



Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee
Of The Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission
City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

TO: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Members

FROM: Thanh Dang, Transportation & Environmental Planning Manager

DATE: March 10, 2016

RE: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Agenda for Monday January 25, 2016

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee met on Monday January 25, 2016 at 6:00pm in Room 011 of City Hall, 409 South Main Street, Harrisonburg. Meetings are open to the public.

Welcome

Subcommittee members: Elise Barrella, Alleyn Harned, Eric Saner, Stefanie Warlick

Guests: Thanh Dang, Tom Hartman, Brad Reed, Harsit Patel, Lee Eshelman, Becky Johnston, and Matt Hassman.

1. Welcome to new member

The Subcommittee welcomed Stefanie Warlick as a new member.

2. New Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Matt Hassman introduced himself as the new Safe Routes to School Coordinator for Harrisonburg.

3. Public comments.

No public comments.

Business

4. Selection of new Chair person

Elise Barrella was nominated and selected to continue serving as Chair person of the Subcommittee.

5. Sidewalk Snow Removal Ordinance Changes & Map

Mr. Patel introduced himself as the Business Services Manager at the Public Works Department and introduced the new sidewalk snow removal ordinance that was enacted on October 27, 2015. Copies of the notification used to inform residents of the requirement for sidewalk snow removal were passed out to attendees. The previous ordinance was enacted in the early '80s and required that snow be cleared by 10 AM the morning following a snowfall event. The new ordinance sets grace periods for snow removal that are based on the severity of the storm: 24 hours after the snow has ceased to fall for 6 inches or less and 36 hours for 6 inches or more. Enforcement of the new snow removal ordinance will be complaint driven and not proactively enforced. When a complaint is received, Public Works staff will place a notice on the door of the owner in violation, taking a carbon copy with them, and track progress. If the owner does not comply within 24 hours of receiving this notice, the city will contract the clearance of snow from the sidewalk and charge the property owner through their water utility bill.

Since the recent storm that ended the weekend immediately preceding this meeting dropped such a significant amount of snow, the City announced that the grace period was extended until the Thursday following this meeting at 10AM.

Several questions were raised about the parameters of the new ordinance. It was explained that the new ordinance applies to business in the same manner as residents and that regular offenders of the ordinance will be closely monitored. Mr. Hartman noted that the ordinance requires that a path be cleared and that use of sand or ashes is encouraged in lieu of salt on slick area. Those who are physically unable to clear snow can contact the Public Works Department and complete a Special Assistance Form. This form required a physician's certification and citizens must reapply on an annual basis.

Dr. Barrella specifically noted issues with snow not being cleared from bus stops and asked whether prioritization of these locations has been considered. Ms. Dang said that the issue will need to be discussed with the Department of Public Transportation.

A map has been posted on the City website depicting areas where the City clears snow from sidewalks and where property owners are responsible for their frontages. Visit www.harrisonburgva.gov/snow-plow for more information and links to the ordinance.

6. Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update

Ms. Dang requested comments from the Subcommittee regarding the project prioritization process for the bicycle & pedestrian plan update currently underway. A memo was sent out to members in advance of this meeting describing proposed prioritization factors, their weighing, and the variables used to score them. A brief overview of the proposed variables (e.g. – average daily traffic, population density, etc.) was provided to show the components going into the broader prioritization factor (e.g. – safety, existing conditions, connectivity, etc.). The Subcommittee suggested normalizing each factor for the number of variables it contains as well as adding distance from bus stops as a variable. It was agreed that the goal of the factor weighting is to balance needs with project feasibility in a manner that still allows projects having a critical need to float above those with the greatest feasibility. Mr. Hartman explained that the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan is the first layer of the transportation planning puzzle and is

expected to be followed by an overall transportation improvement plan to weight projects for all travel modes.

The Subcommittee discussed whether variables adequately relate demand for a particular project, particularly latent demand for non-existent facilities. It was agreed that demand is covered adequately by the variables for the equity factor. It was also noted that there is no factor that covers whether or not a project brings a facility into compliance with accessibility standards. Suggestions to add a variable for compliance and increase the weight of the connectivity factor will be taken into consideration by Public Works staff.

