



**Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Web Conference
Meeting Minutes**

April 29, 2021 • 5:00-7:00 p.m.

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

By telephone at: 1 (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 843 4688 1510

1. Call to Order

Dr. Nathan Belz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

*Nathan Belz

*Jesse Coleman

*Donna Gardino (absent)

*Carl Heim

*Jim Richardson

*Peter Stern

*John Stowman

*Larry Zervos

**Jackson Fox

**Olivia Lunsford (absent)

**Deborah Todd

Don Galligan

Mike Spindler

Jeff Jacobson

JJ Cotter

Janet Norris

Andrew Ooms

**BPAC Representative*

***FAST Planning Staff*

3. Approval of the April 29, 2021 Agenda

Motion: To approve the April 29, 2021 Agenda. (Richardson/Stowman).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the March 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the March 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes as presented. (Zervos/Stern).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Staff /Working Group/Chair Reports

Mr. Fox provided the following updates:

- The Bike/Pedestrian Advisory Committee Work Group that is working on mapping priority routes for winter maintenance of non-motorized facilities met on April 19, 2021 and will meet again on May 21, 2021.
- The Policy Board approved sending of the letter that was drafted to the Alaska Railroad for the Chena Riverwalk Project.
- The Policy Board authorized Mr. Fox to apply for the Bloomberg Grant Opportunity for the Asphalt Art Initiative Project.

6. Public Comment Period

Mike Spindler commented that he would like to have the access link to the meeting packet documents that were shown on the screen.

Janet Norris commented that she was an adult bicycle rider in Fairbanks for more than 20 years and asked if anyone had ever raised the issue of traffic calming in Fairbanks to make it better for cyclists and pedestrians such as lowering the speed limit or anything like that.

Mr. Fox explained that throughout City limits in Fairbanks, speed humps and speed radar signs had been installed in various subdivisions around town, as well as speed tables and intersection chokers where it took the sidewalk curb corners of the intersection and protruded it out into that intersection, so it narrowed the traveled lane so when people approached those intersections, they slowed down. Mr. Fox explained that those were put in Bjerremark Subdivision, Hamilton Acres, and the Graehl Subdivision as well as on Lathrop Street and Aurora Drive. Mr. Fox explained that they were aimed at slowing vehicles and installed with the mindset that it improved safety by slowing down motorists in that area and they could seek funding through FAST Planning to install those. They had done those in a variety of subdivisions over the years if they obtained enough signatures and the Aurora Subdivision started a petition for that but had yet to meet their threshold of signatures.

Ms. Norris asked what the policy was to install bike lanes in Fairbanks.

Mr. Fox explained that they had a bike lane network was identified in the Non-Motorized Plan included in the meeting packet and if the Plan were adopted it would be up to the City of Fairbanks to consider implementing the project with funding from FAST Planning and would have to pay the match funding and sign a Maintenance Agreement.

7. Old Business

a. Non-Motorized Plan Update (Action)

Mr. Fox explained that the meeting packet contained the revised Non-Motorized Plan and the BPAC could make a recommendation to the Technical Committee and Policy Board to approve adoption of the Plan. Mr. Fox explained that the packet contained all the public comments that were received and their responses, and revisions to the Plan were made based on those comments. Mr. Fox stated that the project that was most commented on was the City of Fairbanks Bike Lane Signing and Striping Project.

Public Comment Period: No public comment.

Motion: To recommend to the Policy Board to approve the Non-Motorized Plan as presented. (Stern/Stowman).

Discussion: Mr. Zervos commented that he read it again and either he was getting more used to the language or it did not bother him as much as before. Mr. Zervos stated that he thought it was not something that people were going to pick up and read it. Mr. Zervos stated that he thought it was too long, repetitious, and boring. Mr. Zervos stated that it did to make sense to him, but it was overly technical and not easy for a person to pick up and read. Mr. Zervos stated that all those things were off putting the target and that was the public. Mr. Zervos stated that he would not stand in the way or change it because some of the language had already been changed and he appreciated that.

