



**BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE TRANSPORTATION SAFETY & ADVISORY COMMISSION
CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA**

TO: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Members

FROM: Thanh Dang, Public Works Planner

DATE: April 1, 2011

RE: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Meeting Summary for Monday March 28, 2011

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee met on Monday March 28, 2011 at 6:00pm in the Community Development classroom, 409 South Main Street, Harrisonburg. Meetings are always open to the public and citizens are encouraged to attend.

Members present included: Thomas Jenkins, Len Van Wyk, Charles Chenault, Paul Johnston, and Lara Mack.

City staff and guests present included: Thanh Dang (Public Works), Drew Williams (Public Works), MPO Greg Deeds (Police), David Wiens (citizen/Councilman), Arlene Wiens (citizen), Zach Evans (JMU Cycle Share), Nathaniel Layman (citizen), Travis Layman (citizen), MPO Matthew Combs (Police), POII Wes Campbell (Police), Paul A. Yoder (citizen), Ben Wyse (citizen), Eldon Kurtz (EMU), Nick Geer (JMU Cycle Share).

Welcome

1. Introductions

2. Special Presentation: JMU Cycle Share

The full powerpoint presentation can be found in Attachment A.

Zach Evans and Nick Geer are students at JMU and members of JMU Earth Club who started the JMU Cycle Share program. JMU Earth Club started the program after a survey was distributed to the student body and 75% of students who responded said that they would use a bike library if one were available. A goal of the JMU Cycle Share program is "to give people a chance to try out bicycling and promote greener and healthier alternative forms of transportation."

In fall 2010, JMU Earth partnered with Shenandoah Bicycle Company to build 15 bicycles for the bike library/ JMU Cycle Share program. 20-25 people came to help build the bikes. All the bikes are the same model so that maintenance is simplified and parts of unusable bikes can later be reused on another bike.

JMU Cycle Share currently checks out the bikes for a period of 2 weeks. Bikes are rented out for free to students. Return and check out occurs every two weeks on the Commons on JMU campus. JAC Card (student identification) numbers are recorded for each check out. Students checking out the bikes are also provided with a bike helmet and lock. Because some people checking out the bikes may be inexperienced, JMU Cycle Share does fit the bike and fit the bike helmet to the rider. JMU Cycle Share also maintains the bikes in good working order and checkout generally occurs in conjunction with the Tube & Lube event where individuals with their own bike can come get minor maintenance performed. Good feedback from students has been received.

Mr. Johnston asked how they were going to keep this program going after Mr. Evans, Mr. Geer, and other students involve graduate. Mr. Evans responded that they are working with JMU administrators to move the program out of JMU Earth Club and to incorporate as a university program.

Someone asked if interest and participation in the program was geographic. Mr. Evans replied that information has not been collected and that the group would consider adding that question to a survey.

There was discussion that a City map showing recommended bike routes and facilities would be useful to the JMU Cycle Share Program. Mr. Jenkins noted that there is interest and a need and maybe a partnership between the Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee and JMU Earth Club could be formed.

3. Park Road Bike Lanes

Ms. Dang introduced this matter for the Subcommittee's consideration. Last year, Mr. Ben Wyse made a request to Public Works Department to extend bicycle lanes on Park Road from where they end at West Dogwood Drive to Birch Drive. Ms. Dang advised Mr. Wyse that because installation of bike lanes would require the removal of on street parking from both sides of Park Road, signatures from all the residents/property owners along Park Road indicating support of this action would be required.

In November 2010, Mr. Paul Yoder, who had been working with Mr. Wyse, returned letters of support acknowledging the impact of on street parking from Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community (VMRC) and Park View Mennonite Church (PVMC), in addition to signatures from 6 out of 8 property owners between West Dogwood Drive to Shank Drive. They were unable to receive support from property owners north of Shank Drive.

