



**Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Special Meeting
Meeting Minutes**

February 2, 2021 • 5:00-7:00 p.m.

By computer at www.fastplanning.us/keepup/zoom

By telephone at: 1 (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 828 8467 5945

1. Call to Order

Ms. Lunsford, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

*Nathan Belz

*Donna Gardino

*Carl Heim

*Jim Richardson

*Peter Stern

*John Stowman (absent)

*Larry Zervos

**Jackson Fox

**Olivia Lunsford

**Deborah Todd

Susan Bissell

Andrew Ooms

***BPAC Representative**

****FAST Planning Staff**

3. Approval of the February 2, 2021 Agenda

Motion: To approve the February 2, 2021 Agenda. (Gardino/Zervos).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Public Comment Period

No public comment.

5. Draft Non-Motorized Plan Update (Action Item)

- *Committee member discussion of comments on Draft Non-Motorized Plan Update and recommendation for releasing the document for a 30-day public comment period.*

Mr. Fox explained that the special meeting of the BPAC was to afford them more time to discuss the Draft Non-Motorized Plan prepared by Kittelson & Associates. Mr. Fox stated that Andrew Ooms of Kittelson & Associates was on the phone to answer any questions they had. Mr. Fox stated that they hoped to have a motion from the BPAC to recommend release of the document for a 30-day public comment period from February 17-March 17, 2021. Mr. Fox stated that another option for the BPAC was to make a motion that the document was not ready for public comment yet and more significant revisions needed to

be made. Mr. Fox stated that if the document advanced to the Technical Committee, they would want to know what motion was made by the BPAC before they made their decision. Mr. Fox then gave the BPAC an opportunity to make comments and minor revisions to the document.

The following comments were made by members:

Mr. Zervos thanked Mr. Ooms for working with him to help him understand the document and thought the document was very technical and hard to read but found and did not appear to be geared towards the public.

Ms. Gardino stated that she enjoyed the presentation, photos, and info graphics associated with the verbiage in the document. Ms. Gardino commented that the College Road project should be moved to the short term and DOT had data that supported that.

Mr. Heim stated that DOT had five years-worth of recent crash data.

Mr. Ooms stated that the current MTP recommended that in the next MTP update, the College Road project be moved from the long-range to the short-range list. Mr. Ooms stated that the priority of the project was originally set by the BPAC scoring and could be changed by the BPAC as it was not fiscally constrained.

Mr. Stern commented that the document was painful to read and he was astounded to find out that the current document was fifty pages longer than the previous version and found it difficult to read.

Mr. Stern commented that he thought the 2012 version was easier to read. Mr. Stern noted that the maps in the 2012 document were laid out in 11 x 17 which was easier to read. Mr. Stern stated that on Page 15 of the document there was a list of completed projects and the projects listed were ones that most people would not necessarily relate to such as the Cushman Street project.

Mr. Stern stated that Holmes Road was not shown on the map on Page 22 and was listed as an Illustrative project. Mr. Stern thought it was a project that people felt very strongly about.

Mr. Fox stated that the current project nomination for the Holmes Road project was to widen the road and was not a non-motorized nomination.

Mr. Stern stated that he thought there was widened shoulders on the project specifically for bicycles and pedestrians as well.

Mr. Fox stated that the purpose and need for the project was not specifically for non-motorized users and that was just a secondary benefit of the project.

Mr. Stern stated that the project on Page 23 was mislabeled and asked if HP-5 should be the Old Steese according to the description.

Mr. Stern asked if HP-6 was still part of the Steese/Johansen Interchange Project.

Mr. Fox stated that the project would most likely be incorporated into the Steese/Johansen Interchange Project.

Mr. Stern stated that it should be mentioned that the project would be part of the Steese/Johansen Interchange Project.

Mr. Stern stated that there was no mention of: Barnette Street Reconstruction Project providing bike lanes in downtown Fairbanks, Aurora Slough Bridge Project (discussed in the 2012 Plan for pedestrian safety), University Avenue Bridge Project (pedestrian safety), or South University South, Airport Road to Mitchell Expressway (adding sidewalks for pedestrian safety).

