



City of Harrisonburg

City Hall
409 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Meeting Minutes - Final Bicycle and Pedestrian Sub-Committee

Marci Frederick

Jessica Pyle

Benjamin Craig

Jenny Toth

Dudley Bonsal

Monday, September 28, 2020

6:00 PM

Virtual

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee meeting on Monday, September 28, 2020 at 6:00pm was held using a GoToMeeting. The meeting was not held in person due to the state of emergency related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Subcommittee members attended by calling in using a phone or joining by audio/video on a computer. Information allowing members of the public to watch the meeting live was provided in the agenda and posted on the City website in the week prior to the meeting. Members of the public were given the opportunity to provide comments on the items discussed by phone or e-mail prior to the meeting.

Mr. zumFelde opened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves, so that all members knew who was on the call. Those present included the following.

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

Staff: Tom Hartman (Public Works), Erin Yancey (Public Works), Jakob zumFelde (Public Works)

Other attendees: Kyle Lawrence (Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission chair)

2. Follow up items

2.a. N. Liberty reconfiguration between Rock St and Gay St

Mr. zumFelde and Mr. Hartman said that discussions were continuing regarding the reconfiguration of this block that had been discussed at a previous meeting.

2.b. Chicago Ave & Waterman Dr Intersection

Mr. Hartman said that creating the island at this intersection has been completed to reduce the length of the crosswalk for people biking and walking. After implementation, Public Works received many calls regarding concerns about ability for people driving to look right when making left turns from Waterman Dr, as the angle was changed due to the island. Mr. Hartman said that staff are monitoring these concerns, as it is not yet clear whether changes are necessary or whether the concerns raised were resulting from drivers getting used to the configuration change. Ms. Pyle said that the island looks nice and that she feels safer when biking on the path, although she also understands the concern of drivers. Mr. Lawrence asked if there was a time frame for

considering changes. Mr. Hartman said that the improvement was installed about a month ago, and that they will continue monitoring but are unsure when any decisions may be made.

3. Safe Routes to Schools and Walk Zones

Mr. zumFelde provided a brief overview of efforts that were completed by staff after the September Subcommittee meeting. He said that staff have determined draft zones using the guidance indicated at the September meeting. He said that the zones will be reviewed/revised with Harrisonburg City Public Schools, who will guide the next steps of this effort. Mr. Hartman emphasized that it has been considerable effort by staff to evaluate all of the schools and draft the zones, with the information being forthcoming following upcoming meetings with HCPS administration.

4. Old Furnace Rd hill

Mr. zumFelde said that staff have developed an initial concept for Old Furnace Rd where concerns have been raised about safety for people biking up the hill going westbound between Oriole Ln and Blue Ridge Dr. Mr. zumFelde explained that the concept involves adding a westbound bike lane as a climbing lane up the hill, with the road not being wide enough to accommodate bike lanes in both directions. Mr. Hartman added that staff have contacted VDOT to identify whether this change can be made as part of the traffic plan for the closure of the Old Furnace Rd bridge across I-81, given that some additional traffic may be on this segment of Old Furnace Rd at that time. There was additional conversation about the proposal, with Ms. Pyle and Mr. Lawrence thanking staff for pursuing this concept due to safety concerns that people biking on the road have expressed for many years.

5. Project Updates

5.a. Project Updates

Mr. Lawrence asked if there was any update regarding right-of-way for the Garbers Church Rd Shared Use Path. Mr. Hartman said that staff are working hard in negotiation with the landowners to complete acquisition of the right-of-way. Ms. Toth asked whether there was something that the Subcommittee could do to emphasize the importance of the path to landowners. Mr. Hartman said that such opportunities could be considered, if necessary. Mr. Hartman also let the Subcommittee members know that a survey will soon be released to collect name suggestions, as a new name will need to be chosen for this path.

Mr. Hartman said that the City had learned that the second block of shared use path on Federal St, between Market St and Water St, will be funded through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board is expected to finalize this approval at their October meeting.

6. Announcements/Other business

Ms. Pyle indicated that she has been commuting by bicycle and has concerns about the intersection of Evelyn Byrd Ave and Reservoir St. She has determined that the safest way to navigate this intersection is to use the crosswalk and pedestrian signal, but that vehicles turning right are frequently not looking at or yielding to her in the crosswalk. She asked if the right lane, which is currently only for right turns, could be converted into a right-through-left lane where all movements could be made from that lane. Mr. zumFelde noted that the situation at this intersection may change as a result of the project that has been funded to reconfigure Evelyn Byrd Ave. Mr. Hartman said that staff will evaluate the situation.

Mr. Lawrence asked if there is a strategy or method for when the City installs leading pedestrian intervals at signals. Specifically, he indicated that someone had noted to him that they thought that crossing Mason St at Wolfe St was a place where this would be beneficial. Mr. Hartman said that staff usually implement this in response to concerns or comments from residents or when studies indicate that a leading pedestrian interval would be beneficial.

Mr. Lawrence also indicated that he had experienced the pedestrian signal malfunctioning at Mt. Clinton Pike and Virginia Ave. He said he submitted the Public Works form related to signal issues, and then heard from staff that they had found a malfunctioning part and fixed it. So he thanked the Public Works staff for this effort. Mr. Hartman thanked him for submitting the form and noted that it is important for all members of the public to contact Public Works if they see an issue so that staff can resolve it.

Mr. Lawrence said that he reviewed the costs of the SMART SCALE projects that were submitted and noticed the cost of the Bluestone Trail extension had increased since the initial cost. Mr. Hartman said that VDOT assisted in the final cost estimation and included additional contingencies, so the cost of all projects increased in cost. While this makes the estimates look quite expensive, it is in line with all projects being submitted statewide for SMART SCALE funding.

6.a. Accepting Subcommittee member applications

Mr. zumFelde noted that applications for Subcommittee membership are available on the website. The Subcommittee will review applications at the next meeting, for review by TSAC to consider.