Dr. Belz stated that he looked at this document and saw it having a few different audiences and two priorities and one was where the areas were that were going to be fixed or modified and also saw it as documentation of what those projects were to make a written account of the priorities and kept the agencies accountable.

Dr. Belz stated that it was challenging to navigate and should have active links to take them from one section to another.

Mr. Zervos stated that it seemed that it was done as shelf material, but after looking at the list of completed accomplishments that had taken place since the last time the report was issued in 2012 was impressive so if we could look back in ten years and say that we accomplished something, that was well worth it.

Mr. Stern commented that he agreed with a lot of what Mr. Zervos said. Mr. Stern commented that it also made it as an introduction to how the planning worked and you had to dig into the FAST Planning TIP and go through all the various projects and try to figure out which ones were geared toward bicycle and pedestrian issues. Mr. Stern stated that it was a good exercise to bring the descriptions together and if someone was really interested in this, it was a good starting point to learn how this process worked.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

8. New Business

a. **College Road Rail Crossing-Proposed Pedestrian Crossing Improvements** **• Review of Proposed Improvements in FAST Planning's Draft Road/Rail Crossing Reduction/Realignment Plan; Request for BPAC Member Feedback**

Mr. Fox explained that in May, the Technical Committee and Policy Board would be considering release of the Draft Road/Rail Crossing Plan for 30-day public review. Mr. Fox explained that there was one alternative that directly related to pedestrian crossing improvements and that was proposed College Road Rail Crossing Pedestrian Crossing Improvement Project. Mr. Fox explained that he was curious if BPAC had any comments or thoughts on it and whether it would be something that would be worthwhile for FAST Planning to spend money on.

Mr. Stern asked what criteria was used to select this crossing as there were others that were not identified.

Mr. Fox stated that they were others identified such as University Avenue and College Road had relatively high volumes of bike and ped traffic as opposed to other locations so those were proposed to bring them up to current Railroad standards and were the only ones he was aware of.

Dr. Belz asked if there was a perceived crash or safety hazard in that location or it was just antiquated and out of date.

Mr. Fox stated that there were none that he was aware of and it was a perceived safety issue.

Mr. Heim asked if counts were done in that location.

Mr. Fox stated that he did not believe counts were done in that area. Mr. Fox explained that to bring the crossing up to Railroad standards, pedestrian gates were required at that crossing.

Mr. Heim inquired if there were any particular reason they were doing this or if it was just to bring it into conformity.

Mr. Fox explained that he believed that was correct and in order to bring it up to Railroad standards they would have to correct this crossing.

Mr. Heim stated that if he had his druthers he would not drop a million bucks on gates at that crossing because he felt that there was a better use for that funding in town for FAST Planning needs.

Mr. Stern stated that he agreed with Mr. Heim and from the standpoint of College Road he thought the stanchions for the Railroad were outside the sidewalk area and thought that it was an issue they needed to follow up on to make sure that they did not have to be out a million dollars.

Mr. Heim stated that College Road path was outside of the big concrete blob and University Avenue had a gate that went down and blocked the road. Mr. Heim stated that they were going to rebuild that in the future so a million bucks would not be good unless the Railroad was going to pay half of it.

Dr. Belz stated that Mr. Heim was correct, that the gates blocked the sidewalk on University Avenue. Dr. Belz stated that if somewhere along the line the projects had to be improved and brought up to current standards they could add it then but, particularly at the College Road crossing, he did not feel that was necessary.

Mr. Richardson stated that the trains moved very slow and were quite obvious before they got into the crosswalk area.

Mr. Heim stated that unless it were an issue of compliance for DOT or the Railroad then it would necessitate it, and he would check on that.

Dr. Belz asked Mr. Fox if they could have DOT provide a presentation about this project.

