



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

September 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

NAME	REPRESENTATION
Rebecca Brouwer (RB)	City
Nate Wood (NW)	City
Katy Jones (KJ)	At-large
Ashley Ownbey (AO)	Development Director
Franz Holt (FH)	City Engineer
Chuck Smith (CS)	Public Works Director

Sarah Elder, Sylvia Sichi, and Jason Smith had excused absences.

Two members of the public joined the meeting – Omega and Brenda Wilson of the West End Revitalization Association (WERA).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Omega Wilson asked about the status of a proposed multi-use path in the West End area that will connect West Holt Street and South Mebane Elementary School. The West End Revitalization Association (WERA) is holding its annual dinner in November, and people are interested in the trail's progress.

RB and KJ discussed progress on acquiring easements for the trail, and AO presented a map of the planned multi-use path.

FH explained that the map was from a preliminary design and that the City has been working with property owners to address site constraints. The City has acquired easements from most property owners but is still waiting for one property owner who may prefer a land swap. The East-West Connector from Corregidor to Third Street has been budgeted, and as soon as the final easement is acquired, management likely will want the project to go out to bid. The proposed North-South Connector has faced more hurdles with property owners concerned about the path's proximity to their homes.

Mr. Wilson asked another question about security barriers that have been employed elsewhere to protect the elderly, disabled, and children from hazards such as waterways. He expressed concern about potential risk for those using wheelchairs or modes such as skateboards and scooters on a section of trail with a steep drop-off.

FH responded that the trail will be ADA compliant and that no part of the slope exceeds the five percent requirement for railings. The trail surface will not exceed a two-percent slope and will have a small gravel shoulder. In addition, the City



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

September 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

convened departments and agreed to have other safety measures such as markers that can easily indicate the location of accidents. FH said that the City's priority was completing the initial phase.

Mr. Wilson asked about low lighting and signage indicating drop-offs. He noted that people new to the area may not be familiar with some of the topography along the trail. FH said the City will make some drainage improvements along the trail to make the trail last longer since the creek drains a significant amount of the land. Most of the slopes are considered mobile slopes unless they are in tight locations. Steeper locations are good candidates for a sign, and the low-level crossing of the creek should be signed, especially given the likelihood of high rainfall events. FH said that the City has looked at lighting options for parks and that using sources such as solar is a possibility in the future as prices continue to fall.

Brenda Wilson asked about emergency call boxes.

FH said that the City had considered that and he would follow up on it. He also said that they were looking at waste collection and that the intent was to occasionally have representatives of City Departments on the trail to assess areas of concern.

Mr. Wilson and FH discussed calculating the distance along the trail.

Mrs. Wilson thought distance markings would be a good incentive for people to aim for certain amounts of physical activity.

FH also stated that the intent is to eventually add more distance both to the north and between Third Street and Fifth Street. FH added that trails are permitted in Duke Energy corridors provided a certain distance is maintained from power lines.

AO found that distance of the east-west section of the trail is approximately .75 miles.

Mr. Wilson asked about students using the trail to get to school and if the trail would have room to accommodate student volumes.

KJ described how students currently access the school in a safe way, and RB added that the school will likely determine how students access the school from the trail. It is likely that the school will provide bike racks as well. The school will also know what mode of transportation students plan to take.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

September 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Mrs. Wilson asked if the trail will be shared between bicyclists and pedestrians.

FH said the trail would be shared and likely require some interaction between users.

NW asked about motorized trail use and potential signage for that.

FH replied that motorized use would not be permitted and that there would be stop signs as well as trail rules at trail entrances and crossings.

The BPAC further discussed school access and trail completion. FH took several notes, and Mr. Wilson invited a representative from the City to speak about trail progress at WERA's annual dinner. The Mayor most likely will attend as well as someone from the Alamance County Department of Health.

APPROVAL OF APRIL, JUNE, AND AUGUST MEETING SUMMARIES

RB moved to approve the meeting summaries from April 25, 2022. NW seconded the motion.

A unanimous vote (3-0) supported approval of the April meeting summary.

Meeting summaries from June and August are to be approved at a later date with greater presence from BPAC members.

RESULTS OF ASHBURY HOT SPOTS STUDY

AO provided an update on a temporary project that installed stop signs and crosswalks in the Ashbury neighborhood for two months in 2021, from late August to late October. The City contracted with a traffic consultant to do a traffic assessment and teach staff how to conduct future assessments and understand traffic calming techniques.

