



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Regular Meeting Summary

July 24, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

NAME	REPRESENTATION
James Allen (JA)	Orange County
Rebecca Brouwer (RB)	City
Matt Cummings (MC)	City
Katy Jones (KJ)	Chair, At-Large
Jason Smith (JS)	Alamance County ETJ
Allison Tate (AT)	City
Franz Holt (FH)	City Engineer
Rachel Gaffney	City Planner
Ashley Ownbey (AO)	Development Director
Aaron Davis (AD)	Recreation and Parks Director

APPROVAL OF June 11, 2023, MEETING SUMMARY

Before beginning the meeting, the BPAC members briefly discussed that Nate Wood had recently resigned from the BPAC.

KJ asked if there were any changes to the meeting summary and none responded. RB moved to approve the meeting summary from the June 11 meeting. JS seconded the motion.

A unanimous vote (4-0) supported approval of the meeting summary. JA and AT arrived at the meeting after the vote.

CAPITAL PROJECTS REVIEW

AO explained that FH is here to review capital projects that are currently in the budget. The BPAC members will need to be prepared to make recommendations for projects for next year's budget very soon. AO explained that the BPAC members can start thinking about possible recommendations after this meeting but they are not expected to make a decision yet. The projects reviewed are listed below:

Sidewalk on the Third St Extension from Corporate Park Dr to Augusta Dr: FH explained that the City is trying to come to an agreement with the owner of two lots on the north side of S Third Street so that the planned sidewalk can travel through that area.

Third St to Fifth St Connector Trail: FH explained that Duke Energy owns a couple of parcels and has an easement through the property owned by the church. The City needs to speak with Duke Energy about their requirements for a walking path through that area due to the proximity of the transmission lines. The City also needs to discuss these plans with the adjacent property owners. The plans also include additional crossings on Third Street and Fifth Street to connect the trail to



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the existing sidewalks. RB asked if these would be standard crosswalks or if there would be additional features. FH explained that the design and the safety requirements for those crossings would need to be evaluated once the project moves forward. NCDOT would have some involvement in that evaluation as well. He said that at minimum there would be signage identifying the crosswalk. He added that the City does not have any signalized or “Ped-head” midblock crossings at this time.

Sidewalk at People’s Church – Crawford St from N First St to N Second St: FH said that they are finalizing the easement agreements with the church and the project is progressing well.

Lake Michael Connector: FH explained that this project will connect Lake Michael Road and the Retreat at Lake Michael neighborhood and the Havenstone neighborhood. The project has gone out for bid and the City is waiting for responses. Contractors are currently very busy so the City is hoping they will get enough responses to move forward. In a formal bid process, the City must receive at least three bids in order to be able to open them and consider them. If they do not get at least three bids then the City will have to readvertise. FH explained that the grit trail will be 8-10 feet wide and they are also taking an alternative bid for paving that section. JS asked if the trail would be a 8-10 foot wide grit trail, narrow down to a sidewalk for one section, and then expand back out to an 8-10 foot wide trail. FH confirmed that was the planned design. FH explained that there will also be sidewalks connecting the Tupelo Junction neighborhoods to Lake Michael. JA asked why the trail narrows at the sidewalk portion. FH explained that it has to because of the dimensions of the road. The City is not planning to build a bridge and the wetlands in that area limits the available space for the trail. The trail has to stay within the culvert boundaries on the road. JA said that other communities have used elevated wooden boardwalks over wetlands. FH replied that type of design had been discussed but it was determined to be too expensive. It would have doubled the project cost. FH explained that Mebane is trying to move forward a number of projects to close gaps throughout the City’s sidewalk network. Spending more on this project would mean that other projects could not be accomplished.

RB asked if the Third to Fifth Street Connector would be paved or grit. FH said that the Holt Street Greenway is being bid as a 10’ paved path. If that project is paved then it is likely the Third to Fifth Connector would also be paved. There is an alternate bid for a grit trail for the Holt Street Greenway and if that design is chosen by Council then that may affect the Connector project as well. FH explained that they are in the middle of bidding for the Lebanon Road project and the Holt Street Greenway. He also provided more detailed information on the bidding process and requirements.

