

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)**Date:** Tuesday, December 20, 2022**Time:** 7:00 p.m.**Place:** City Council Chambers, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801**Members Present:** Annie Adams, Bill Brown, Kara Dudek-Mizel, Audrey Ishii, Susan Jones, Bruce Michelson, Dan Saphiere, Yousef Shaw, Nancy Westcott, John Zeman**Late Arrival:** None**Staff Present:** John Zeman, Kat Trotter**Others Present:** Charlie Smyth**Members Absent:** Sarthak Prasad**1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Bill Brown called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm, Roll call was taken.

A quorum of members was present.

2. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

The Traffic and Crash Report discussion was removed from the agenda. Urban Area Plan Safety Update has been added to the Unfinished Business section.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (September 20, 2022)

Bruce Michelson motioned to approve the minutes, Kara Dudek-Mizel seconded.

Motion approved with unanimous voice vote.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

Audrey Ishii addressed the Commission regarding a budget amendment for the Traffic Study that was done at the intersection of Vine and Water St., the site of a pedestrian death last year. Audrey relayed that the crosswalks offered no promise of safety, but the referenced pedestrian deaths did not occur within the references crosswalks. Audrey compared the Urbana pedestrian deaths to those of Champaign. She shared that Pedestrian deaths in Urbans have actually increased, while pedestrian deaths in Champaign, a much larger city than Urbana, have decreased. When providing the Commissioners with the supporting data for this, Audrey referenced crash data provided by the Regional Planning Commission (RPC). RPC optimized crash statistic and conglomerated the data between Urbana, Champaign, Mahomet and Savoy. Audrey urged the Commissioners to change the systemic culture on Urbana Streets in the same way that the other two cities have. Audrey referenced Champaign's increased speed enforcement and Savoy's residential speed limit drop to support this request.

Charlie Smyth addressed the Commission about his plans and concerns for Urbana's Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Designation as he comes to the end of his tenure as the Champaign County Bikes Chair. Charlie stated that the criteria for the American League of Bicyclists program changed substantially. The new changes emphasize speed, infrastructure, and connectivity, except for MCORE and the improvements that have been made to University Avenue. Charlie believes that it is only a matter of time before Urbana sees another causality. To combat this concern, Charlie shared images from a safety demo project regarding suggestions for Lincoln Avenue that he believes would be beneficial in helping combat this growing concern. In regards to the shared presentation images, Charlie noted that the roads shown are similar to those of Lincoln Avenue and the addition of bollards, planters, sharrows, and rumble strips would be relatively inexpensive, yet effective ways in which the City could increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Charlie also drew attention to the fact that sharrows and rumble strips are

no longer considered to be “infrastructure”, so they do not contribute towards the BFC designation. Charlie stated that neighborhood traffic calming is long overdue and is concerned that these existing issues cannot be addressed in time for the new BFC application and designation. Charlie urged the Commissioners to consider installing the aforementioned safety measures, along with additional signage and speed bumps. Charlie reiterated the importance of implementing these measures by informing the Commissioners that national car injuries and fatalities total close to 10,000 per day, which those caused by gun violence by 30 to 40 percent. The City has already passed ordinances in the past regarding these issues and he urged the Commission to review them and advocate for them to be implemented.

Annie Adams asked Charlie to explain why sharrows are not considered “infrastructure”. Charlie responded that sharrows aren’t classified as serious safety mechanisms. He also relayed that roads in which the speed limit is 20 to 25 mph are not considered “infrastructure”, but are considered “safe roads”. He then mentioned that Main Street, which runs through Downtown Urbana, is a 30 mph speed zone, which he feels is too fast when you consider the number of pedestrians in the area and the fact that the City should want its residents to slow down and spend time in the area.

Chairperson Brown stated that RPC will be attending the January BPAC meeting to speak about the Bicycle Friendly Community Application.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Review of Recommendations to City Council – Bill Brown

- i. Council adopted Vision Zero as a Resolution. The Vision Zero task force will convene a total of two to three times per year. Cynthia Hoyle was the lead contact. RPC is currently working on its version of a Vision Zero policy.