Mr. Ooms stated that the projects could be listed as non-motorized project improvements in the plan.

Mr. Stern commented that the Van Horn Mitchell Ramp Intersection did not exist, and the description needed to be fixed to make it clear that it was the intersection with South Cushman.

Mr. Stern stated that the on Page 26, HP-18, the map on Page 22, he disagreed with the project description as high priority. Mr. Stern stated that it would be a path to nowhere and he felt that terminating at South University Avenue east ramp of Fairbanks International Airport was a poor choice and there were no good links to other paths/routes from that end. Mr. Stern stated that sidewalks on Old Airport Road from Old Airport Road to the Harley Shop and maybe they should consider putting a separated path all the way to Mitchell so there were no right-of-way, driveway, or side street issues which would be a safer way to tie those routes in.

Mr. Stern stated that the date for Virtual Open House #2 on Page 47 needed to be fixed.

Mr. Ooms stated that it was just a placeholder for the Open House that had not been held yet.

Mr. Stern stated that for Page 62 it was a shame that the crash data was so far behind (2012-2016). Mr. Stern stated that there had been a pedestrian fatality on Aurora Drive in 2020 that got left out.

Mr. Belz stated that the Trauma Registry currently available was through 2019 and was more difficult since incidents were not geolocated, so it was not as easy to use as the DMV crash data. Mr. Belz stated that if they used the Trauma Registry, someone would have to go through and manually to try to geolocate those accidents with injuries.

Mr. Ooms stated that the Trauma Registry was not suitable for a regional plan of this level.

Mr. Stern commented that on Page 66, University Avenue Bridge (widened sidewalks), South University Avenue (adding sidewalks), and Aurora Slough Bridge Replacement (widened sidewalks) were not mentioned on the improvement list.

Mr. Stern commented that on Page 67, the Danby/Wembley Project could be listed as completed.

Mr. Stern stated that on Page 78 he encouraged exploring the use of more visible crosswalk markings or ladder style markings to get drivers attention.

Mr. Heim asked Mr. Fox how often the Non-Motorized Plan had to be updated.

Mr. Fox stated that it was up to FAST Planning when they thought they needed to update since it was not a required plan. Mr. Fox stated that the first Non-Motorized Plan for our area was created in 2012. Mr. Fox stated that he would say that they should be updating the Plan every five to 10 years and AMATS only updated their Non-Motorized Plan every ten years.

Mr. Stern stated that on Page 88 there was a statement that said that non-motorized paths were not maintained in the winter months and thought they should be getting credit for maintaining some of those non-motorized paths.

Mr. Stern stated that Page 89 contained no mention of UAF or the FNSB for winter maintenance on trails and thought they should be getting credit for maintaining some of those paths and sidewalks.

Mr. Fox agreed and thought that they should be added.

Mr. Stern stated that on Page 88 they should discuss large private commercial retail development where the developer would construct the roads and should require a minimum 4-ft. width for shoulders or sidewalks and winter maintenance of those pedestrian routes.

Mr. Fox stated that Mr. Stern's comment was a good comment.

Mr. Belz stated that current facility on the south side of Geist was extremely dangerous and if we did not include some sort of proposed modification or at least put it on the radar we were doing ourselves a disservice.

Mr. Fox and Ms. Gardino agreed.

Mr. Belz stated that for Fairbanks Cushman Street Bridge he thought that should be Cushman Street Bridge.

Mr. Fox stated that they needed to update that project name and description.

Mr. Belz asked for clarification as to whether bikes were allowed on the Mitchell as shown on Figure 6.

Mr. Fox stated that he would have to look that up and there was a map showing where bikes and peds were allowed but did not think that Mitchell made that list. Mr. Fox stated cited an email that stated that the Mitchell Expressway was not prohibited for bicycles but was prohibited for pedestrians.

Mr. Ooms stated that it was an oversight that could be fixed.

