



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Meeting Summary

November 28, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

NAME	REPRESENTATION
James Allen (JA)	Orange County
Rebecca Brouwer (RB)	City
Katy Jones (KJ)	Chair, At-Large
Sylvia Sichi (SS)	City
Jason Smith (JS)	Alamance ETJ
Nate Wood (NW)	Vice Chair, City
Joan Lyons (JL)	Transportation Planner, Stewart
Doug Taylor (DT)	Transportation Planning Leader, Stewart
Lisa Wolff (LW)	Project Manager, BerryDunn
Aaron Davis (AD)	Recreation and Parks Director
Ashley Ownbey (AO)	Development Director

Sarah Elder had an excused absence.

WELCOME NEW BPAC MEMBER

KJ welcomed JA to the BPAC.

JA discussed his bicycling experiences around Mebane and Northern Alamance County as well as his passion for bicycling. JA described witnessing the area's growth and the need for cycling infrastructure to grow accordingly to maintain parity with automobiles. JA expressed interest in further educating motorists as well as getting more people out on bicycles in the community.

The rest of the BPAC gave brief introductions.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 24, 2022, MEETING SUMMARY

RB moved to approve the meeting summary from the October 24 meeting. JS seconded the motion.

A unanimous vote (5-0) supported approval of the meeting summary.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

JL from Stewart presented updates on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. She was joined by DT from Stewart and LW from BerryDunn. JL provided the following updates:



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- The team has reviewed past plans as well as City of Mebane GIS data and is inventorying existing infrastructure.
- Much of the recent focus over the past few months for both the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan and Recreation and Parks Master Plan has been on public engagement.
- The first public engagement effort for both plans was a three-day kickoff that included several stakeholder interviews and focus groups. The first public meeting took place at the end of the kickoff period. More recently, community members had opportunities to provide feedback at the Hometown Holidays event.
- There is an online Social Pinpoint public engagement hub that allows participants to put pins on maps and ideas on a virtual board. Over 109 comments relate to bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
- Thousands of City residents were mailed postcards for a statistically valid survey, and 129 people have responded. An open link survey is now available to the greater community.
- Current online engagement opportunities will close in December, and feedback will be presented in January or February 2023.
- Stewart will engage with the City Engineer and other City staff to evaluate proposed bicycle and pedestrian projects for feasibility as well as incorporating stakeholder engagement.
- The goal is to identify priority projects and corridors, establish facility preferences, and have a schedule of recommendations by March.

KJ asked about the response rate relative to the size of the community.

JL said the mixed methods had average participation but that participation in the significantly significant survey was below average.

SS asked if lower participation was a result of online technical issues.

LW said the technical issue affected relatively few people. She said that staff continues to do a great job promoting the survey and added that analysis would include responses to the open link if participation in the closed link remained insufficient. She added that the Social Pinpoint data and other engagement would be valuable as well. For example, there were over 89 comments at the Hometown Holiday event.



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JL added that the Social Pinpoint website has had 1,200 unique users. Even if the users did not all engage directly, many people at least viewed the website.

LW mentioned the possibility that people may be happy with how things are in the City and less likely to respond for that reason.

RB asked if any areas of Mebane were underrepresented in terms of input and offered to put out another blast.

LW said that she would need to follow up on that.

RB said the group could get some good engagement from Mebane on the Move.

JA asked if there was a spike when a promotional video went out.

LW said that there was a huge spike in Social Pinpoint and a smaller one in the survey following the video segment.

The committee also discussed advertising the survey during the holiday parade.

LW reminded the BPAC that there are paper copies of the survey that may reach those who are less tech-savvy.

The BPAC discussed how long the survey would remain open.

The survey was slated to close on December 9, and the Social Pinpoint page would remain open a week longer but closer prior to the holidays.

DISCUSSION OF DISCRETIONARY FUNDING AND CAPITAL PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

AO provided an update on discretionary funding. She confirmed that bike racks would cost around \$500, and green paint would require a pilot project from Public Works before the BPAC could fully commit to more widespread implementation. The other item for discretionary funding was the crosswalk at the new basketball courts. AO said the BPAC could decide how to spend the funding at this meeting or wait until January.

KJ asked if the potential uses for the funding could be itemized by January.

JA asked about pairing sharrows with signage.

KJ said there was already “share the road” signage on Fifth.

JA asked about “bicycles may use full lane” signage to complement the sharrows that already occupy the full lane.

RB asked if this type of signage would be in the City budget.



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AO responded discretionary funding can be used to fund signage. She added the sharrow pilot would likely be on North Fifth Street.

AO discussed the capital improvement plan (CIP) and noted that the City would be entering budget season. Staff will come back to the BPAC with what has been included in the CIP, and the BPAC should have any recommendations for the CIP by the January meeting.