KJ asked when the BPAC would need to make a recommendation on capital projects. AO said that the City Council will be reviewing it in the fall, so the BPAC should make a decision on their recommendation at their September meeting. KJ clarified that the BPAC should plan to discuss capital projects at the August meeting and be ready to vote on recommendations at the September meeting. AO said that she could send out the project list that she had included in the



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PowerPoint presentation. This list contains the projects that City Council is already considering for future fiscal years. RB asked if there was a plan to time the BPAC's recommendations with the bike and pedestrian transportation plan update. AO explained that there had been a lot of turnover at Stewart Engineering which was causing delays with the plan update. Staff are hoping that the BPAC members will get project prioritization information next week or by the first of August so that they can provide input on which projects will get cutsheets. KJ added that she saw the sidewalk going in at EM Yoder Elementary on her walk this morning and she is excited for that project to be finished. JA added that the sidewalk adjacent to Stagecoach Corner was also nearly completed.

MEBANE ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

RG explained that they needed to check in on the Activity Challenge and thanked KJ for promoting the Challenge at Musical Chairs. RB asked what other promotion is planned for the Challenge. KJ said that she needs to write some new social media content. AO asked if she wanted to post some of the photos from last year and KJ agreed that was a good idea. RB asked if the PIO would eventually be taking over some of this kind of promotion or if that would always be BPAC's responsibility. AD said that he doesn't know how exactly the PIO position is going to evolve. Recreation and Parks is still producing their own social media content independently of the PIO and have continued to contract someone to organize and publish their social media content. AD explained that Kelly (the PIO) has several of her own projects such as organizing the videos produced by each department. JA agreed that she has put out a significant amount of videos and other content promoting the City. AD explained that there are so many new efforts to promote the City coming out right now that it is not clear what the plan is for existing programs. KJ said that she understands and that she's fine with continuing to help with the BPAC's social media needs for now.

Moving on to prizes, KJ explained that last year the BPAC had just repurposed some branded items that the Recreation Department already had but there had been some discussion of trying to come up with some better prizes this year. KJ asked about the possibility of using discretionary funds and how much is left. JA added that he had talked to two bike shops that were willing to donate something, they just needed more details. AO explained that she had discussed this with the City's Finance Director and she was not comfortable with the BPAC purchasing items to be given as prizes but it is fine if there are businesses willing to donate items in return for promotion. KJ added that she could outline the details of the proposed promotion, such as guaranteeing three social media mentions, etc. and she can send that to JA. AO clarified that the BPAC could purchase branded items to be used throughout the year for general promotional purchases and those items could be included in the activity challenge prizes. KJ said that she still has several sunglasses and athletic towels from previous years. AD added that the Recreation Department has more athletic towels that could be used too. He said that they also have color changing "Positively Charming" straws. AO asked how much the branded hats are and AD said they were \$27 each. AD added that there were also trucker style hats for \$15 each. They also have lanyards and water bottle koozies.



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RB said that a nice insulated water bottle would be a good prize. AD said that if there is something specific that the BPAC wants, the Recreation Department could order a large number for the volume discount and keep whatever the BPAC doesn't need. KJ asked who could look into water bottle possibilities. RB and JS offered to review possible designs/brands and provide the information to AD.

FAMILY BIKE ROUTES MAPPING PROJECT

RG presented drafts of the bike route maps to the BPAC. She had designed one overall map and one map that focuses on the family friendly routes at the center of the City. RB asked if the mileage of the routes could be added and RG agreed. She also asked if there could be levels of difficulty shown. They discussed different ways of showing difficulty and other information. KJ suggested using patterns like dashes and dots to show difficulty and RG agreed that was a good idea. JA asked if there were any plans to mark these routes on the actual streets. JS responded that would be difficult as many of the routes extend beyond City limits. KJ said that the City's walking trail markings had been organized by the women's group but added that it had been an expensive project and RB agreed. JA said those markers were more elaborate than what he was thinking which would be just small signs that could be added to existing street sign posts. RB asked if maybe the bike trails could be added to the large City maps at the Bell Garden and MACC. AO said that the routes should be tested before the BPAC publishes them and RB agreed. JA said that publishing the maps is a good start but they also need a clear way for people to be able to follow the routes. RB suggested that if they have the routes finalized by next May then they could mark the smaller in-City routes with yard signs or something similar as part of the Bike Month campaign. RG agreed that putting together some kind of marker for the routes that are in the City would be easier than for the longer routes outside the City. KJ suggested making a GPS linked map through Strava or another website so that cyclists can get verbal directions rather than trying to follow a map while riding. RB said they did something like that for the urban trails. KJ suggested putting the route information on the BPAC webpage and then adding a QR code to the printed map. There was some discussion of what kind of yard signs could be temporarily used to mark the routes as part of a May bike campaign. KJ suggested holding a contest to name the routes. AT suggested hosting a community ride to help promote the new routes. KJ asked if it would be a good idea to test the routes before they move forward with publicizing them and there was general agreement from the other BPAC members. JS volunteered to test the yellow lasso shaped route and JA volunteered to test the orange route to the south. KJ offered to take the red route, AT said she would take the green route, RB took the teal route from Lake Michael, and MC volunteered to test the purple route. RG asked that everyone test their route by the next BPAC meeting in August so that she can finalize the maps.