Mr. Belz stated that he did not think that in the current definition, shoulders were not considered a bike or pedestrian facility and shoulders served several purposes and one of them was bike and pedestrian use. Mr. Belz stated that in general, he really liked the document. Mr. Belz stated that he had trouble with the page numbers in the document or if the end product was the combined version and would recommend an outline with hyperlinks to places in the document to make it more navigable. Mr. Belz stated that he liked that on Page 71 they said that sidewalks were not suitable for bikes. Mr. Belz stated that for Geist Road, the current facility on the south side of the road, not the new one from Fairbanks Street to the Geist Interchange was extremely dangerous and if they did not include some type of proposed modification, they were doing themselves a disservice. Mr. Belz stated that it needed to be in there somewhere because if something happened it would not be on anybody's radar. Mr. Belz stated that otherwise he really liked the document.

Mr. Stern stated that Wein should be spelled Wien. Mr. Stern stated that he thought that in the winter maintenance portion of the document it would help the public understand what BPAC did if it was mentioned that part of BPAC's goal was encouraging winter

maintenance and BPAC was instrumental in getting grant money for some of the improvements for winter maintenance such as securing funding for an additional articulated tractor for DOT and what impact that would have on maintenance efforts. Mr. Stern stated that there were metrics for snow removal for winter maintenance and snow removal on roads and thought that should be encouraged on sidewalks and paths as well.

Mr. Richardson commented that it was brought up about snow removal during the winter and it really needed to be looked at. Mr. Richardson stated he thought that having three entities doing it was counterproductive and allowed some sidewalks to be cleared and other sidewalks were not cleared. Mr. Richardson stated that the City's approach to sidewalks clearing was secondary to any street snow removal. Mr. Richardson stated that he rode in the downtown area consistently and he would get so far and then could not go any further because it was not plowed. Mr. Richardson stated that the map thing was a good idea but somehow, they needed to get these entities together. Mr. Richardson stated that he thought a separate entity should be doing the snow removal and of course, it had to be coordinated with street snow removal, but they could not wait as some of the sidewalks around town were not cleared of the 12-14 inches of snow they had in the beginning November until the end of December.

Mr. Fox explained that also related to Mr. Stern's comments about developing snow removal metrics for paths and sidewalks for those facilities around town, he thought what Mr. Richardson mentioned about trying to outsource some of the winter maintenance activities and creating metrics for paths and sidewalks in our network would logically fit very well into the update to the Seasonal Mobility Task Force Report that was produced back in 2010. Mr. Fox stated that they would be firing that Task Force back up to look at a Plan update so both of those things could be added to the scope of that update to that report. Mr. Fox stated that he also had a conversation with Ryan Anderson, who is the DOT Northern Region Director, about his interest, as far as updating that report went, about looking at the transportation network and having the BPAC assign priorities to the network similar to the way DOT prioritized the roads for winter maintenance in the network. Mr. Fox stated that he thought Mr. Anderson would like to see the BPAC weigh in on what should be the priority routes for paths and sidewalk maintenance throughout town. Mr. Fox stated that Ms. Lunsford, with her GIS skills, could help them create a map for that because he thought it would look very different from the road priorities map and they could develop metrics to go along with it. Mr. Fox stated that under a separate effort, throughout the spring and summer he thought they could continue those conversations with the maintenance folks at the table.

Mr. Stern stated that he was confused about the map on Page 104 and the description for MT28, was just an idea and not posed as a project as far as realigning Phillips Field Road. Mr. Stern stated that he was not understanding the part of the path alongside the bridge and if the intention was to put a pathway over a portion or just making sure that when the roadway was realigned and had a sidewalk associated with it.

Mr. Fox stated that it was just an idea at this time. Mr. Fox stated that he had talked to Ryan Anderson about it as well, and there was some interest in moving Phillips Field Road to the bank of the river away from its current location. Mr. Fox stated that if the road was

moved, a sidewalk, shoulder, or separated path or something like that could be added alongside that. Mr. Fox stated that it would get Flowline's yard into the Rail area as opposed to being across the street from the Rail area. Mr. Fox stated that if that did not get built, then the Chena Riverwalk Project, as a future phase of the project, did have interest in putting a riverwalk along the river through there if the road stayed in the same location.

