wide sidewalks.

RB asked for staff to check how far down the sidewalk goes along Giles.

AO provided a link to a sidewalk map in the Zoom chat box.

RB asked about the shifting plans for the greenway and if a revised budget would need to be presented to City Council.

CR said he could not answer that question before Council discusses. He commented on what was needed for the Local Government Commission (LGC) to approve the City to borrow money for the project.

RB commented that the project could be less expensive with the EW connector and the Third-Fifth connector.

CR agreed it would be less expensive, which could create more discussion about whether a loan is needed. Bids are needed to better understand the cost of the project. CR stated staff feels a better option is keeping funds available for a second phase.

SS asked about the total length of the EW connection.

CS replied it is about one mile – approximately a 5k loop from the MACC along the EW connector then to Third Street and back to the MACC.

CR identified a block of sidewalk missing along S First St, to which the EW connector stubs. He suggested if the project costs come under, the City might try to address the sidewalk gap.

RB asked the BPAC if anyone else had questions.

AL commented that it makes sense to pursue a study to determine what is feasible for additional length on the EW connector.

RB asked if formal action was required for requesting the study.

CR replied that it would be helpful.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

AL made a motion asking staff to commission a study to determine what is feasible for a Third-to-Fifth extension.

CS asked for clarification if staff should identify the best location for a crossing at S Third St.

AL replied the BPAC had considered using existing sidewalk infrastructure, but the state of the sidewalk may not allow for the best experience. He suggested maintaining the width of the greenway.

CR commented that staff does not want to leave the sidewalk as it exists today, suggesting a 10-foot side path along Third Street. He advised the BPAC to allow the City to work with engineers to determine where a crossing fits best.

AL stated the only directive is to make the experience what is desired long-term. He commented on the BPAC's intention to provide for the best experience with the greenway project.

RB agreed, commenting this is the first leg of the greenway, and the BPAC certainly does not want it to be the last. She stated a desire for the community to recognize the vision and welcome it in Mebane.

RB seconded the motion made by AL.

CS asked for a roll call vote given the virtual nature of the meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

CR thanked the BPAC.

RB asked for CR to return with noteworthy updates as they become available.

CR agreed, commenting he hopes to have news to report with easement acquisition for the EW connector.

PDP asked for CR to send a copy of the map.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

CR stated he would send the map to CS for distribution to the BPAC.

RB suggested uploading the map to the Trello Board as an attachment to the greenway project card.

RB recognized Jason Smith, a member of the public on the Zoom call.

MEBANE OUTDOORS CAMPAIGN CHECK-IN

RB asked AD to provide an update.

AD updated the BPAC that 29 signs have been distributed. He commended SS for selecting highly visible locations throughout the city to post signs. AD commented that he would love to see more signs distributed but suspects COVID-19 is impacting the distribution. Multiple social media posts have highlighted the different signs. AD commented that although 29 out of 100 signs sounds low, current signs are posted in good places and he sees them frequently. AD clarified that the 29 signs includes those distributed to BPAC members (31 signs if you count two requested by CS). He asked the BPAC if there was anything from a marketing standpoint that he could be doing to support the sign distribution.

RB suggested members of the BPAC network with individuals they know to distribute more signs.

ME commented that the low distribution reflects that it is not a great time and suggested distribution may improve in the future.

AD commented that the signs are not going anywhere and asked BPAC members to contact him if they want a sign posted somewhere.

SS asked if she would be allowed to hand signs out at the park or during fall sporting events.

RB revisited the reasoning from the last discussion, including the statewide orders and City policies, and suggested holding the idea of in-person distribution.

AD clarified that City offices are open, but the MACC is closed due to the 10-person maximum for gatherings. He agreed with RB's suggestion.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

CR agreed and commented that he liked the idea of a contact-free pickup at the Community Park.

AD suggested pickup at the Community Park could be offered as another option on social media posts. He asked if CR would be okay leaving signs for distribution at City Hall.

CR suggested placing signs in the front lobby with a note describing the campaign.

RB agreed with AD's previous comments about the signs not going anywhere and suggested the BPAC may have a second burst with the campaign that is not just about the signs but includes maps and other promotional materials.