Mr. Dang introduced Mrs. Arlene Wiens and Councilman David Wiens who live on College Avenue and who do not support the addition of bike lanes on Park Road. They are concerned that if on street parking

is removed from Park Road that the large number of people attending sporting events at EMU will park on College Avenue.

Ms. Dang reported that Public Works staff and the City Manager's Office has reviewed this matter and recommends to the Subcommittee that shared lane markings, a.k.a. sharrows, be applied on Park Road rather than bike lanes. Not all property owners living along this stretch of Park Road are in support of bike lanes. This section of Park Road has relatively low traffic volumes, and has a residential character similar to South Dogwood Drive where the City has begun applying shared lane markings. Mr. Yoder had also expressed agreement for shared lane markings starting at Villa Drive to the north. (See Attachment B).

Mr. Wyse expressed that he began pursuing this matter after other residents came to after bike lanes were painted on Park Road between Mt. Clinton Pike and West Dogwood Drive. He also noted that the average residential street does not have Public Transit routes on it like Park Road does. There is about 1 bus per hour traveling on Park Road. Mr. Yoder added that during EMU events, cars park on both sides of the street and pedestrians often walk across the street between the cars where they are not always seen by drivers causing a potential safety hazard.

Mr. Van Wyk asked what the 85th percentile speeds on Park Road are. Staff noted that they are about the same as South Dogwood Drive, around 35 mph.

There was discussion about where people traveling on Park Road are going to and from and that they are going to the shopping center or biking out of town. It was noted that Park Road is a direct route and that most bicyclists and pedestrians would not prefer to use College Avenue as an alternative. If there are bicyclists who currently prefer to use College Avenue, it was recommended that College Avenue be kept the way it is and no changes made to it.

Mr. Van Wyk made a motion for the City to install sharrows on Park Road from South Dogwood Drive to Harmony Drive. It was seconded by Mr. Jenkins. The Subcommittee unanimously supported the installation of sharrows on Park Road, reserving the right to consider bike lanes on Park Road in the future.

Mr. Williams added that staff will create a draft policy document on bike lanes versus sharrows for the Subcommittee to review.

4. Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Amendment & Northend Greenway Update

Ms. Dang provided an update that City Council approved the amendment to the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan to include the North End Greenway at the March 8, 2011 meeting. Since then, Public Works and Parks & Recreation staff met with representatives of New Community Project who are working on the

Northend Greenway. At this time City staff and the Subcommittee will continue to play an advisory role as New Community Project proceeds with design and right-of-way negotiations.

5. Bluestone Trail Update

Ms. Dang informed the Subcommittee that the project is on hold pending direction from City Council. Public Works presented the project and requested endorsement of an alignment from the Parks & Recreation Commission at the February 28, 2011 meeting. There was discussion between Public Works and Parks & Recreation staff to bring Rich Edwards, Trails Specialist, to assist with the design and determination of an alignment. However, following their March meeting, Parks & Recreation Commission is reluctant to give endorsement on an alignment of the trail through Purcell Park. Pending a decision from the Commission or City Council, Public Works and Engineering staff has suspended work on the project.

6. Chicago Avenue & Waterman Drive Intersection Update

Mr. Williams updated the Subcommittee on improvements made at the intersection of Chicago Avenue and Waterman Drive. Crosswalks have been installed making the pedestrian crossing area much more visible. Mr. Williams added that this area is part of the study for Chicago Avenue, and is a temporary solution until future improvements are made as part of a larger project.

There was discussion about the white stop bar and that the law requires vehicles to stop at the stop bar and then vehicles may move forward beyond the stop bar until it is safe to pull out. A recommendation was made to add a pedestrian island at this intersection to make the intersection even safer. Due to its large width a pedestrian island could give pedestrians a safe place to rest if needed. Staff will continue to review this intersection.

