



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

July 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: 858 7863 7232

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, Chair

*Jesse Coleman (absent)

*Carl Heim

*Travis Naibert (absent)

*Jim Richardson

*Peter Stern

*John Stowman

*Larry Zervos

**Jackson Fox

**Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair (absent)

**Deborah Todd (absent)

Don Galligan

Robyne – KUAC

***BPAC Representative**

****FAST Planning Staff**

3. Approval of the July 29, 2021 Agenda

Motion: To approve the July 29, 2021 Agenda as presented. (Stowman/Stern).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the June 24, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the June 24, 2021 Meeting Minutes. (Richardson/Stern).

Discussion: Mr. Zervos stated there was a typo on Page 3 of the minutes. Mr. Fox stated he would make the correction.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Staff /Working Group/Chair Reports

Mr. Fox provided the following updates:

- A response letter was received from the Alaska Railroad regarding the request for a long-term land lease to install a new path along the north bank of the Chena

River from the footbridge near Pioneer Park going west to Chena Landings Loop Road. Mr. Fox explained that there were two main issues that would have to be resolved before the agreement was granted. The first issue was that the Railroad wanted the City of Fairbanks or the Borough to sign a maintenance agreement to take care of that path, and the second issue was that the Railroad's preferred payment would be a lump sum amount based on the fair market value of the long-term lease. A copy of the Railroad's letter was sent to both Mayor Ward and Mayor Matherly.

- The FAST Improvement Program Project priorities for construction in 2022 chosen by the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee were recommended by the Technical Committee for approval and by the Policy Board with one change. The change recommended the South Cushman Extension Project which added a new gravel surface from Northland Wood to the Levee and was felt to be a higher priority than the 2nd Dog Park Access Road so one was moved up and one was moved down. The Policy Board agreed with that motion and Mayor Ward spoke with Parks and Recreation staff and concluded that he was also in support of the South Cushman Extension over the 2nd Avenue Dog Park Access Road. The outcome of the proposal that was accepted included the main priorities of: Dunbar Avenue, North Pole Driveway Aprons, Phillips Field Road from University Avenue to the cul de sac, and the South Cushman Extension with the worst section of the Mitchell Expressway Path, the 2nd Avenue Dog Park Access Road, and Pratt Avenue listed as contingency projects should funds become available.

6. Public Comment Period

Don Galligan, Fairbanks North Star Borough Community Planning, commented that the Borough was responsible for Local Planning Authority Approval which meant that DOT brought projects it had that were within the Borough before the Borough Planning Commission and Borough Assembly for review and approval depending on the scope and scale of the project. Mr. Galligan stated that he had received a request for Local Planning Authority Approval from DOT&PF for the Richardson Highway Milepost 359 Railroad Grade Separated Facility which raised the highway over the railroad crossing on the Richardson and separated the grade so there was no possibility of conflicts with trains. Mr. Galligan commented that he read that they were also planning to construct a mile of the pathway that went between the north end of Badger Road and the Steese Highway. Mr. Galligan explained that as he read the Design Study Report he found something that he thought might be problematic. Mr. Galligan read the portion of the text in the Design Study Report (DSR) which stated, *"The proposed multi-use pathway will add 0.65 lane miles of maintenance responsibility. DOT&PF Maintenance & Operations does not maintain separated pathways in the winter and does not plan on maintaining the proposed multi-use pathway for this project in the winter either."*

Mr. Galligan explained that he responded by email as follows: *"Perhaps that would be the case if it were put in without connections, but it was my understanding that once this project was completed either simultaneously or perhaps the following year, the pathway from Badger to Steese was going to be constructed. At that time there would need to be a maintenance authority for the improvement. For this to say that Maintenance and Operations does not maintain separated pathways is incorrect. As a matter of fact, within the urban area, FAST Planning is putting together winter maintenance priorities for DOT and other agencies responsible for maintenance to help prioritize where they*

should clear first, second, etc. Dan Schacher is on the Winter Maintenance Forum that has requested these priorities for snow removal. I've not known DOT to propose a new facility and then turn around and say they won't maintain it. That seems counterintuitive from the experiences I've had with DOT Maintenance. If you could follow up and let me know if that was an error or perhaps overstated that would be great."