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NEW AND ONGOING BUSINESS

AUTUMNFEST

RG recommended that the BPAC members start planning now to get a booth for Autumnfest and decide what they want to do during the event. Autumnfest will be Saturday, October 7th this year. AO asked if AD would be able to help the BPAC get a booth. AD agreed to look into it. AD said that he had Recreation and Parks tents and asked if that would be okay. KJ said that she was a little concerned that at past events they had been mistaken for City employees and they might need something to more clearly show that they represent the BPAC. RB suggested using a plain tent with a BPAC banner. She also suggested getting BPAC T-shirts or something similar made. KJ agreed that a plain tent would be better and AD said that they have a plain khaki colored tent available. KJ and RB also suggested maybe getting BPAC buttons or pins. RB asked if they needed to discuss what they would have at the booth and if they would need to share the booth. AO responded that staff mostly just wanted to start the conversation and make sure that BPAC wanted to have a booth at Autumnfest and that enough members would be available to volunteer. KJ suggested that having their own booth might be better.

RB asked what they would be promoting at Autumnfest. JA responded that hopefully the bike route map that they're working on would be ready. AT asked if Autumnfest is similar to Dogwood Festival and RB and KJ said that it is a much smaller event but a similar concept. RB asked what helmets they are left and KJ said it's mostly adult size and very small child size left. JA asked if any of the helmets could be given as prizes for the Mebane Activity Challenge. RB agreed that was a great idea. KJ said it would be difficult to make sure the helmets are the correct size unless they come to pick up their prize in person. It was agreed that the helmets may just need to be available for those that come to Autumnfest to pick up their prize. JS explained that they have identified at least a couple of purposes for being at Autumnfest: promoting the bike route maps, handing out prizes from the Mebane Activity Challenge, and generally providing educational information on pedestrian and bicycling activities in Mebane. Several BPAC members indicated that they would be available that day. AO added that the US-70 study group is continuing to do some public outreach and may be interested in sharing a booth with BPAC at Autumnfest, but that is still a tentative possibility. There was general agreement that that would be a good match and AO said she would follow up with them later on to confirm if they are interested. RB added that the BPAC could also set up some sort of suggestion board or sticker map as a way of getting public input on bicycle and pedestrian needs and concerns in Mebane. RG agreed that should be fairly easy to set up. RB said that they often receive suggestions from visitors at these types of events but they might get more input if there is a clear way for people to share their ideas.

BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE / GUEST SPEAKERS

AO explained that the plan update is behind schedule. The current plan is for the BPAC to move their October meeting date to the 16th in order to have a combined meeting with RPAC to discuss



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the draft plan. RG responded that the BPAC had a guest speaker scheduled for the October meeting date. She agreed that, based on the new schedule, she and AO will need to discuss rescheduling the guest speaker for a different meeting date. AO explained that the BPAC will need to review and discuss the plan in October in order for the plan to hopefully go to the Planning Board in November and before the City Council for adoption in December. Staff wants to make sure that the consultant will have time to edit the plan, based on any comments from BPAC, RPAC, or staff, before the November Planning Board. AD asked if it would be possible for Palmer to speak at the meeting on October 16th. AO said that she would need to speak with BerryDunn to see how long their presentation is likely to last. Staff doesn't want to overpack the meeting. RG said that she would check if Palmer will be available October 16th or for the November or December regular meetings.

BIKE RACKS

KJ said that the new bike racks are in and they look great. She asked if anyone knows if they are being used. A few BPAC members said that they had not seen them being used yet but they might not have been there at peak times. AD said that he has not seen the bike rack at the MACC being used but someone keeps turning it around. There was some discussion of the correct orientation for a grid style rack. It's possible that the bike rack may be too close to the entrance to the building. JA suggested adding bike rack locations to the bike route map and RG agreed that would be simple to add.