7. HPD Enforcement & Education for cyclists

Mr. Jenkins suggested that the committee initiate a better education campaign for cyclists in partnership with Harrisonburg Police. He has been in discussions with Officer Joe Palaskey (not present at this meeting) regarding this matter. Mr. Jenkins described that in Davis, CA, police officers give warnings to bicyclists for violations (no lights at night, running stop signs, etc.), and after second or third violation warning then the bicyclists is given a ticket and fine. Mr. Jenkins would like to see this program be brought to Harrisonburg.

MPO Combs stated that Officer Palaskey is meeting with command staff about this matter and will be in touch with Mr. Jenkins and the Subcommittee. MPO Combs mentioned that PSAs could be integrated into this program.

8. Brief update, if any, on projects in the planning phase

a. Bike Month 2011

Ms. Mack stated that fewer people are working on organizing Bike Month events compared to last year. If anyone has free time to help please contact Ms. Mack at lmack4286@gmail.com. Bike to Work Day is May 19th and coordination with local workplaces has already begun. The Bike to Work Day website is: <http://www.hburgbike2work.org/>.

b. Thomas Harrison Middle School Shared Use Path

There was discussion about the city right-of-way between two homeowner properties that could connect Wyndham Drive to Thomas Harrison Middle School. It was noted that more than 6 years ago when a connection was proposed here as part of a larger trail network in the neighborhood that the community came out in full force against the trail. However, times have changed and it may be worth talking with these two property owners and request their support.

Mr. Jenkins recommended that he contact the two property owners by letter on behalf of the Subcommittee.

Mr. Van Wyk shared that a resident of James Place (1 block from Wyndham Drive) spoke with him about proposed connections between Wyndham Drive and Thomas Harrison MS. The resident with a daughter attending THMS and she said that she would not want her daughter to use a connecting trail at the end of Wyndham Drive because of the proximity to the woods. She is concerned for her daughter's safety.

c. Safe Routes to School: Stone Spring Elementary School

Ms. Dang shared that she is working with Assistant Principal Joy Blosser on scheduling a follow up meeting with the SRTS Team during the week of April 11 or April 18. She asked if and how the Subcommittee would like to be involved in this project and grant application. The Subcommittee said to present to them future meeting dates and information as they become available.

The proposed HAWK signal on Peach Grove Avenue was discussed to help students cross the street from the neighborhood to the school. The Subcommittee asked if the school and police have considered a crossing guard at that location in addition to the HAWK signal. Ms. Dang will present this question to the SRTS Team at the next meeting.

9. Update for projects under design/construction (see to Attachment C)

No comments or questions from the Subcommittee or others present.

Other Business/ Announcements

10. DR 100 Donates \$6,200 to City, \$5,000 City Match for Shared Lane Markings

On March 8, Steve Tomasi, Robert Cone, and Kristi Cone with DR 100 presented a donation and check in the amount of \$6,200 to City Council for new shared lane markings on South Main Street between Cantrell Avenue to Campbell Street, South Dogwood Drive between Maryland Avenue and Hidden Creek Lane, and Hidden Creek Lane between South Dogwood Drive and South High Street. Approximately 8,400 ft. will be marked with shared lane markings. The City will be matching those funds in the amount of \$5,500. These new markings are expected to be installed this Spring/Summer .

11. Chicago Avenue Public Meeting

Mr. Williams invited the Subcommittee to attend the Chicago Avenue/ Mt. Clinton Pike Public Meeting on April 19, 2011 from 6-8pm at Park View Mennonite Church. More information about the project and the meeting is available at www.ChicagoAvenue.org.

12. Free Webinar: Women Can Change the World through Cycling

Ms. Dang announced that Public Works will be hosting a showing of the webinar on Wednesday March 30 from 3pm-4:30pm. Anyone is welcome to attend.

13. HB 1981. Amend & Reenact Virginia Code 46.2-833. Relating to Traffic Lights

Ms. Dang presented that a new Virginia law will be in effect July 1, 2011 that will allow motorcycles, mopeds and bicycles to run a red light in certain situations. House Bill 1981 will allow motorcyclists, moped riders, and bicyclists to pass through red lights, as long as there is no oncoming traffic, after waiting 120 seconds or two cycles of a light. This was to address the problem in communities and locations that still use induction loops which motorcycles and bikes are often not heavy enough or do not have enough metal to trip the sensor. Ms. Dang added that motorcyclists, moped riders, and bicyclists must maintain all the liability and give way to oncoming traffic.