- The purpose of the project was to evaluate travel patterns and the speed of drivers in the Ashbury neighborhood to see where calming measures were needed and where stop signs and crosswalks may be warranted.
- Several City Departments attended meetings with the consultant over the course of the project
- Stop signs should not be used to slow speeds. Traffic circles, bump-outs, and chicanes are common traffic calming devices. Speed humps are viewed less favorably by emergency responders but also count as calming measures.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

September 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

- Measures to evaluate the need for traffic calming range from federal to local. Two important measures to consider in Ashbury include traffic volumes and streets where over 85 percent of drivers are traveling more than five miles per hour above the posted speed limit.
- The Ashbury study revealed 85 percent of drivers surpassed only *two* miles per hour on one street but never exceeded five in the neighborhood.
- Traffic volumes were all less than 700 vehicles per day.

NW asked why the metric for traffic volumes was set at 700 vehicles per day.

AO replied that was the federal guideline.

NW asked if this was for federal funding, and CS said it was more for having a universal standard.

RB asked about the need for enforcement in more dangerous speeding cases that could not be solved by traffic calming.

AO responded that enforcement for higher speeds was discussed at meetings, which included representatives of the Mebane Police Department.

There were questions about speeding and cut-through traffic in the Blue Lake area as well as data separated by times of day.

KJ noted that a large of people cut through Large Oak.

AO replied the raw data from the study has been provided and time of day can be considered.

NW asked about crash data for the area.

AO reviewed police data reviewed prior to installation of the temporary project in August 2021. Crashes were minimal and consisted primarily of property damage, but there was one accident involving a child on a scooter.

AO reviewed information regarding warrants for stop signs and crosswalks and presented the following recommendations from the consultant and City staff:

- Two crosswalks at the existing four-way stop at Ashbury and Mockingbird. The consultant felt that the stop could be justified even if it did not meet the threshold due to its location at the entrance to the neighborhood and higher pedestrian activity.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

September 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

- A crosswalk at Ashbury and Blue Lake. This would require that on-street parking be disallowed in an area due to a sight distance problem. Coordination with the Ashbury HOA and neighbors is required.
- Completion of a missing sidewalk segment and installation of a crosswalk at Blue Lake and Mockingbird. The current property owner is not very supportive due to a tree and potential yard damage. The City would need her support to construct the sidewalk. KJ added this location was the spot with the highest detected speeds.
- The City will allow midblock crossings connecting the HOA-maintained trail to the public sidewalk network if funded by the HOA for initial installation. The City would maintain the crossings long-term. CS added that midblock crosswalks would require installation of ADA ramps.

KJ suggested reaching out to the HOA as the next step before using the discretionary funding.

AO replied City staff will follow up with the HOA.

RB asked if City staff were planning to conduct any more of these types of studies.

AO replied that the City's traffic calming policy currently requires a signed petition from neighbors. If a petition is received, City staff would consider how a study might be beneficial.

NW asked if a study could go through City staff instead of the consultancy process.

AO replied that was the hope.

AO asked FH to discuss how the City has used what it learned from the study when reviewing new subdivisions.

FH explained The City is now using traffic calming devices such as bulb outs and roundabouts instead of stop signs when reviewing new subdivisions. So far, developers have been receptive.

AO asked if Ashbury Blvd. and Mockingbird Lane would be a good candidate for some of the \$10,000 of the BPAC's discretionary funding. The improvements there would cost \$7,300.

CS said that striping could not begin until April and would have to be completed by May, which would be tight. CS could put in a funding request by the end of October.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

September 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

The BPAC discussed how last year's discretionary funding was spent on the new crossings of S Fifth and S Third. Prior to that, the funding was used to have crossings marked where the roads were resurfaced.

KJ asked about balancing bicycle and pedestrian projects and asked if bike racks had ever been considered.

AO said a past proposal included installing a temporary bike rack from the Better Block Project at Lowe's Foods and seeing if people used it. AO noted that most of the City's more prominent bike racks in places like parks are not getting a lot of use.

RB added that a lot of smaller bike racks have not gotten a lot of use either, perhaps in part because people do not recognize them.