Mr. Stern asked if it would continue alongside where those houses were currently being built or if it would go up Chena Landings Loop Road and follow the new roadway.

Mr. Fox stated that for that specific location, it would follow Chena Landings Loop Road and would not be along the river where the new houses were. Mr. Fox stated that there was a platted trail easement so there was right-of-way reserved for putting a path along the east side of Chena Landings Loop Road so that path should probably be redrawn for that section.

Mr. Richardson asked about the path that went from Chena Landings Road over to the motel and crosses the river that was not currently maintained and had not had snow removal this winter.

Mr. Fox stated that the Railroad owned that property and the path had been nominated to FAST Planning to get Federal funds to get that path resurfaced and having pedestrian lighting to go along with it. Mr. Fox stated that it was on Railroad property so they would be going to them first to ask them to maintain it and if they did not agree to maintain it, we would be looking to the Fairbanks North Star Borough to maintain it.

Motion: To add "Geist Road Sidewalk Safety Improvements" to the Draft Non-Motorized Plan as a new high priority, low cost (\$0.5 million) project to improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists by reducing conflicts with motor vehicles on the non-motorized path on the south side of Geist Road. (Belz/Stern).

Discussion: Mr. Heim stated that he thought it was a good idea because that path was bad but did not know how realistic it would be due to the cost to mitigate the drainage problems in that area which would make it costly.

Mr. Stern commented that adding a painted crossing in the Geist area might help make vehicles aware that there were pedestrians in the area.

Mr. Belz stated that he thought just moving the stop signs to the side nearest to the businesses where the vehicles would stop a little sooner before turning into traffic.

Mr. Belz stated that he thought there were some low costs things they could try to start with.

Mr. Ooms stated that it would be helpful to have a priority associated with it as well as a name and description for that project.

Mr. Belz stated that he would say either medium or high priority due to the history of crashes and incidents of injuries on that entire stretch of road Mr. Belz stated that in terms of a project title, probably the intent would be to "improve safety by reducing motor vehicle and non-motorized conflicts on the path on the south side of Geist Road". Mr. Belz stated that it was broad, but it got to the point because the issue with all those crossings was that vehicles were not really looking for bikes or pedestrians.

Mr. Heim suggested the project be called "Geist Road Sidewalk/Safety Improvements".

Mr. Heim asked what the priority was of the project that was already listed for Geist Road.

Mr. Ooms stated that it was MP-14 and was to install a new path.

Mr. Belz stated that it was listed in the medium range projects and if they were looking at it from a safety standpoint, it should be high priority.

Mr. Heim stated that "high priority, low cost" would be good.

Mr. Belz stated that his hope was that Geist Road would be rebuilt eventually or expanded with additional lanes, but for the near term if they did some safety enhancements on it that would be low cost.

Mr. Fox stated that this would be a new high priority project, estimated \$0.5M and his recommendation would be not to combine it with the current medium range project because the construction of the path on the north side was a medium priority that would be done under a separate larger project.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

Motion: To move the "College Road Complete Street" Project from medium to high priority in the Draft Non-Motorized Plan. (Belz/Heim).

Discussion: Mr. Heim stated that he thought it was a good idea.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

Motion: To recommend to the Technical Committee and Policy Board to release the Draft Non-Motorized Plan for a 30-day public comment period with minor revisions provided at today's Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting. (Belz/Richardson).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

6. Other Issues

No other issues.

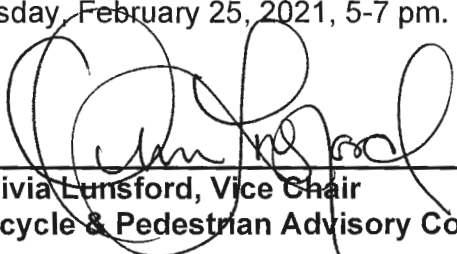
7. Committee Member Comments

- Mr. Heim, Mr. Belz, Mr. Richardson, and the rest of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee members present thanked Mr. Ooms.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn. (Heim/Belz). The meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m. The next BPAC meeting is Thursday, February 25, 2021, 5-7 pm.

Approved: _____


Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Date: 02/25/21