



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

NAME	REPRESENTATION
Rebecca Brouwer (RB)	City
Sarah Elder (SE)	City
Matt Engwall (ME)	City
Katy Jones (KJ)	At-large
Chelsey Morrison (CM)	Orange County
Sylvia Sichi (SS)	City
Jason Smith (JS)	Alamance County ETJ
Cy Stober (CS)	Development Director
Aaron Davis (AD)	Recreation & Parks Director

APPROVAL OF APRIL 26, 2021, MEETING SUMMARY

RB moved to approve the April meeting summary.

A unanimous vote (7-0) supported approval of the meeting summary.

BETTER BLOCK EVENT PLANNING

CM updated the BPAC on the input she received from neighbors and the HOA in the Ashbury subdivision regarding traffic calming ideas. She reviewed where stop signs and crossings are desired on Blue Lake Drive, Mockingbird Lane, and Ashbury Boulevard, highlighting mid-block crossings where neighborhood trails intersect a road with sidewalk on the other side. CM mentioned two of the proposed crossings are from sidewalk to sidewalk. The first is across Blue Lake at Mockingbird, where a gap in the sidewalk exists. She inquired about additional measures to extend the crossing to account for the missing sidewalk, such as with a pedestrian lane on the road. The second location is across Ashbury at Mockingbird, which is a new, four-way stop and part of a popular pedestrian loop. CM noted the need to cross twice and asked about diagonal crossings. CM reported the Ashbury HOA approved the request and she has email record of the approval.

RB asked staff about diagonal crosswalks.

AO responded one may exist in Chapel Hill.

CS replied diagonal crossings are possible and common in urban cores. He noted diagonal crossings are in the MUTCD manual and a design guideline exists if the crossing were to become permanent.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

SE remarked she saw diagonal crossings while in Atlanta.

CM asked for staff input where sidewalk is missing on Mockingbird.

CS described a sidewalk gap on S Second that is currently being addressed. He suggested the City would need to consider right-of-way acquisition for a permanent sidewalk. A temporary measure could be accomplished with cones.

RB summarized the Ashbury HOA and neighborhood is welcoming of the three-month experiment.

CM agreed and remarked many of her neighbors were excited and thought the measures were permanent.

ME informed the BPAC of his conversations with the Mebane Public Works Director regarding a bike lane on W Ruffin, noting a bike lane would not work without significant changes. He remarked that most Downtown streets are too narrow to support a bike lane and would require widening or becoming one-way to allow for bike lanes. ME mentioned the Public Works Director said he would investigate further how to establish a bike route to get from Fifth to the Community Park.

RB commented the bike lane project may not make the current Better Block timeline, which has projects occurring from August to October.

ME agreed, noting the complexity of a bike lane.

RB mentioned the consideration of sidewalk on W Crawford. She suggested considering a shared-use path to help solve the need for a safe bike route through downtown.

ME commented a temporary bike lane does not seem possible at this time.

RB reported on her conversations regarding a temporary parklet, outdoor dining space in Downtown Mebane. She discussed the idea with the owner of Solgarden who suggested using the parking spaces across N Fourth Street in front of the vacant building or the spaces in front of Solgarden on Clay Street. The spaces in front of Solgarden on N Fourth are often used by bands unloading equipment. The parklet would occupy one or two parking spaces. RB remarked the parklet does not have to stay in one spot and could move to a new location after six weeks. She asked AD about Clay Street After Work.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

AD replied concerts will not occur Downtown this year and only one concert is currently planned at the MACC. He mentioned the lack of seating available for people to enjoy the Saturday food truck in Downtown. He asked if the BPAC would be using the mobile parklet from Graham or creating their own space.

RB responded the BPAC had not discussed that level of detail and noted the need to reserve the mobile parklet.

AD mentioned the mobile parklet is accessible however the ramp does extend onto the sidewalk and the BPAC would need to ensure enough space is available.

RB remarked on the need to decide how the parklet will look before presenting to Council. She asked if the mobile parklet would make it less flexible for moving locations.

ME and AD agreed, noting the role of the City of Graham in transporting the parklet.

AD suggested coordinating the parklet's location with food trucks.

SS asked about employing different designs. She remarked on the lack of table space with the mobile parklet.

JS agreed, noting the limitations of how many people could use the space.

ME asked where the food trucks park.

AD commented on the various locations – Melville Trading, Filament, Curious Peddler – noting the idea is to have the food trucks move around.

SE remarked on the difficulty of moving the mobile parklet to every food truck location.