Mr. Galligan stated that the response he received from DOT was as follows: *"Don, the statement in the DSR is correct. Currently due to budget constraints, Maintenance & Operations has indicated that they currently do not maintain other separated paths in the winter (Badger Road was given as an example) and therefore, they do not plan on maintaining this one in the winter as well. The statement in the DSR does not state or imply that we do not maintain separated pathways. It states that similar to other separated pathways there will be limited maintenance for this pathway. I hope this clarifies the statement."*

Mr. Galligan commented that this was the problem in a nutshell. Mr. Galligan commented that there was this important connection that was being made and DOT was saying that they were not going to maintain it. Mr. Galligan stated that a connection between Fairbanks and North Pole was very important. Mr. Galligan stated that he did not know if they wanted to put together a resolution or something about this, but thought it was an important issue to bring to their attention and get their attention.

Mr. Stern asked what the implications were if this were left in the DSR and if that meant that in the future they did not intend to maintain separated paths.

Mr. Galligan stated that currently DOT did not plan to eliminate this language and he thought that he thought it was irresponsible to build facilities and then say that they were not going to maintain them.

Mr. Galligan stated that he thought that they needed to have a public hearing about this because he thought that the Planning Commission was going to have an issue with this idea that if they built it but said they were not going to maintain it.

Mr. Heim stated that he thought that was in reference to that 0.6 miles and was pretty sure that this was just misstated in the Design Study Report and asked when and who had signed it.

Mr. Galligan stated that it was signed in March of 2021 by James McCurtain.

Mr. Heim stated that was probably just a mistake. Mr. Heim stated that the way he understood it was that they were just saying that they were not going to maintain it until the Richardson Highway Bike Path came along. Mr. Heim recommended that Mr. Galligan ask them to clarify the statement because they maintained all the stuff they built.

Mr. Galligan stated that his email to Colleen Ackiss stated that this might be the case now but once that connection was made that statement in the DSR was incorrect, but Ms. Ackiss stated that the statement was correct, and they did not plan on maintaining this one in the winter as well.

Mr. Heim stated that it sounded to him like someone might have misspoken, but maybe not.

Mr. Galligan stated that he would hate to have a miscommunication result in a misunderstanding and asked Mr. Heim if he had any advice on how to proceed.

Mr. Heim stated that he would sort it out and get back with him. Mr. Heim stated that they could modify the DSR if that was the case.

Dr. Belz stated that Mr. Galligan made a good point in that they had gone through the exercise of prioritizing the facilities that they wanted to be maintained and wondered if the BPAC should rank this project in the prioritization and if it ranked high, his expectation would be that the entity responsible for maintaining it would do so.

Mr. Heim stated that this was CH2M Hill and was probably just an oversight.

7. Old Business

a. Mapping of Priority Routes for Non-Motorized Facilities (Action Item)

- *Review of online map of prioritized routes and latest adjustments by Committee work group, and recommendation to Seasonal Mobility Task Force for incorporation into Mobility Recommendations Report Update*
- *View map at <https://arcg.is/1T4eXe0>*

Mr. Fox explained that the meeting packet included information that the BPAC had already seen previously showing the map with priority routes for winter maintenance of non-motorized facilities. Mr. Fox stated that the hope was to have a motion from the BPAC to recommend moving the map forward to the Seasonal Mobility Task Force for their approval.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To forward the Draft Priority Route Map [for winter maintenance of non-motorized facilities] to the Seasonal Mobility Task Force for their consideration. (Zervos/Stern).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

b. Cycling Education – Smart Cycling Courses/FAST PSA Video

Mr. Fox explained that Ms. Coleman was absent from the meeting so he thought they should postpone the item to the August meeting.

Motion: To postpone “Cycling Education” to the August Agenda. (Richardson/Heim).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

8. New Business

a. Mobility Recommendations Report Update

- *Review of updates to Report for winter maintenance performance guidelines and implementation plan by Seasonal Mobility Task Force*

Mr. