



**Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee
of the Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission
City of Harrisonburg, Virginia**

TO: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Members

FROM: Jakob zumFelde, Public Works Planner

DATE: January 28, 2020

RE: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Meeting Summary for Monday, January 27, 2020

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee met on Monday, January 27, 2020 at 6:00pm in City Hall, Room 011 (lower level); 409 South Main Street.

Attendees

Subcommittee members: Dudley Bonsal, Marci Frederick, Jenny Toth, Jessica Pyle, Ben Craig

Other attendees: Carl Kauffman

Staff: Tom Hartman (Public Works), Jakob zumFelde (Public Works), Dastan Khaleel (Public Works)

Welcome

Mr. zumFelde opened the meeting by inviting everyone to introduce themselves. Additionally, as two members were joining the Subcommittee for the first time, he invited everyone to say something about their interests as they relate to the Subcommittee.

Business

1. Subcommittee Business

Mr. zumFelde indicated that there are a few formal actions required of the Chair of the subcommittee, and he opened the floor for nominations to be the Chair for the 2020 calendar year. Ms. Frederick volunteered to be Chair, Ms. Toth seconded the nomination, and Ms. Frederick was elected unanimously.

Mr. zumFelde then showed the group the proposed meeting dates for the year, which included changing a few months (May and November) to the 3rd Monday of the month instead of the 4th Monday to avoid holidays. No members expressed concerns about the proposed meeting dates.

2. Follow up items

- Bicycle Friendly Community award

Mr. zumFelde provided an update on the Bicycle Friendly Community application that the City submitted last year. He said that the City was awarded a Bronze-level status, as it had in 2011 and 2015. In response to a question about how close the City came to being Silver status, Mr. zumFelde said that it is hard to identify the exact threshold. He showed the City's "Report Card" which lists many of the indicators used in the evaluation – some of which the City is doing very well on while others show room for improvement. There was some discussion about the fact that one of the indicators, "High speed roads with bike facilities", does not feel very relevant to the City given how few roads Harrisonburg has that are "high speed" (greater than 35 mph). Mr. zumFelde emphasized that the City is expecting more information, including the results of a public survey that was created by the League of American Bicyclists (which runs the Bicycle Friendly Community program), so staff intend to bring that information to the Subcommittee after it is received.

- Shared use path etiquette sign design

Mr. zumFelde showed the updated shared use path etiquette sign design (see below) to the Subcommittee. He noted that multiple changes were made in response to feedback at the last Subcommittee meeting, with the most major change being the addition of the language in Spanish. The Subcommittee had no further comments about the design. Mr. Craig asked about the size – given the amount of text, he wanted to ensure that it was large enough to read easily. Mr. zumFelde said that it is rather large – 18"x30". [Editor's note: It is actually 24"x30".] Mr. zumFelde said there was no specific timeline for creating and installing these, but that they would probably be installed in the spring at the locations previously discussed on the Northend Greenway and Bluestone Trail.



- Northend Greenway amenities

Mr. zumFelde provided an update on planning for Northend Greenway amenities, using the \$10,000 that the Northend Greenway Steering Committee has provided for these purposes. As discussed at the last Subcommittee meeting, a kiosk and bike fix-it station are planned near the path entrance at Suter Street. Mr. zumFelde showed a map with potential bench and tree locations – he indicated that there may be one or two benches installed. Additionally, he mentioned the idea of having a paved (or other hard

surface) area between the path and fence along the stream restoration. This would provide a space for people to step off the path and observe the stream restoration or otherwise take a break. Mr. zumFelde also noted that staff had additional discussion about trash cans and dog waste stations following the Subcommittee's recommendation to consider these, but staff decided not to take on the maintenance efforts that would be involved with these things at this time. Ms. Toth asked who will be responsible for picking up trash and otherwise maintaining the path corridor. Mr. Hartman said that Public Works will be responsible for these efforts, and if trash is a notable problem, then Public Works will consider adding trash cans. Ms. Frederick asked how to ensure that additional trees are planted, given the many benefits trees would bring to the path corridor. Mr. Hartman said that a planting plan will be created at some point, although this will need to take into account the need for clear zones along the path. Mr. Craig asked whether there were opportunities for volunteers to assist with anything related to the amenities in order to reduce costs. Mr. Hartman indicated he didn't think this was going to be necessary, as Public Works staff are likely to do most of the installation work.

3. Mt. Clinton Pike & College Ave Crosswalk Concern

Mr. zumFelde explained that a resident has expressed concern about the crosswalk across Mt. Clinton Pike at College Avenue. Specifically, the concern is that the relatively long crosswalk combined with the speed of traffic can make it challenging to find a safe gap in traffic to cross; particularly for people who are walking or biking at a slow speed. Additionally, the resident indicated that few drivers yield to people at the crosswalk. Mr. zumFelde said that staff collected speed data on Mt. Clinton Pike and counted the number of pedestrians crossing at the crosswalk. The speed data does indicate that many drivers are speeding on Mt. Clinton Pike and the pedestrian counts showed many people using the crosswalk. Mr. zumFelde said that staff evaluated whether an in-street sign that says "yield to pedestrians in crosswalk" would be warranted at this crosswalk. He said that based on previous precedent regarding where to install these signs, this crosswalk has considerably fewer pedestrians crossing than locations where these signs have been installed. Ms. Toth asked if that precedent could be changed. Mr. zumFelde said that if it was changed, there may then be many other locations where these signs could be justified and that staff was trying to maintain a consistent standard regarding where these are installed. Ms. Pyle asked if flashing lights or a pedestrian-activated crossing could be installed. Mr. zumFelde said that the City follows VDOT standards for installing rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) and Mr. Khaleel noted that these standards generally indicate not installing an RRFB on a road with a 25 mph speed limit.