REVISIT BIKE BOULEVARD IMPROVEMENTS

RB remarked this agenda item had appeared on the June agenda but was tabled to include ME in the discussion. RB asked for a reminder as to the need for this discussion.

AL replied that two to three months ago SS had mentioned bike boulevards and asked about improvements associated with them.

CS commented the discussion may also affect next month's conversation about the resurfacing schedule as it relates to where bike boulevards versus bike lanes appear.

SS recalled that she had gotten excited about the bike boulevard on Fifth Street, but it was not what she expected. She commented that "share the road" should be everywhere in Mebane.

CS shared that the rationale behind recommending a bike boulevard versus a bike lane is road width. An objective exists to not include a bike lane where safety is not possible. The paved width of the road should be able to accommodate a minimum 4' wide bike lane. With the average car lane width on a general road of about 12 feet and an additional one foot needed for the middle striping, at least 33 feet of paving is needed to accommodate 4' bike



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

lanes. Curb and gutter, trees, etc. determine how much additional right-of-way width is needed. Realistically, 17-18 feet of pavement width on either side of the road is needed for a bike lane. CS commented that although a bike boulevard does not offer a bike lane, it does remind motorists of cyclists' right to the road and avoids offering a false sense of security to cyclists that is sometimes associated with a bike lane. CS stated the need to avoid providing bike lanes on roads with inadequate width for vehicular travel, which could lead to cars drifting into the bike lane. CS commented that bike boulevards offer less security but more caution while reminding motorists to share the road.

SS asked if the bike boulevard could be carried up through Fifth Street.

CS replied the existing bike boulevard is currently on the City-maintained stretch of Fifth Street. The remainder of the stretch is maintained by NCDOT and an encroachment agreement would be required. CS stated he feels it is unlikely NCDOT would give permission without additional shoulder width and believes a similar issue would be encountered with Third Street. He commented that the City can always ask if the BPAC desires.

RB confirmed that ME joined the BPAC in February and commented that he and SE are avid cyclists. She mentioned the BPAC was opportunistic with bike boulevards during initial planning and did not have an exact strategy. She commented that this may have come up when ME first joined the BPAC.

ME remarked he always returns to who is the BPAC trying to reach, noting that cyclists include very different groups. Families with children are likely to prefer greenways. Commuters need connected bike boulevards, which is a big expense. Road cyclists are traveling long distances, limiting what can be done. Greenways can take people to destinations and get people outside. The commuter option becomes problematic because the pathways are more extensive.

RB replied that it does appear to be more related to commuting to recreational spaces.

ME commented the BPAC wants these efforts to be successful. He remarked that stencils and signage are



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

low-dollar expenses for bike boulevards and a need exists for vehicles to recognize others on the roads. The signs provide mental notes for drivers.

SS agreed and added “the more, the better” for signage.

RB asked for a map to visualize where projects have been completed. She remarked this would be helpful for understanding connections.

CS replied that should be easy to do as a paper map. He and AD are working with a vendor for an online map.

RB remarked the BPAC may not be ready to have a discussion on improvements without better understanding of existing gaps and opportunities.

CS commented that the City is working to ramp up its GIS services, which will include an interactive map with parks and recreation infrastructure. Existing and recommended bicycle infrastructure could be shown on the map.

AL commented one of his biggest challenges is understanding what is possible in the space available.

CS replied that recommendations for bike lanes and bike boulevards will be discussed at the next meeting. Staff will need to come back with some numbers about when a bike lane is realistic and when a bike boulevard is appropriate. CS noted that marking streets for road cyclists looks very different than bike boulevards. He suggested staff come up with categories to include defining characteristics.

RB summarized that at the next meeting the BPAC can expect a map of existing bike facilities and a type of opportunity analysis of streets for bike facilities. She suggested coding streets as green for existing bike boulevard, yellow as an



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

opportunity for a bike boulevard, and red as a street inappropriate for a bike boulevard.

CS suggested that may not be possible for the entire city. Staff will have GIS resources available for the next meeting.

RB confirmed that Wayne Pore would be at the next meeting.

NEW & ONGOING BUSINESS

RB asked for any updates on City projects.