RB suggested pursuing more DIY parklets that can easily expand or contract. She asked if the BPAC was comfortable with Fourth Street as the main location.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

AO commented on the need for the BPAC to communicate and coordinate with Destination Downtown, remarking on a possible event affecting Fourth Street.

RB responded she will have a conversation with Destination Downtown before the July Council meeting and suggested the DIY parklet idea and use of the \$500 budget associated with the Better Block Trailer.

ME remarked on the benefits of using the mobile parklet, noting the transportation fee and the protection provided by the structure.

JS commented it may not be an either/or, noting the mobile parklet is 22 feet long. He suggested using the mobile parklet and adding tables on the other side.

RB asked if the BPAC agreed to using the mobile parklet on Fourth and having the flexible extension of additional tables, which could be moved.

The BPAC agreed.

RB commented she and ME are out of town and cannot present at the July 12 Council meeting. She asked for volunteers from the BPAC.

CM and KJ volunteered, with SE as a backup.

RB remarked that other BPAC members could attend in support of the proposals. She asked AO to send an email with revised deadlines for a July presentation.

COMMUNITY INPUT & PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

KJ presented the criteria she drafted for the BPAC to consider. She remarked on her consideration for both bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The criteria included three items with ratings assigned by the BPAC, four items with ratings assigned by City staff, and one item to consider the number of years a request is made.

RB asked about the weight column.

KJ clarified the score assigned to improved safety would be a heavier weight than the score of other items. The BPAC would need to determine the scoring system. She noted the weights are up for conversation.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

RB asked about existing safety metrics.

CS replied the NCDOT collects annual data for the release of safety scores. He noted issues with the data. CS commented the Mebane Police Department collects and reports the data and has more up-to-date data.

CM asked if number of requests should be included.

ME suggested including a threshold of a certain number of different people making the request before it receives extra weight.

CS commented on the City's traffic calming policy, which follows the example set by State annexation law. A majority of residents who would be affected give their consent. CS noted this allows people to sign on in support or object to the request.

KJ commented the discussion emerged with planning for Better Block projects and how the BPAC wanted to prepare for incoming requests.

RB asked if this scoring criteria would be independent of Mebane's 311 portal. She commented on the video the BPAC created for Better Block outreach, asking how it might be connected to receiving requests.

CS responded staff is working on a new platform.

RB suggested a request would go through the City's portal, be reviewed and scored by staff, and then come to the BPAC for further scoring.

CS agreed. He suggested he and AD prepare a presentation for the BPAC.

KJ advocated for using an existing system.

CS replied the one he is describing is not existing. He commented the City does have an existing Mobile 311 system and that could also be presented.

SE asked if the scoring criteria would only be used internally for assessing and prioritizing requests. She asked if it would be publicly available so people would know how requests are scored.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

KJ supported making the criteria public and suggested the BPAC would need to decide the level of detail. She remarked the examples she reviewed all had something available explaining the scoring criteria, with some offering more detail than others.

Members of the BPAC expressed agreement.

RB remarked on an internal spreadsheet to track requests. She added incoming requests should have a format and asked if that has been determined.

KJ responded not yet. She focused on establishing the main criteria. KJ suggested using some conditional logic with the requests to separate bicycle and pedestrian questions.

CS replied the traffic calming petition is relevant and reviewed why. He suggested sharing the policy with the BPAC and offered for staff to review how other communities receive requests.

RB asked if proximity is the right measure for the criteria related to distance to destinations.

KJ replied the examples she reviewed did include distance ranges but she was not confident they would apply to Mebane.

CS commented on the first-mile/last-mile concept and noted the problem of missing infrastructure between destinations. He remarked on previous BPAC conversations regarding localized investments or distribution of bike/ped infrastructure. CS noted staff considers access to schools and other destinations. He commented the drafted scoring criteria would allow the BPAC to pursue both a focus on destinations and addressing critical gaps.

RB asked if the BPAC would like to consider the criteria further and discuss at a later meeting.

The BPAC agreed.

UPDATES

2021 Bike Rodeo



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

RB updated the BPAC that she is working with the American Legion and Councilman Ewing to confirm details of using the American Legion Space. Corporal Ward has received permission from E.M. Yoder to use their space for the bike rodeo. RB notified the BPAC of a delayed shipment of helmets from the NCDOT grant. She mentioned possible partnership with the RPAC to gather volunteers for the bike rodeo as well as the Mebane's Women Club.

CS commented former BPAC members would likely volunteer for the event.