Chairperson Brown asked John if RPC would be able to report on Vision Zero at the January BPAC meeting. John Zeman responded that he would reach out to RPC to confirm.

ii. Snow Removal Recommendation – Bill Brown

City Council partially adopted the recommended expansion of snow removal areas. The old snow removal areas, where residents were required to remove snow from sidewalks, included the Campus south of Springfield and Downtown south of Water. BPAC’s new recommendation was to include the MCORE area along Green Street. Council adopted the expansions requested for Campus and the Downtown areas to extend north to University Avenue. Council did expand the area to include the MCORE portion of Green Street.

Annie Adams noted that residents are afraid they would be fined if they did not remove the snow from the sidewalks. Annie stated that she is willing to confirm this with Council and to clarify the penalties and stipulations associated with snow that is not removed. Annie suggested for the City bundle the expectations that you have to clear snow from the sidewalk outside your property with the other ones about leaves, branches, etc.

Bill Brown stated that the City’s primary focus with this adjustment was to focus on commercial areas and residential areas, such as apartment complexes, that are already required by city ordinances to do this. Chairperson Brown stated that he thinks the City could use this as an opportunity to educate and encourage people to clear the sidewalks in front of their houses rather than enforcing a city-wide mandate.

Bruce Michaelson noted that the map does not place very strong importance on clearing the sidewalks near the City Building, Leal School, the Urbana Free Library, Urbana Middle School, the High School, etc. He suggested that those streets be added map as well.

iii. No Parking in Bicycle Lanes – Bill Brown

The Police Chief would like to send this item to Traffic Commission, before City Council, in early 2023.

iv. Short-Term and Long-Term Solutions for East Main Street Corridor – Bill Brown

A proposal for speed limit reduction, additional signage, street lighting, and KRT connectivity with the addition of a sidewalk on the north side of Main Street and a safe crossing for bus stops was sent to Council. A response to this proposal is not until a source of funding can be secured for this project.

v. Implementation of Vision Zero as a Council Goal – Bill Brown

This did not make it into the 2023 City Council Goals.

vi. Budget for Sidewalk and Path Maintenance – Bill Brown

A recommendation to increase the sidewalk maintenance budget from \$120,000 to \$250,000 was approved. This year's Capital Improvement Plan shows an increase in the budget for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects such as sidewalk improvements, in addition to the Equity and Quality of Life projects.

vii. Increase Staff Support for BPAC – Bill Brown

A need to increase the staff support for BPAC was presented to Council. A request to hire an Active Transportation Coordinator, similar to an Arts & Culture Coordinator, as a staff member who is dedicated to working on these specific grants was made.

viii. Crosswalk Visibility at Washington and Race – Bill Brown

The request to have the Traffic Commission review the crosswalk visibility at the intersection of Washington and Race was not forwarded to Traffic Commission. The previous City Engineer denied the request for an intersection evaluation.

Annie Adams asked if the intersection review could be added to a future Traffic Commission meeting agenda for the request to be reconsidered.

ix. Three-foot Minimum Passing Signs – Bill Brown

Champaign County Bikes recommended several locations where the City could install these signs. The BPAC reviewed the recommendations. John Zeman will be taking the recommendations to the Traffic Commission before they are installed.

Audrey Ishii stated that the State of Illinois has also installed some of these signs on IDOT roads.

b. Urbana Area Safety Plan Update – Audrey Ishii

Audrey gave an update on Urbana's Area Safety Plan and mentioned that there will be a public input period associated with this plan.

Audrey informed the commissioners that RPC put in a grant application for \$25 million of funding for the Safe Streets and Road for All (SS4A) project under the Champaign-Urbana Safety Plan. This project includes some Vision Zero initiatives and there will be another opportunity to apply for funding in the spring that the City of Urbana should consider applying for. The City could use this grant as a way to fund Urbana's Vision Zero Plan.

An “MPO” is required for any urban area of more than 50,000 people. The Champaign County Regional Planning Commission is comprised of Champaign, Urbana, and Savoy, and while the transportation component of the budget is relatively small, it is very important to BPAC.

CUUATS is the Champaign Urbana Urbanized Area Transportation Study, a technical committee and policy committee that supports RPC.

The Long-Range Transportation Plan is a priority for Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Public outreach is required for the LRTP. Plans are “fiscally restrained”, must be realistic and public input is required.

Audrey provided the commissioners with a list of resources for Vision Zero and a variety of Safety Plans. These resources and plans consisted of the RPC Urban Area Safety Plan, LRTPs, 2040, and 2045, a list of total traffic fatalities and crash data, Urbana Open Data Portal, etc.

