



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

TO: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Members

FROM: Erin Yancey, Public Works Planning Manager

DATE: March 20, 2017

RE: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Meeting Summary for Monday January 23, 2017

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee met on Monday, January 23rd, 2017 at 6:00pm in City Council Chambers; 409 South Main St. Meetings are open to the public.

Subcommittee members: Elise Barrella, Carl Droms, Dastan Khaleel, Stephanie Warlick

Guests: Thanh Dang, Tom Hartman, Thomas Jenkins, Kyle Lawrence, Ian Pike, Eric Saner, Drew Williams, Erin Yancey

Welcome

1. Recognition of Eric Saner

Ms. Yancey presented Eric Saner with a plaque and thanked him for serving on the subcommittee for the last three years.

2. New Subcommittee Members

The subcommittee welcomed Dastan Khaleel as the newest member. Mr. Khaleel is a civil engineer with Valley Engineering, with an interest in biking and walking. His educational background is transportation/traffic engineering-related with expertise in public transit. He is very excited to learn more and be a part of these discussions.

1. Select new Chairperson for the Subcommittee

Mr. Droms nominated Dr. Barrella as Chairperson. Ms. Warlick seconded this nomination. Dr. Barrella accepted and will continue as the chairperson.

2. Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Public Comments Discussion, next steps

Ms. Yancey explained the only major change to present to the group, as a result of the public comment period, is a project to recommend bike facilities on W. Market St. from the western city limits to Liberty St. It was inputted into the ATP tool and placed approximately in the middle of the other bike segment projects without changing any other projects' position. The subcommittee approved adding this project to the final plan.

When asked if there were any last comments to be made about the plan, Dr. Barrella said that the score weighting of the major factors (Constraints, Existing Conditions, Public Involvement, Connectivity, and Equity) should be adjusted to reflect what several of the public comments asked for – weighing Connectivity and Equity higher than Constraints. By weighing projects more heavily in Constraints, it skews the priority list towards projects that may be easier to complete, but may not provide the most valuable connections in the network. By weighing projects more heavily in Connectivity and Equity, the project list will better reflect the needs of the community and the missing links in the network.

Public Works staff's preference throughout the development of the plan was to have Constraints be the highest weighted factor so that the priority list would result in more achievable projects, instead of potentially unrealistic aspirations. Public Works also explained that although the Activetrans Priority Tool creates a priority list, the ranking of a project on the list is not the only driver of the order in which projects are implemented, which has to do with a variety of factors, including other municipal projects and private development.

There was much discussion around this point, but it was ultimately agreed upon to leave the scoring as it is so that the plan can move forward toward adoption without having to be delayed by an additional public comment period. The group consensus was to document the conversation and revisit it at the next update of the plan.

The group discussed other public comments and changes to the plan. The following items were discussed:

- The group decided to add a strategy to study lighting on on- and off-road bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- The group decided to add a strategy to consider deployment of signing and markings for safety at vehicle/cyclist/pedestrian conflict points or shared spaces.
- The group decided to add verbiage to the strategy regarding data collection and evaluation of the use of the bicycle and pedestrian network to include qualitative measures, in addition to quantitative measures.

Mr. Hartman laid out the next steps for the plan after being formally adopted by the subcommittee – it will be presented to the Transportation Safety and Advisory Commission in February, then, if approved,

presented to the Planning Commission in March, then, if approved again, presented to City Council for final adoption in April.

The group collectively agreed to adopt the plan, including the pending changes.

3. Garbers Church Road Shared Use Path – Citizen Information Meeting debrief, next steps

Ms. Yancey thanked everyone that came out to the recent Citizen Information Meeting. There was a great response and a great turnout with approximately 75 people signing in.

Mr. Droms asked if there was any opposition to the plan at the meeting because he had seen some neighbors express concern through social media. Ms. Yancey said that there was some concern from the Heritage Estate neighborhood along Garbers Church Rd. Mr. Hartman replied that the most common comment was to build it as soon as possible. The most popular segment to build, if the project was to be broken into phases, is from Garbers Church Rd into Hillandale Park.

Mr. Jenkins asked what the approximate cost of the entire project would be. Mr. Hartman said those numbers were still being worked out internally, which is why citizens were asked to rank different phases. Public Works is already working with a consultant, but there are some stormwater issues that are proving to be more expensive than originally thought. The plan is to present a definitive project to city council in the spring and start determining the impact to property.

Mr. Saner asked if this would include the Cale Trail section, including a connection across the middle school property, which was not shown during the information meeting. Mr. Hartman said that the connection to the middle school would need to involve school administrators. Ms. Dang noted that they were not interested in making the connection when this was last discussed in 2015, but that may have changed now that this plan is becoming more realized. Mr. Saner explained that the connection to the middle school was a major reason behind the public enthusiasm for the “Connect our Schools” initiative. Mr. Hartman said that there will be more discussion with school officials.

Ms. Warlick noted that another citizen was surprised that this project was planned through people’s property without those people being contacted. Mr. Hartman explained that people will certainly be contacted if this project is deemed to have an impact on their property. There is a fine line with citizen information meetings because they are held at the very beginning stages of the design process, but it helps to get feedback from the community.

Mr. Jenkins asked what the next steps are with public engagement. Mr. Hartman said that they will be presenting a more defined project to city council in the spring and start reaching out to property owners in the fall. There will be a public meeting in 2018 with more complete design that will go to bid in the fall of 2018. Construction is planned for spring 2019.

4. North End Greenway Proposal

Mr. Hartman explained that Public Works received an unsolicited design/build proposal under the Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act (PPEA) in December for the North End Greenway. Staff and Council reviewed it and determined it to be an acceptable proposal, and one that would benefit the City. That started a 45-day open-bid period for competition based on non-confidential documents open

to the public that closes on March 6. Public Works staff will be meeting with VDOT to determine the next steps after the bid period closes.

Mr. Droms asked if the right-of-way concerns had been worked out. Mr. Hartman said that information is still confidential.

Dr. Barrella asked what the next steps would be if there are no competing bids. Mr. Hartman said it would depend on the meeting with VDOT.

Announcements

1. HR MPO Long Range Transportation Plan Public Meeting – March 1, 2017 4-6pm Rockingham County Administrative Building, Community Room

Ms. Yancey noted that this will be the last opportunity for public comment. Dr. Barrella asked if this meeting would be much different from the previous one. Mr. Williams explained that it would be substantively the same.

Other Business

1. Comprehensive Plan Update

Ms. Dang passed out flyers for the upcoming Comprehensive Plan update that will be kicking off in February. There will be an information session about how the update works and to answer questions. There are applications online to join one of four different committees that will start meeting in April or May and continuing through the summer.

Ms. Warlick asked if there has been much interest so far. Ms. Dang said that about 5-10 people had already applied online, but many more have expressed interest. Dr. Barrella asked how many people will be on each committee. Ms. Dang said there will be between 6-12 people per committee, depending on the level of interest.

Adjourn

Next Meeting: March 27, 2017 6pm – City Council Chambers, 409 South Main St