Mr. zumFelde said that there is an upcoming project, with information provided on the 'Project Updates' page of the agenda, that includes multiple improvements to Mt. Clinton Pike between Virginia Ave and Park Rd. The primary improvement will be a shared use path along the north side of the road, with other improvements including some new sidewalk along the south side of the road and likely relocating the crosswalk at Chicago Ave. Given the close proximity of this project to Mt. Clinton Pike and College Ave, Mr. zumFelde said that staff are recommending that further evaluation of improvements at the College Ave crosswalk be completed alongside this project. Ms. Toth asked about the timeline for the project. Mr. zumFelde said that the project is fully-funded and construction is planned for 2022. Ms. Frederick commented that speeding is an issue there in part because of the fact it is a short stretch of Mt. Clinton Pike where the speed limit is 25, with the speed limit being 35 in the County and east of Chicago Ave. She asked if reducing the speed limit to 25 between Virginia Ave and Chicago Ave could be considered as part of the project. Mr. Hartman and Mr. zumFelde said that it was being considered, but there were many factors that would determine whether it would be appropriate.

4. S. Main Street STARS Study

Mr. zumFelde provided some background on an effort that the City has been working on with VDOT, as well as other partners, to study a segment of South Main Street and the intersection of Erickson Ave and Pear Street for safety and operational improvements. Starting with S. Main Street, Mr. zumFelde and Mr. Hartman explained safety concerns that exist on the segment between Mosby Ave and Erickson Ave/Stone Spring Rd, particularly in relation to vehicles turning in and out of the fast food restaurants. Mr. zumFelde showed a diagram of proposed improvements that would include creation of a median that would improve safety by limiting left turns into and out of the fast food restaurants. He indicated that addition of the median would involve removing the bike lanes. Mr. Hartman noted that the project would also include construction of a sidewalk on the east side of the road. There was some discussion about the existing bike lanes and sidewalk in the area. The bike lanes on S. Main Street currently end at Mosby Rd, so removing them between Mosby Rd and Stone Spring/Erickson would shorten the extent of bike lanes but would not leave a gap between bicycle facilities. The new sidewalk on the east side of S. Main would connect to existing sidewalk on Stone Spring Road and the crosswalk at Mosby Rd, with a major purpose of this sidewalk being to provide safe access to the bus stops that are on the east side of S. Main Street. Ms. Pyle asked if the potential Bluestone Trail extension to the new High School is seen as an alternate route for bicyclists to reach the south side of the City. Mr. Hartman said that that would be the primary bicycle and pedestrian route to the High School, but he noted that it would not connect to Mosby Rd.

Mr. zumFelde then showed a diagram of the proposed improvements at the intersection of Erickson Avenue and Pear Street. Mr. Hartman and Mr. Khaleel described how the new design would work, as it restricts left turns off of Pear Street and redirects them to a traffic signal to U-turn. Mr. zumFelde noted that a crosswalk would be added, improving pedestrian connectivity at the intersection. Mr. Craig asked if the bike lane would be impacted by the bulb being created for U-turns, and Mr. Hartman explained that the bike lane would continue normally and would be delineated by painted stripes through this section. Mr. zumFelde and Mr. Hartman said that there is an upcoming Public Meeting regarding the STARS Study, which will be held from 5:00-6:30 PM Wednesday February 5 at Harrisonburg Public Works Department, 320 E. Mosby Rd, Harrisonburg, VA 22801. They noted that an online survey is also available to provide feedback on the study proposals.

5. Project Updates

Mr. zumFelde asked if there were any questions regarding the project updates that were provided with the agenda. There was some discussion about the Federal Street shared use path project, with Mr. Hartman indicating that it was on-schedule to be completed this spring. Ms. Pyle asked if that path will be swept consistently after completion, and Mr. Hartman said that it will be swept by the downtown sweeper that is used for sidewalks. Mr. Bonsal asked when the Audible Pedestrian Signal (APS) implementation will begin. Mr. Hartman noted that many intersections, including those downtown, already have APS, and that this project will be bid out before the end of 2020.

Announcements / Other Business

Mr. Hartman let the Subcommittee know that there was a survey open regarding the downtown parking study. Information that was presented at a recent open house and a link to the survey are available at <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/downtown-parking-study-2019>

The meeting was adjourned

Next Meeting: March 23, 2020 @ 6pm – City Hall, Room 011 (lower level), 409 South Main St