

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)

Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2015

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: City Council Chambers, City of Urbana, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL

Members Present: James Roedl (Stacey DeLorenzo), Cynthia Hoyle, Audrey Ishii, Susan Jones, and Craig Shonkwiler

Staff Present: Mike Brunk, Kevin Garcia

Members Absent: Brandon Bowersox-Johnson, Karie Brown-Tess, Michele Guerra, Elsie Hedgspeth

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Craig Shonkwiler moved to have Cynthia Hoyle serve as temporary chair of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission. Susan Jones seconded the motion. Ms. Hoyle called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Roll call was taken verbally. A quorum of members was present.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Susan Jones moved to approve the agenda; James Roedl seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Audrey Ishii moved to approve the minutes; Craig Shonkwiler seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

Cynthia Hoyle recommended that action items be listed as bullet points in the minutes so members could easily track items that required further discussion.

Craig Shonkwiler agreed that staff would prepare the list.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a) MCORE Project Update

Craig Shonkwiler gave a presentation about the MCORE Project, in general; and Project #1 (Green Street from Wright Street to Busey Avenue) and Project #5 (Green Street from Busey Avenue to Race Street), specifically. Mr. Shonkwiler mentioned that the consultants were finalizing the design concepts, which would be presented at the MCORE Public Meeting to be held on September 14, 2015, at a location not yet secured. *(Since the meeting of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, the meeting location has been scheduled for the Alice Campbell Alumni Center, 601 South Lincoln Avenue, Urbana and the date for the open house was changed to September 17, 2015.)*

Regarding Project #1, Mr. Shonkwiler showed renderings of the design for Green Street in front of the Illini Union. He mentioned that of the three design options presented, option B seemed to be favored. Some of the features of Project #1 design discussed were:

- One way traffic in and out of the Illini Union. No left turns would be allowed onto Green Street from the Union.
- Separated bus movements. Bus only lanes would lead to platforms where passengers would be discharged.
- The west entrance would be closed and the east entrance would be right turn in and right turn out and additional parking would be available in front of the Illini Union. Possible installation of a fountain in front of the Illini Union.
- Raised bicycle lane from Wright Street to Lincoln Avenue. The bicycle lane would have a curb roll-up to improve comfort for bike riders and reduce conflict with pedestrians and motorized vehicles.

Craig Shonkwiler discussed the benefits of the raised bicycle lanes as found in a publication by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), which stated that the raised bicycle lanes provided a greater level of comfort for bicyclist along an area with many conflicts. He mentioned that the consultants, Hanson and Clark-Dietz, worked with T. Y. Lin. He added that T. Y. Lin had designed transportation plans for Chicago, which included the raised bicycle lanes. For Project #5, Mr. Shonkwiler mentioned that there would be no raised bicycle lanes since the area was primarily residential.

Cynthia Hoyle stated that she had concerns about pedestrians using the bicycle lane instead of the sidewalk.

Mr. Shonkwiler encouraged the BPAC members to attend the Open House to discuss their concerns. He said that the Public Works Department was reviewing snow removal methods for the raised bicycle lanes on the street. He added that the City was working with the University of Illinois to develop a maintenance agreement

Cynthia Hoyle suggested a pedestrian crossing at Green Street and Wright Street that would feature bicycle rumble strips and/or a raised pedestrian crosswalk before the pedestrian crossing near the point of conflict. She expressed concern about the timing of the pedestrian crossings. She said that the timing was very complicated and wondered how the Project #1 design would be coordinated with that intersection.

Craig Shonkwiler showed a picture of a raised bicycle lane from Milwaukee to give the Commission an idea of how the proposed lane might look.

Susan Jones expressed concern about pedestrians following weird traffic patterns while transferring from one bus to another.

Craig Shonkwiler stated that the City had worked with the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (MTD) to develop a compromise which included reducing the number of traffic lanes from four to three to narrow the number of lanes for pedestrians to cross to improve the current situation.

Ms. Hoyle said that design reduced the multi-lane roadway crash threat. She added that MTD planned to install fencing to restrict pedestrian crossings in unsafe areas.

Mr. Shonkwiler continued his report by adding that the project would be let in June 2016. He stated that after the public meeting, the City would be seeking design approval and move rather quickly after that to produce the plans for the project.

Ms. Hoyle expressed interest in having the simulated traffic loops showing bus, bicycle and pedestrian flow at the upcoming open house. She opined that having the simulated traffic videos at the last open house was very helpful.

b) Sidewalk Snow Removal Update

Craig Shonkwiler reported that the Neighborhood Task Force had not met since BPAC saw the presentation regarding sidewalk snow removal. He added that the Commission might want to define the purpose of the sidewalk snow removal program and to determine how the City would be involved. He said that he was unsure as to what City staff's role would be in the volunteer program. He added that the existing sidewalk snow removal program could be expanded to include more businesses in the areas where sidewalk snow removal currently was required by ordinance. Mr. Shonkwiler mentioned that staff was concentrating on the goals established by City Council.

Cynthia Hoyle made a motion to explore several options, including working with public/private partnerships and service clubs, considering sidewalk snow removal around bus routes and Safe Routes to School areas. Ms. Hoyle suggested that additional City staff could identify who would be volunteering and assign groups to the different areas. She recommended some ideas to encourage and motivate others to participate in the program that would involve City staff time. She asked if others would be interested in researching other programs and discuss at the next meeting.

Craig Shonkwiler suggested tabling this item and concentrating the focus to one area then discussing the concept with Bill Gray, Public Works Director and Libby Tyler, Community Development Director. He felt that then City Council would have a clear idea about the program.

Cynthia Hoyle recommended a working group meeting prior to the next BPAC meeting to develop a program. She recommended sending an e-mail to invite all for an evening meeting to discuss ideas. Ms. Hoyle encouraged the group to reach out to others in the community such as Boy Scouts, Rotary, churches and college organizations.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) Bicycle Parking– Kevin Garcia/Mike Brunk

Mike Brunk reviewed areas where bicycle parking had been installed since last spring. He said that 53 new racks had been added to the downtown area in the form of inverted U racks, varsity racks and specialty racks. He mentioned seven racks had been installed near the guitar store that was located at Main Street and Race Street. He added that in the Urbana Parking Deck, three racks were added on the east side and seven were added on the south side for a total of 21 racks. He mentioned that ten racks were added for the Urbana School District in a location near where the Boneyard Creek

improvements had occurred. He was hopeful that those racks would be used more frequently as activities were planned near the Boneyard. Next, Mr. Brunk mentioned that a covered shelter had been installed in the Lincoln Square parking lot near Common Grounds and that a QR code was posted at that location to give additional information about bicycle etiquette and parking. He added that there were bike racks installed on North Broadway Avenue near Black Dog Café and near the City Building Complex in the area formerly known as the Engineering Annex. Mr. Brunk pointed out that the racks near the City Building would also provide additional overflow parking for those visiting the Market at the Square. Other bicycle racks had been installed near Weiner Company at the east entrance of Lincoln Square and at the Urbana Public Works Facility, 706 South Glover Avenue, according to Mr. Brunk. He stated that additional bicycle parking was planned around the northwest corner of the Boneyard Creek where improvements were recently made. Also, staff was looking at an area near Griggs Street for additional racks.

Mr. Brunk discussed the possibility of installing a bike corral/cycle stall in downtown Urbana that would be similar to one located in Normal, Illinois. He explained that the bicycle parking stall would be located in an on-street parking space and that it could provide several bicycle parking spaces. He said that there was concern about possibly interfering with sidewalk cafés located nearby but those bike corral installations were in the development process.

Kevin Garcia discussed a project he conceptualized to provide an application that would plot points on a map to locate bicycle parking areas and to show bicycle routes. He explained that he found an application where he could enter data found by surveying the City of Urbana's bicycle facilities and could make the information available to others. Mr. Garcia stated that the app would allow users to find information about the location, condition and type of bicycle facility. He stated that the University of Illinois surveyed its bicycle parking facilities on an annual basis and he hoped that the City of Urbana would be able to do the same with the help of the app. He thought this might be useful in providing bike census information for the City.

Craig Shonkwiler asked the application could be linked to the City's website.

Cynthia Hoyle suggested that it be shared with the Urbana Business Association.

Mr. Garcia said that he could make the app available.

James Roedl applauded the improvements made by adding the bicycle racks and hoped that future placements would be in convenient locations that encouraged bicyclists to park their bikes in the racks. He noticed that there had been incidents where vehicles had blocked bicycle lanes while waiting for carry-out orders in downtown Urbana. He voiced his approval of the bicycle stalls as a way to encourage more bicycle traffic in the downtown area.

Kevin Garcia said that consideration for all modes of transportation in the downtown area would need to be evaluated to encourage visitors to the area.

Mr. Roedl asked about the possibility of expanding the covered bicycle parking facility at Lincoln Square near Common Grounds. He said that the current bicycle parking around Common Grounds frequently was full and that parking at the north end of Lincoln Square had not been ideal because of its remote location and reported thefts of items.

Mike Brunk stated that the facility was to be expanded, but the additional area would not be covered and usage would be monitored.

Craig Shonkwiler asked what the process would be for installing the bike corrals.

Mike Brunk said that he would like to meet with businesses in the area to discuss any concerns that they might have and possibly install a corral in the spring. He mentioned that they were working on a way to avoid conflicts with sidewalk cafés located in the downtown area.

Mr. Shonkwiler asked about funding sources for the bicycle corrals.

Mr. Brunk explained that there was a budgeted line item for appurtenances, which would include bicycle racks. He said that a year and a half ago the pricing for the racks had a drastic price increase and that now the price was back to its original price of \$1,000 for 14 bicycle racks.

James Roedl asked if any local businesses might be able to design bicycle parking facilities.

Mike Brunk said that the bike corrals would need to be taken apart for storage in the winter so it might be possible that a local vendor could supply a design.

Cynthia Hoyle stated that MTD sponsored an annual competition for students interested in creating apps. She thought that perhaps the students could create a bicycle parking app as part of the competition.

b) Pedestrian Activated Signals at Race Street and Main Street

Cynthia Hoyle asked why the pedestrian crossing had to be activated at the intersection of Race Street and Main Street. She said that most pedestrians were used to automated timing which would not require any action from the pedestrian. She felt that the signal did not give priority to pedestrian traffic. She assumed that many pedestrians crossed without a walk signal.

Craig Shonkwiler asked Ms. Hoyle to send him an e-mail and he would look at the signals. He said that the pedestrian activated crossing signals allowed traffic to move freely when pedestrians were not at the intersection. He added that the current timing was set to avoid traffic backing up and blocking other crossings along Main Street.

Ms. Hoyle said that there were no incidents of traffic back-ups at that intersection.

Mr. Shonkwiler mentioned that the lack of traffic back-ups was a result of the timing of the signals working.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Light the Night on 9/9/15
- Walk and Roll to School 10/7/15
- Bicycle Summit 10/28/15
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Training 10/29/15
(Will include a presentation about new guidelines for bicycle facilities.)

Jeff Yockey of Champaign County Bikes summarized a recent meeting of the Kickapoo Rail Trail Board. He announced that the group was close to raising the remaining \$110,000 needed for matching the grant funds for the project. He added that bids for construction of both segments of the project were expected to go out at year's end with construction beginning next spring. He said that the Urbana Park District and the Urbana City Council were looking at ways to bring the trail into Urbana.

Cynthia Hoyle mentioned that the Urbana Park District hosted a bicycle tour through City parks to show the connections to travel on bicycles to the parks in Urbana.

8. FUTURE TOPICS

a) 2015 Bicycle Master Plan Update

Mr. Shonkwiler reported that the initial draft of the Bicycle Mater Plan had been reviewed and returned to the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC). He said that several CCRPC staff had been furloughed as a result of State budget constraints. It was hoped that after the comments had been incorporated into the document, the revised plan would go to the steering committee and then be presented to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission, the Planning Commission and staff. He predicted that September would be the earliest date for that presentation to occur.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Hoyle moved to adjourn the meeting. Susan Jones seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stiehl
Recording Secretary