Ms. Dang introduced the project list that has been compiled by Public Works staff as well as the anticipated project schedule. Staff will use gap analysis to determine what improvements should be added to the list to fill critical gaps between existing facilities and/or proposed facilities. The March 28 Subcommittee meeting may be a work session for the plan, but it is not known what materials will be given out for consideration at this time. The Subcommittee was asked to review the 'Other Projects' in the project list that was sent out to help staff get them into the plan. Ms. Dang noted that non-construction projects can't be prioritized, but will be discussed in the plan narrative.

Ms. Dang said she has been brainstorming good activities that promote biking and walking that can be listed in the plan and asked members to do and send ideas. Help was also requested to consider how bike racks fit into the plan. Mr. Hassman asked what parameters should be considered for bike rack placement. Ms. Dang explained that consideration will be given to the standards for bike racks required at new developments. Existing developments are outside of the City's responsibility, but would like ideas to put in the plan that may encourage the community to install racks.

Dr. Barrella suggested that working groups be formed for particular plan topics. She also volunteered to help with items related to education, encouragement, and enforcement. Mr. Saner volunteered to help with bike racks. All other members also volunteered to help with education.

Ms. Dang said that, at the next workshop that is set up, a table of contents section for the plan will be shared and non-construction projects/items will be discussed.

Ms. Dang said that completing the plan update by the end of 2016 is optimistic. There is no due date per se, but there is a goal to complete updates every 5 years.

7. Update on Bicycle Friendly Community Award

Ms. Dang shared the Bicycle Friendly Community award report card and recommendations received from the League of American Bicyclists. The City was awarded a Bronze-Level Designation. Copies of the BFC application, report card, and feedback are available here, <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/biking-and-walking>.

There was discussion about the lack of Bicycle Friendly Business designations in Harrisonburg. Businesses should be encouraged to apply and can also be nominated by the public or by employees. It was suggested that this could be a suggestion in the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan. More information is available at the League website, <http://bikeleague.org/business>.

8. Update on letter to Police Chiefs requesting increase officer training and public education for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists

Ms. Dang reported that a response from Chief Shifflett at JMU Public Safety has been received and the Subcommittee has been invited to meet with JMU Public Safety and Harrisonburg Police chiefs. Ms. Dang will follow up to set up a meeting with the police chiefs and subcommittee members.

The goal of this meeting is to understand what pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists can expect following a collision and what, if any, the situational differences are, and also to offer opportunities for partnership to make walking and biking safer and encourage more people to walk and bike in Harrisonburg.

9. Updates on projects under design/construction

In addition to Attachment A, Ms. Dang provided an update on the Cale Trail. The Cale Family has donated more than 10 acres to the City. The City is working to hire Rich Edwards (trail specialist and Harrisonburg resident) to lay out the alignment of the trail. Rich previously assisted the City with the Bluestone Trail alignment. There is no funding dedicated yet for this project, and depending on opportunities available, this project is likely to be phased with a natural or gravel surface to start, and then later paving with asphalt to be considered. Ms. Dang will be contacting the Cale Family to gather their input to ensure that gravel and paving is in conformance with their vision.

Mr. Hassman hopes that the terrain will be preserved as this is one of the few natural areas left in the City. Ms. Dang stated that care would be taken as it was part of the gift conditions that no development or structures be placed on this property, and that the property was to be used for trails.

Announcements

Mr. Hassman announced information on the “Connect Our Schools” campaign being led by the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition to encourage the City of Harrisonburg to build Garbers Church Greenways by the time the new elementary school is built. The goal is to get 2,000 signatures of support. Mr. Hartman added that the City submitted a VDOT Revenue Sharing grant requesting \$1.5 million to match the City’s \$1.5 million. The City expects to be notified in April/ May. More information about the campaign, <http://svbcoalition.org/connect-our-schools/>.

Ms. Dang announced that Be Heard Harrisonburg is currently accepting recommendations on the City’s annual budget preparations.

Ms. Dang announced that the SVBC Education Committee has several bike education opportunities coming up this Spring. A list of classes is available at, <http://svbcoalition.org/bike-education/classes/>.

Next Meeting: Monday, March 28, 2016 at 6pm – Location: City Council Chambers, 409 South Main St

Adjourn

ATTACHMENT A: Updates on projects under design

General information is also available at: <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/transportation-projects>.

PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION, OR SOON TO START CONSTRUCTION

- **Carlton Street and Reservoir Street Roundabout** – This project is being funded by a combination of VDOT Revenue Sharing Funds and local funds. A roundabout at this location will improve intersection safety for motorists and pedestrians. More information: <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/carlton-street>
 - UPDATE: Construction nearly completed
- **Thomas Harrison Middle School to Wyndham Drive** - In August 2014, community members and city staff worked together to delineate the 10-ft wide right of way between 1022 and 1032 Wyndham Drive, and get support of adjacent property owners.
 - UPDATE: Construction 5-ft path complete! Fencing underway.

PROJECTS UNDER DESIGN/ PLANNING

- **Bluestone Trail – Sonner Hall to Carrier Drive** – Shared use path project by City and JMU. Construction anticipated in 2016. <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/bluestone-trail-project>
 - UPDATE: Design engineering underway.
- **Cale Trail – Westover Park, West Market Street, & Thomas Harrison Middle School** – Shared use path to connect Thomas Harrison Middle School and Westover Park through the former Cale property that was donated to the City by Dr. William Cale and Mrs. Susan Cale.
 - UPDATE: The Cales attorney and the City Attorney are working on finalizing the deed for land donation. There is currently no city funding available for construction of the path.
- **Country Club Road Sidewalk** – In early 2014, citizens requested that new sidewalk be constructed on Country Club Road. City Council approved funding for sidewalks to be placed on the south/ west side of Country Club Road between Spotswood Mobile Home Park and Linda Lane.
 - UPDATE: Right-of-way from adjacent property owners is required in order to construct new sidewalks along Country Club Road. City staff has been trying to work with adjacent property owners. No construction schedule available at this time.
- **Downtown Streetscape Phase III** – Reconstruct sidewalks on both sides of N Main Street between Elizabeth Street to Wolfe Street and install traffic signals and pedestrian signals, and crosswalks at both intersections. Awarded VDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant funds. Anticipated construction to begin Spring 2016.
 - UPDATE: Environmental review and engineering design underway.
- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Way Road Improvement Project** – VHB, Inc. and Valley Engineering will be assisting the City with engineering design for widening along portions of MLK, Jr. Way, S. Main St, and E. Grace Street. Construction anticipated to begin late-Summer 2016. www.harrisonburgva.gov/martin-luther-king-way-improvements
 - UPDATE: Design is underway. VDOT Revenue Sharing grant submitted in October 2015.

- **Mt. Clinton Pike Road Improvement Project (includes Roundabout and Northend Greenway)** – City is working on road improvement design on Mt. Clinton Pike between Park Road to Virginia Avenue (Route 42). This project will include the construction of a shared use path along Mt. Clinton Pike that will tie into the Northend Greenway. This project is being funded by a combination of VDOT Revenue Sharing Funds and local funds, but is not yet fully funded. Anticipated construction to begin in 2018. <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/mount-clinton-pike>
 - UPDATE: Design is currently underway and project is being coordinated with Eastern Mennonite University and adjacent property owners.

- **Northend Greenway Phase I** – This project involves the design and construction of a shared use path between the intersection of Mt. Clinton Pike and Virginia Avenue (Route 42) to Suter Street (near Liberty Street). This project is being funded by a combination of VDOT Revenue Sharing Funds and local funds. No schedule for future phases. <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/northend-greenway>
 - UPDATE: Right of way phase and negotiations with property owners underway. Anticipated construction to begin in late 2016/ 2017.

- **Pleasant Valley Road Bridge Replacement** – Bridge replacement project on Pleasant Valley Road over Blacks Run near MTC and Fire Station #4. Bridge will be built to include width for 2-travel lanes, plus center turn lane, bike lanes, and sidewalks on both sides, in anticipation of long-term future road improvements for Pleasant Valley Road. Bridge replacement anticipated to take place in 2016. <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/pleasant-valley-road>
 - UPDATE: Engineering design underway. Public Hearing meeting held on October 15, 2015.

- **Reservoir Street Project** – Widen Reservoir Street to sections of 5-lane facility and 4-lane facility with median. Project will include sidewalks on both sides and bike lanes. <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/reservoir-street>
 - UPDATE: To be advertised for construction bids in January 2016. VDOT Revenue Sharing grant submitted in October 2015.

- **West Mosby Road Sidewalk Project** – Construct new sidewalks on south side of West Mosby Road from Main Street to eastern Millwood Loop entrance. Bus shelter will be installed next to Sharp Shopper. This project is funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).
 - UPDATE: Right of way phase is underway. Construction to start in Spring 2016.