- 6. REPORTS OF CITY OFFICIALS AND STAFF AND REPORTS OF COMMITTEES – John Zeman**
- a. The CUUATS Long Range Transportation Plan 2050 Steering Committee will be starting up in January. Lily Wilcock will be the City’s representative for that Committee.
 - b. The Pavement Marketing Contract is working its way through supply chain issues. This project is expected to be completed in April 2023. The contract date has been extended to reflect this change.
 - c. A budget amendment was passed for the Traffic Engineering Studies. The City is now contracting for spring 2023 data collection on things such as speed, vehicle types, etc.
 - d. The sidewalk improvement projects just awarded a contract to A&A Construction for \$190,000 to make repairs to existing sidewalks in low-to-moderate income neighborhoods this winter. The project is expected to be complete by March 24.
 - e. The City is in the Design phase for the Equity and Quality of Life sidewalk improvement projects. To consolidate the RFP process, there will be one engineering firm selected to complete before and after testing on locations for traffic calming.
 - f. The City’s SS4A Grant Project was included in the submission for the street stretch along Lincoln from Wascher to Killarney. The hope for this project is to implement a road diet with on-street bike lanes or bike paths on streets that go from 4 lanes to a 3 lane cross-section.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Approval of 2023 Meeting Calendar – Bill Brown
Bill Brown presented the 2023 BPAC meeting calendar, sharing that meetings will continue to be held on the third Tuesday of every month. Bill noted that the January meeting, on MLK Jr. Day, as well as the June meeting, on Juneteenth, conflicts with City Council Meetings on those dates, so the BPAC meeting will be held in the Executive Conference Room on both of those dates. John Zeman will reserve the conference room. A motion to approve the calendar was made. Bruce Michaelson moved to approve. Yusef Shaw seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved.
- b. “Curbless” Downtown – Annie Adams
Annie Adams presented the “curbless” infrastructure concept for the Downtown Urbana area. She stated that the Race and Main intersection is a nice intersection to drive through, but not a good intersection to walk or bike through nor a nice place to sit or recreate. She noted that intersections in the Downtown area do not feel safe or comfortable and they lack pedestrian-friendliness, which in turn does not encourage people to stay Downtown, visit businesses, spend money, etc.

In terms of what could be done to alleviate this, Annie proposed the implementation of “slow streets”, and replacing traffic lights with stop signs to force drivers to be more alert to the surrounding environment. An Urbana Slow Streets survey was done in 2021, which received a lot of positive feedback towards the

implementation of “slow streets” in Downtown Urbana, particularly on Main, Broadway, Vince, Race, and Elm. The survey results also expressed openness towards making Downtown Urbana a foot-traffic-only zone and for the City to implement more of the “slow streets” near schools and campus.

Annie further proposed chicanes, woonerfs, and blue light areas, be added to the downtown area. She stated that these s-shaped pathways and known plaza areas for pedestrian traffic have been shown to naturally reinforce traveling at slower driving speeds. Annie also provided suggestions such as adding crosswalks, traffic circles, medians, street paint, etc., supporting their success by showing the commissioners examples from other cities they are used in.

Audrey Ishii stated that she had expected to see information about intersections on curbless streets in the presentation. Annie replied stating that the whole idea is to control the speed, without curbs. She continued saying that all modes need to interact together, in order to slow everyone down. In Urbana, “Curbanas” could potentially be extended beyond the raised space and into the street. Annie thinks that Green Street may be able to evolve to this design since there are such high volumes of pedestrian traffic.

Nancy Westcott expressed concern about buses in a curbless area. Annie Adams said that buses and trucks could work in this design, they just move slower at about 10 mph.

Yusef suggested that the city start thinking about how they can implement this idea into residential areas as well.

c. Examples of Municipal Traffic Calming Policies – Bill Brown

Bill Brown shared Naperville’s Traffic Calming Toolkit, which includes four different levels, with complimentary traffic calming treatments for each level. Naperville’s Traffic Calming Toolkit also includes education and community involvement components. Bill believes that having a policy with traffic calming measures in place is a good idea

Annie Adams stated that she thinks giving residents the option to choose from how they would like this issue to be addressed. The City could present them with options for things like bales of hay, bollards, planters, concrete paint, etc.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

9. FUTURE TOPICS

- a. RPC- Bicycle Friendly Community Application

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Minutes Recorded By:

Hillary L. Ortiz, Office Specialist