Governor McDonnell signed the bill into law on March 24, 2011. The law can be reviewed here: <http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?111+ful+CHAP0471>.

The majority of signals in Harrisonburg use cameras to detect vehicles, bicyclists, motorcyclists, etc. If bicyclists are not being detected at an intersection they should report the problem to the Public Works Department so the cameras can be adjusted.

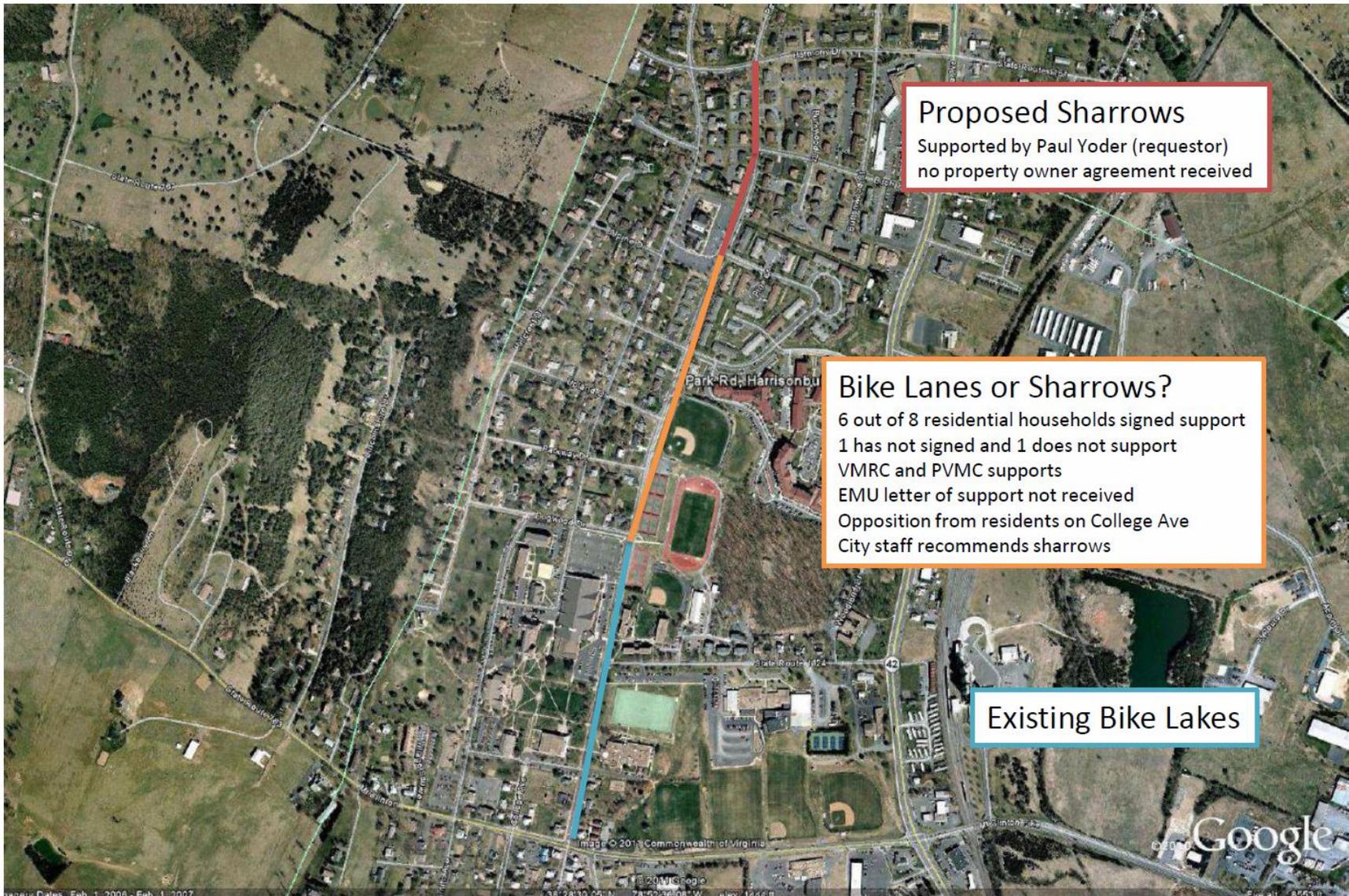
Adjourned

Next Meeting: Monday May 23, 2011 at 6pm in the Community Development Classroom, 409 South Main Street

Attachment A: JMU Cycle Share PPT Presentation

Powerpoint presentation slides will be made available shortly and added to this document. Waiting to receive copy from presenters.

Attachment B: Park Road Bike Lanes



Attachment C: Update on City Projects under design and construction

For the March 28, Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee meeting:

PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- Safe Routes to School: Keister Elementary – Construct sidewalks on South Avenue between S. Dogwood Drive and S. Main Street, Central Avenue between South Avenue and Southampton Drive, and Maryland Avenue between S. High Street and Chestnut Drive. Includes pedestrian signals. Estimate cost: >\$450,000. Funded by VDOT SRTS Program and city funds.
 - UPDATE: Project under construction by Contracting Unlimited. Construction began late October 2010 and expected to be completed May 2011. Construction continues.
- East Market Street Sidewalk Phase II – Construct a 10-ft wide sidewalk with 5-ft grass strip on north side of East Market Street between Spotswood Shopping Center entrance and Linda Lane. Estimated cost: <\$184,000. Funded by VDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program.
 - UPDATE: Contractor, A&J Development and Excavation has completed project. Working through final punch list and approval.
- Neff Avenue Crossing – crossing from trailhead of Arboretum trail to opposite side of Neff Avenue, includes construction of ADA ramp, installation of crosswalks and flashing pedestrian crossing warning lights and signage. Funded by city.
 - UPDATE: Equipment for warning lights has been ordered. Work to construct and install will be done in Summer 2011.

PROJECTS UNDER DESIGN

- Bluestone Trail Phase I – Construct a 10-ft wide shared use path between Port Republic Road at Bluestone Drive to Stone Spring Road across from RMH Wellness Center. Estimated cost: >\$600,000. No funding yet available.
 - UPDATE: Engineering design is on hold.
- East Market Street Sidewalk Phase III – Construct a 5-ft wide sidewalk with 3-ft grass strip on south side of East Market Street between University Boulevard and Evelyn Byrd Avenue. Estimated cost: >\$212,000. Funded by VDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program.
 - UPDATE: Project is currently under design by city staff. Construction anticipated to begin late 2011 and to be completed in 2012.
- Safe Routes to School: Waterman Elementary School – Sidewalks on west side of Chicago Avenue between 2nd Street and Rockingham Drive, bike lanes on Chicago Avenue between Gay Street and Rockingham Drive, sidewalk on south side of 3rd Street between Collicello Street to Stuart Street, sidewalk on east side of Stuart Street, sidewalks on both sides of Virginia Avenue from about 2nd Street to 5th Street. Estimate cost: >\$500,000. Funded by VDOT SRTS Program and city funds.
 - UPDATE: Engineering design continues by city staff; about 75% design completed. Right of way has not yet started.

- Trail Locator System Signage: City staff from Public Works, Parks & Rec, Fire, Police, Emergency Communications Center, IT, etc. working on a system for emergency locator signage for existing and new trails. See example of concept here:
<http://community.railstotrails.org/media/p/4621.aspx>.
 - UPDATE: Staff is exploring options for sign design, and integration into existing emergency communications systems.