AD provided an update on the fitness court. The fitness court at Mebane Community Park is almost complete. It is considered a playground and not allowed to open under current guidance from the State. AD asked the BPAC about sending out a link to allow members to sign up as a Fitness Court Ambassador.

CS commented about the terms for the BPAC Chair and Vice Chair, which are voted on annually every February.

RB asked if nominations or discussion are needed at the January meeting.

CS replied everything can happen in February.

AL commented on struggles in the past to find good candidates for the BPAC. He suggested adding an item to next month's agenda for discussing a strategy. AL asked how many members would be rotating off in January, indicating he would.

RB commented that she and AL are the only members who have been on the BPAC for three years and thus have the opportunity to rotate off.

AL remarked that an ETJ representative may be more difficult to find.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

RB informed the BPAC that a conversation occurred before the meeting began about getting ahead of recruiting candidates to fill any open seats on the BPAC. RB asked AO to add the discussion to the September agenda for press releases in October.

AO shared with the BPAC that while attending a virtual conference for the City's participation in the Main Street program she learned of Main Street peers with walking trail programs, maps, and websites, which may serve as good examples for the BPAC and the City to consider in the future.

CS added that PDP's term with the BPAC will also be expiring.

SS asked if PDP could renew.

RB replied everyone could.

CS confirmed no term limits exist.

RB suggested she, AL, and PDP decide if they would like to renew in order to decide how much marketing of BPAC positions is needed. RB asked if new and renewing BPAC members must be approved by City Council.

CS confirmed that the Council appoints all members.

RB asked if Council would need to review new and old candidates together.

CS reviewed that Council considers experience and interest. Service on the BPAC is something Council would consider when making appointments. Positions would be open to the public.

RB stated it would not change the marketing plan.

CS commented it may affect when the BPAC begins advertising the opportunity.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

Sean Ewing added that even if a candidate is not chosen for the BPAC, Council may consider the candidate for other committees and advisory groups.

CR provided an update on new sidewalks. The block of sidewalk on W Jackson between Second and Third Streets has been extended. Wayne Pore, Public Works Director, has had positive conversations with property owners along Jackson Street and is getting pricing together to extend the sidewalk, which is included in the budget. Mr. Pore is also working on a portion of Second Street sidewalk.

CS provided a multi-use path update. The City received a letter from NCDOT about SPOT 6.0 funding. NCDOT does not have a lot of money, and CS is not sure BPAC projects have a good chance of being funded by the State.

RB asked when final word on the projects will be received.

CS replied that he knows what projects will be submitted but will not know NCDOT's evaluation of the projects for at least another year.

RB asked for updates on Cates Farm and Lake Michael trails.

AD responded the contract is complete for the Cates Farm trails. Nature Trails, LLC will get started with the forest loop first. The butterfly loop is likely the last portion to be constructed. Nature Trails, LLC plans to begin in September. AD stated he did not have any updates for Lake Michael trails as that work was not included with the FY21 budget.

RB asked for AD to send a copy of the planned trails at Cates Farm to upload to the Trello Board.

AD agreed and commented small changes may occur with the wildflower loop – 10-20 feet left or right on the eastside of the property.

SS asked when the Cates Farm trails are anticipated to be completed.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

AD estimated 10 weeks.

RB replied that would mean around Thanksgiving.

AD responded the trails should be complete by the first of the year.

RB asked for any updates on crossings.

CS replied a better update should be available by the next meeting.

CS asked for the addition of a NCDOT bike plan grant card to the Trello Board to ensure application in February. An existing card was discovered on the "Other/Admin Items" Trello Board. A due date was added for the January meeting.

CS notified the BPAC the City's new planner – Audrey Vogel – would be introduced at next month's meeting.

AL asked about the status of the bicycle campaign card and if it should be labeled as "in progress" or "complete."

RB changed the name to reflect a 2020 campaign and moved the card to complete.

RB recognized that some of the items listed as complete would be revisited next year.

SS asked if a "revisit" category could be added. RB added a new category and moved some of the existing cards.

RB reminded BPAC members they could add and edit items on the Trello Board.

AO reminded the BPAC that Wayne Pore would be attending the September meeting to discuss the resurfacing schedule.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting summary by Ashley Ownbey, City of Mebane Planner