RPAC Coordination

RB described her meeting with RPAC Chair Sherri Seagroves and noted the RPAC is set up differently from the BPAC.

AD agreed and commented on the RPAC's larger advocacy role.

RB reported that she and Chair Seagroves are planning to meet every six months to discuss priorities. RB will report back to the BPAC after the meetings.

AD described the information available on the RPAC's webpage.

Trello Board Review

The BPAC reviewed and updated the Trello Board.

RB requested an update on crossings that had been submitted to the NCDOT for encroachment agreements.

CS responded the crossings are still under review by NCDOT. He reported the crossing at Foust and NC 119 has been approved and will be included with the widening project and provided by the developer of Villas on Fifth. A high-visibility pedestrian crossing of NC 119 at Foust should be provided by this summer. CS commented the crossing of N First at Stagecoach is included as a capital project this fiscal year as is the crossing of N Fifth at Kit Ct. He reported the W Crawford sidewalk project and Third-Fifth greenway connector were submitted to Council for design in the FY22 budget and the S Fourth sidewalk was submitted to Council for design and build in the FY22 budget. The S First sidewalk near Tanglewood is packaged with greenway construction. CS added the high-visibility pedestrian crossing of Third Street at Fieldstone and Skyview will be included with final construction.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

AD updated the BPAC the multi-use path connector (from Kayak Ct) to Lake Michael Park is recommended to Council in the FY22 budget.

CS updated the BPAC of the approval of construction drawings for the first phases of the Tupelo Junction subdivision, which include a multi-use path and crossing of Lebanon Road.

AD commented he is working on an application for an NC Trails Grant to complete the trails around Lake Michael.

ME asked if AD was referring to the design by Nature Trails.

AD responded he was referring to that conceptual design, but this early work would focus on getting around the lake with additional trails later. He provided an update on Cates Farm, commenting on an upcoming meeting with Duke Energy.

RB asked if updates on that conversation will be included in the meeting minutes for the RPAC.

AD responded updates would be provided to the RPAC, which meets every other month.

CM asked if anyone had explored a connection to Ashbury.

AD replied he had not at this point.

SS asked if any disc golf was being planned.

AD replied there were no paper plans. He suggested the trails need to be completed first.

ME described concerns with rogue access points to Lake Michael. He asked when AD would hear about the grant applications.

AD replied with his assumption of early next year. He commented the final grant is due in September and is for \$100,000 maximum with a 25% match.

JS asked if construction of the connector would count as matching funds.

AD replied no. The connector would be budgeted as a capital project if approved by City Council.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

AD mentioned the trail would be approximately two miles with bridges and boardwalks. He discussed different ideas with the BPAC regarding trail improvements and connections to Lake Michael.

SE asked if the greenway through Tupelo Junction would connect all the way to the Mill Creek neighborhood.

CS responded the part to be constructed by the developer of Tupelo Junction would go to the property limit of the subdivision. He discussed how the greenway could be extended in the future by the City, future development, and the Mill Creek HOA. In reference to the Ashbury access to Lake Michael Park, CS mentioned the update to the Bike/Ped Plan, which is included in the proposed FY22 budget. He suggested Ashbury access could be included in a plan update but the HOA and affected homeowners would need to be included.

CM replied with the idea of a possible trailhead near the pool and apartment complex at Ashbury.

AD commented the budget also includes a proposal for a Recreation and Parks Master Plan and he would appreciate the BPAC's involvement.

CM asked if the new neighborhoods have parking near the greenway connecting them to Lake Michael.

CS replied yes and no, noting parking is required at amenity centers and mail kiosks within the new subdivisions but it is not dedicated for the greenway use. He commented the Retreat at Lake Michael does not have dedicated parking, but Havenstone and Tupelo Junction do have parking areas to serve folks who want to access the greenway. He added the parking is scaled to suit the amenities on site not the greenway and noted the City does not have a parking standard for greenways.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

RB reviewed how the BPAC could use the Trello Board as a workspace. She asked about the past use of City flyers.

AD responded he recently found a booklet and maps at the MACC and was unsure who created them.

RB replied Mebane on the Move produced those through a grant. She clarified she was asking about the water bill flyers. RB commented that social media has been the primary form of communication and asked SS to describe the project for newer members.

SS commented the flyers were an easy way to let everyone know of new parks and improvements. She added some older adults may not be on social media as much.

RB suggested the BPAC may be sunsetting their involvement in driving the City flyer, referencing the RPAC and a possible Public Information Officer for the City. She asked if the card should be moved to complete.