Mr. Fox stated that the Technical Committee would release the document for 30-day public comment and thought it was appropriate for the BPAC to make recommendations on whether it should stay in the Plan or be removed at the May meeting.

b. Annual Intersection Bike and Pedestrian Count

Mr. Fox explained that it was almost May and they needed to start planning and getting the word out for project volunteers. Mr. Fox stated that the dates he proposed were from May 25-27 from 4:30-6:30 pm. Mr. Fox stated that FAST Planning had the forms and were open to feedback on how to make them easier for people to use. Mr. Fox stated that the list of intersections that were counted was included in the packet for those interested in signing up. Mr. Fox stated that a training session was done prior to the counts and people were welcome to come in and get trained on how to do them.

9. Other Issues

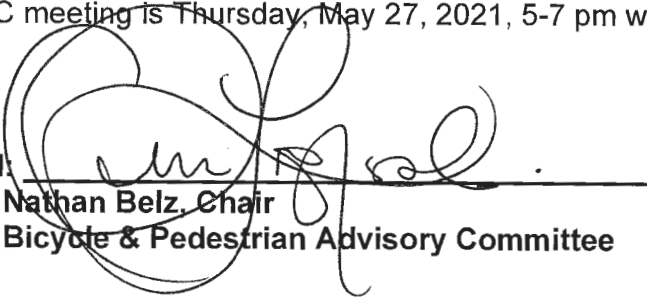
No other issues.

10. Committee Member Comments

- Mr. Zervos commented that he wanted to volunteer for Cushman and Airport for the bike/pedestrian counts.
- Mr. Richardson commented that he wondered if they had something he could look at for when there were enough peds or bikes that they had to be separated. He was concerned that if bicycling got more popular if they had to get off the sidewalks and was concerned about how they would interact and how it affected our planning.
- Mr. Fox explained that the separation of bikes/peds/vehicles was very context sensitive based on the classification of the roadway and vehicle speed, so it was very project specific. Mr. Fox explained that there were recommendations from AASHTO on bike/ped facilities based on different context and he thought that was one of the better resources for answering some of those questions. Mr. Fox explained that maintenance considerations were also offered up in that decision-making process.
- Ms. Coleman commented that she would be happy to take the lead on that and asked if it had to be on the next agenda.
- Mr. Heim commented that he was looking at the report and it talked about the areas in Fairbanks that had Level 4 and the areas where people would ride down that road and there were times that bikes, kids, and people walking were on there. Mr. Heim commented that count more and pay attention and make sure that our recommendations got into these reports.
- Mr. Stern stated that the College Road sidewalks had been swept of gravel but did not see any evidence that it had been swept on Johansen. There is a path closed sign blocking the path on Peger Road and what the intention was for that and whether a pedestrian was supposed to reverse their direction.
- Mr. Heim asked if it was flooded.
- Dr. Belz commented that it was flooded, and he did not know what the protocol was there, and DOT had posted about it.
- Mr. Heim stated that people had to go all the way up to the Peger Road intersection and cross there.
- Mr. Stowman commented that if they had roads like College Road with three lanes and a shoulder and that there was an alternative to the road closure on Peger and that was to throw the bike over your shoulder and cross it like that.
- Mr. Zervos commented that he had gone under that Peger Road overpass and there had been signs there that it was flooded and not to go that way so at least they were making the effort to sign it.
- Mr. Belz stated that there was a huge ice jam at University Avenue Bridge.
- Mr. Zervos asked if you could cross University Avenue Bridge as a pedestrian or cyclist.
- Mr. Heim said yes, there is a temporary pedestrian bridge at the University Avenue Bridge and commented that it was a serious pedestrian route from UAF.

11. **Adjournment**
Motion to adjourn. (Richardson/Heim). The meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m. The next BPAC meeting is Thursday, May 27, 2021, 5-7 pm with in-person option.

Approved: _____



Nathan Belz, Chair
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Date: 05/27/21