RG asked how the BPAC members want to proceed with their ideas for a downtown bike rack. JA suggested that would be an interesting idea to discuss with community members during Autumnfest. They could have some kind of sign advertising an upcoming design contest. KJ asked if the BPAC was waiting on feedback from Barbara with the Mebane Main Street program. RG agreed that the BPAC had asked her to look for businesses downtown that might be interested in hosting the portable bike rack, potentially taking over one of the on-street parking spaces. RG said that she would follow up with her and see if she's been able to have any conversations with any businesses. JA said that he recently traveled to Indianapolis and they had very interesting and compact bike rack designs.

RG added that they had previously discussed reaching out to Alamance Arts for advice on how to run a design contest or suggestions of artists that could complete this type of project. She asked if anyone wanted to move forward with that. JA said that he wasn't sure that they had decided on a timeline for that. RB said that she thought they were focusing on a potential location first and would focus more on the design element once the location was settled. RG agreed that the location will influence the design constraints. KJ said that she thought the initial feedback from the downtown business owners was that they wanted more information on what it would look like, so that has created a bit of a circular problem. RB asked if there would be any benefit to scheduling a joint meeting between the BPAC and the downtown business group. RB asked if they could coordinate that through Barbara and KJ asked if they meet monthly. RG responded that Barbara



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does organize a regular meeting between the Main Street organization (formerly the Downtown Development Corp.) and the downtown business owners, but she wasn't sure how formal the meeting is or how regular attendance is. AO said that they do have a regular board meeting, which AD attends as a non-voting member. She suggested that meeting with the board may be the best place to start. RB asked how the BPAC should move forward with this. KJ suggested that they determine the location for the bike rack and have a better idea of how the work would be completed, and who would do it, before they launch a design contest. JA agreed that having that information would better define the parameters for the design contest. RB agreed that having that groundwork in place would help ensure community acceptance of the project and KJ added that they don't want to put together a community design only to realize that they can't execute it. RG agreed to speak with Barbara about whether she had spoken with any downtown businesses about bike racks and if it would be possible for BPAC members to meet with the board to discuss a possible projects.

Additionally, BPAC members discussed conflicting information in the City's ordinance regarding whether bicyclists are permitted to ride on sidewalks. AO explained that in 2019 a revision was made to the Ordinance, Section 34-94, which says that a person can legally ride a bicycle on a sidewalk as long as that sidewalk is not downtown and they follow certain rules. However, Section 34-134 of the Ordinance states that riding on sidewalks is prohibited. Any changes to the City's Ordinance will need to be approved by the City Council. AO said that she can initiate a conversation with the City Manager and others and then follow up at the BPAC's next meeting. RB added that she heard that a skate shop was coming to town and asked if the City's Ordinance accommodates skateboarding. AO said that she would check. RG noted that the Ordinance stated that you could not use roller skates or inline skates in any roadway, except when crossing the street. Roller skates are also not permitted on the streets or sidewalks within the fire limits of the City. It was not clear to staff what fire limits the Ordinance refers to. RG indicated that staff would like into these issues further and follow up. AO added that the City has a new police chief and she will see if she can set up some time for him to meet with the BPAC. RB asked if a replacement for Nate's position had been advertised yet. AO said that they were waiting until after this meeting to start and RG confirmed that they would be starting advertising the following week. AO reminded the BPAC members that, as Nate was Vice-Chair, they will need to elect a new Vice-Chair at the next meeting.

AT added that she had a request from a friend to look into adding curb ramps at the sidewalk near the library at First and Washington. It is not currently wheel/stroller friendly. Staff checked aerial imagery of the property and saw that there also wasn't a curb ramp at the 2nd and Washington intersection. KJ asked if that would be a capital project and AO said that she thought it could be done with discretionary funds. The BPAC would just need to coordinate with the Public Works Department.

AD said that he has a quick BikeNC update. He listed several volunteers that had signed up so far. He asked if anyone has any affiliation with a church group or other organization that might be



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interested in volunteering. AD has put together a map of the planned event spaces at the MACC. KJ asked if there are shifts of volunteers needed and AD responded that the majority of people will be needed from 6-10pm. There will also be some opportunities to help earlier in the day. There was also some discussion of traffic control and how drop off and parking will work. AD explained that he does not want to block off Corregidor Drive, if at all possible, as there is typically a significant amount of through traffic on that road. Bike parking was also discussed and JA suggested organizing a bike check. JS asked what the security situation would be for the bikes and if there would be someone watching them all night. AD agreed that there would either need to be security or they might need to be secured somewhere inside the MACC. He explained that there are going to be yoga classes and massage therapists available that night and they will need room for food prep but there should still be room for some sort of bike storage area.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Meeting summary prepared by Rachel Gaffney, City Planner.