The BPAC agreed.

NEW & ONGOING BUSINESS

City Budget & Project Updates

RB remarked the BPAC did not make any updates to the Council during budget season as it was included with departmental requests. She noted two small projects not included on the agenda that she wanted to discuss.

AD commented his previous updates on Lake Michael Park covered the budget requests and welcomed any questions.

CS commented the budget will be presented to Council for discussion, amendment, and adoption at the June 7 meeting. He added the \$10,000 budget for BPAC improvements for the current fiscal year has been spent. The crosswalk improvements at N Fifth/Kit, N Charles/W Ruffin, and W Crawford/N Third were included in the resurfacing contract.

New Items

RB referenced the stop signs on London Lane that lack indication that a stop is ahead. She asked if the BPAC wished to discuss additional measures with traffic calming, suggesting a recommendation for pavement markings on London Lane.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

CS replied a memo to the City Manager should be sufficient. The Manager would make a decision if action is required by Council.

RB asked the BPAC to consider areas in Mebane where the BPAC could recommend enhanced traffic calming and suggested it be an item for discussion at the next meeting.

SS added when the stop signs were first installed, they included flags.

KJ clarified RB was requesting the BPAC to consider all of Mebane, not just London Lane.

RB confirmed.

RB remarked on her experience and others' complaints of the crossing of Fifth at Jackson, where motorists tend to ignore the crosswalk and flashing light. She commented one day she waited seven minutes to cross. RB recognized Fifth is maintained by NCDOT and asked if additional calming measures could be added.

SE commented most people do not associate the blinking light above with the crosswalk below.

The BPAC agreed.

CM added she has seen signs that indicate State law is to yield to pedestrians and suggested those may be helpful.

CS remarked he was uncertain of how to make a request for an ineffective measure. He commented improvements to the crossing of MLK in Chapel Hill was driven by fatalities. CS suggested the request will likely come from the Mayor to NCDOT. Discussions can be initiated at a staff level but support from the Manager, Mayor, and Council will be needed to move forward. CS discussed potential improvements and suggested staff could explore and include as a future budget request.

ME added electricity is already present.

KJ commented on the referenced crossing in Chapel Hill, noting components become active when a pedestrian is present. She noted the current measure at Jackson is so active it has become passive.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

RB commented on a recent approval by Planning Board and City Council for a new subdivision in the general area and noted the crossing at Jackson is the only crossing of S Fifth Street. She recommended investing in improving the intersection. RB suggested checking with the community as a first step.

The BPAC agreed the intersection is a problem.

CS commented staff would need approval from the Manager to invest staff's time in the project. He suggested a memo from the BPAC to the Manager. CS added the visibility at the Jackson intersection is poor and asked if the BPAC would consider another intersection.

CM suggested the intersection at Roosevelt and advocated that both Jackson and Roosevelt be considered.

RB referenced the design project for the Third-Fifth greenway connector.

ME added the design included consideration for a crossing of Fifth.

CS confirmed.

RB suggested concentrating efforts to solve a crossing of Fifth and connections to a future greenway.

ME commented on the span between the current crossings of S Fifth (Jackson and Mebane Oaks).

RB recommended focusing a memo on enhancing the Jackson St crossing since the design project for the greenway connector will include exploration of a crossing of Fifth.

SS agreed and suggested a temporary measure while waiting for approval of improvements. She discussed other communities' use of buckets with flags to give more notice of a pedestrian who is crossing.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

The BPAC discussed safety concerns at the intersection and lack of community awareness.

SE asked if there were any other immediate measures to better alert drivers of the crosswalk.

CS responded a “pedestrian ahead” sign may not currently exist. NCDOT approval would be needed for signs along S Fifth.

RB stated she could draft a memo to the City Manager outlining the BPAC’s concerns and request for staff to consider improvements at the Jackson Street intersection.

AD asked about the bike safety signs stored at the MACC.

RB suggested distributing the signs at the bike rodeo in October.

SE asked if the signs had been collected.

RB and AD responded some signs were collected while some individuals elected to keep their signs and be notified when to place them in their yards.

The BPAC discussed and agreed to hold a bike campaign in October, distributing the signs then.

The BPAC thanked AD for adding a sign and bike rack at Cates Farm.

AD commented a pedestrian counter is now at Cates Farm.

SS asked who reviews new subdivision plans to ensure they incorporate bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

AO reviewed the site plan review process.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Meeting summary by Ashley Ownbey, City of Mebane Planner