AO said this issue of use came up during recent public engagement for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan, and there may be an opportunity for the BPAC to provide some education on where bike racks are located throughout the City.

NW said a map of rack locations similar to an existing map of trails would be a great idea.

AO said that most current rack locations were at parks or in Downtown Mebane.

RB brought up the topic of bike racks at schools. In the past, schools had not been as favorable toward bicycling but may be more favorable now that bicycling on the sidewalk is allowed.

AO noted that bike racks at \$500 would be doable in addition to the \$7,300 project in Ashbury.

KJ recommended further discussion be added to the BPAC's October agenda.

AO mentioned the BPAC had discussed funding for trail map signage at the June meeting and Recreation & Parks indicated existing funding in the department's budget.

RB suggested promoting visibility of bike boulevards, sharrows, and signage as smaller ticket items.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

September 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

KJ said there are some signs Downtown, but they are not that obvious or visible.

CS discussed green paint used to mark bike infrastructure elsewhere. While the City is not ready for green bike lanes yet, it could add green box outlines for sharrows, especially since many sharrows have faded. Paint is expensive right now, but CS is willing to look at one sharrow that needs to be redone as a pilot.

KJ made a motion to support the pilot, and RB seconded.

The BPAC voted unanimously in favor.

UPDATES ON 2022-2023 BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN CAPITAL PROJECTS

FH updated the BPAC on funded capital projects:

- The sidewalk on West Carr Street near EM Yoder Elementary School is in the design phase. Easements have been drawn, and the City still needs to get easements from the school board. After that, the sidewalk will go out for construction, which should begin this fiscal year.
- The North Second Street and West Crawford sidewalks adjacent to People's Church are slated to go out for design this year and go into construction next year.
- In addition, the South Third Street Extension through Corporate Park headed toward Governor's Green is a two-phase project. Corporate Park is in design and will identify easements. The second phase will go to all the way to Gibson Road and pick up the sidewalk system that is there.

FH added that he would like to see developments do a better job closing sidewalk gaps, and the City is doing a better job of that with new development north and east of town. He mentioned the sidewalk extension proposed with Peartree Townhomes, which is a recently approved townhome community.

RB asked about the condition of sidewalk pavers for the urban trails and asked about the general condition of the sidewalk on Holt Street near North Street.

CS replied the City has sprayed the area of North Street for weeds multiple times. The section just west of North had been overgrown with grass.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

September 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

AO confirmed that some work was being conducted by the Mebane Trail Rangers regarding the sidewalk pavers. Recreation and Parks could provide a better update.

FH noted that the sidewalk project on North First Street was complete and that the pocket park there was nearly complete as well.

RB asked if the pocket park would have a play area, and FH responded that it would be more passive.

RB said there may be a need for a play area in that part of the City but that was an item for Recreation and Parks.

AO added it is the time for the City to start thinking about projects for the upcoming year, and BPAC members are welcome to bring their ideas to upcoming meetings. Ideas should be consistent with plans, unless an obvious need exists.

FH added that the Capital Improvements Plan has sidewalks and other improvements listed for the next five years. Projects are only budgeted through 2022-2023.

AUTUMN FEST

The BPAC discussed logistics for setting up Autumn Fest and the possibility for cancellation. In addition to BPAC items, the booth will include promotion of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan and Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan.

NEW AND ONGOING BUSINESS

BPAC members discussed participation in the first Mebane Activity Challenge. The challenge had 20-25 participants, without any money spent on marketing.

AO gave an update on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. The City will be launching a public engagement website. Arrangements are being made for information to be shared with water bills, for yard signs to be installed at public facilities, and for flyers to be posted at Downtown businesses and city facilities. AO will also draft a press release and email City Council and Advisory Boards. Updates will be posted on social media as well. In addition, postcards containing a link to a statistically valid survey will be mailed to a random selection of households in the City and ETJ.



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

September 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

RB asked if there was a direct plan for distribution, and AO demonstrated an interactive map and public comment interface that will be part of the process.

AO updated the BPAC on how to review the BGMPO Safety Plan. A draft of the Safety Plan is available for public comment until October 18, with a public meeting and plan adoption held on October 18.

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

Meeting summary prepared by Joseph Hoffheimer, Planning Department Consultant, and reviewed and edited by Ashley Ownbey, Development Director.