AD clarified the recommendations are needed sooner and added the City would be somewhat ready for what was going to go in the budget within the two weeks after this meeting. Ideas, numbers, and process needed to be decided soon.

The BPAC discussed the difference between discretionary and larger capital projects.

JA asked about requiring subdivisions to connect sidewalks to the City network.

AO said those gaps were an issue for the City right now. The UDO holds each applicant accountable to their property, which leads to gaps between properties.

JA asked about the sidewalks around Tupelo Junction, and AO said those should ultimately connect.

RB and AD said the BPAC would likely wait for the new bike-ped plan before implementing significant new capital infrastructure investments.

RB said anything that was a burning issue needed to be discussed now.

JS asked about addressing areas where feasibility studies had already been done.

AO said that some of this was addressed in the current CIP. Currently, there is a three-part process of engagement, design and easement acquisition, and finally construction. The block of Second Street around the People's Church was one project that should be funded for construction within the next couple years. AO pulled up the CIP for review.

The BPAC then discussed potential funding and status for greenway signs. Those would likely require at least a small capital improvement ask.

AO added that this year's budget would include preliminary design for the sidewalk around People's Church and South Third Street Extension. Design is not yet funded for the Third-Fifth Greenway Connector.

JA asked if there was a base cost for sidewalks.

AO and KJ noted that there were several variables.



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JA mentioned widening sidewalks in places where the street width did not allow for bicycle infrastructure.

KJ said the goal for now was to bring ideas to the December meeting.

KJ mentioned signage and more high visibility crossing signals on Fifth as well as outside of the MACC.

MEBANE TRAFFIC SEPARATION STUDY – UPDATES FROM NOVEMBER CITY COUNCIL MEETING

RB brought up the traffic separation study and the fact that left turns would be prohibited from Washington Street onto Fifth or from Fifth onto Washington. There also would be a mountable median that emergency vehicles can cross. RB asked if stoplights would be appropriately timed and if the turn signal to turn left onto US 70 would be extended to accommodate additional left turns.

JA noted that group rides into Mebane frequently turn left onto Washington.

The BPAC also discussed the impact this may have on the intersection of Jackson and Fifth, the redevelopment of the Kingsdown property, and new pedestrian crossings.

JA asked if the design would be presented again to City Council.

AO replied, assuming no major changes, implementation of the current design would be handled at a staff level.

LOOKING AHEAD – 2023 CALENDAR

Spring Bike Campaign/Bike Rodeo

RB described how the BPAC has held bike rodeos in the past in partnership with the Mebane Police Department. The rodeo has been held at different locations and times. Mebane on the Move received a grant for bike helmets, and the rodeo has been one of the main points of distribution. In the past, the BPAC has taken the lead on this event. RB said there were pros and cons with aligning the bike rodeo with a Downtown event. The event gets about 20-40 kids and has 8-10 volunteers. RB recommended gauging the Mebane Police Department's interest in doing this event again.

The BPAC discussed timing, with late spring being the most likely time again.

RB said she would reach out to the Dogwood festival about scheduling and promoting the event, and KJ recommended reusing some of the same materials from previous years.



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JS suggested coordination with other events or reaching out to groups such as BMX riders that could do exhibitions.

The BPAC discussed ways to use events such as BMX to encourage attendance. It would not have to be BMX, but something to drive participation.

AO mentioned using discretionary funding for promotion.

Guest Speakers or Special Topics

AO discussed the suggested list of guest speakers for future meetings.

The BPAC expressed interest in learning more about greenways, which would include how to successfully launch a greenway.

JS asked if the speaker would be for BPAC or the entire community.

AO replied that it could be for either.

SS asked about how greenways could tie into the Mountains to Sea Trail (MST). There have been ongoing conversations about MST signage in Mebane.

RB noted that 2023 is the Year of the Trail and could be a good opportunity for a more public speaker. A speaker could answer questions on topics such as best practices, safety, interaction with private property, and signage.

JA and JS discussed the sewer easements in Chapel Hill/Carrboro and how bicyclists/pedestrians almost never have to get on a physical road. Other suggestions included the Asheville greenway planner and the person responsible for trail planning in the Old Fort area, which has been creative with funding.

The BPAC expressed interest in having speakers at several meetings next year.

Retreat

AO mentioned the addition of new members and asked if the BPAC wanted to have a retreat again.

The BPAC decided to coordinate an orientation/retreat for new members with progress on the updates to the Bike/Ped Plan.



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NEW AND ONGOING BUSINESS

The group discussed the plan adoption deadline, since that will make the year slightly different.

AO mentioned that the City has hired a new planner who was scheduled to start the day after the November BPAC meeting.

The next meeting will take place on December 19 and will mainly focus on capital projects as well as potentially some planning for spring events.

AD reviewed pamphlets for the City Trail Map.

The BPAC discussed some of the insets, how the MST should be indicated, and when the maps will be printed in early January.

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.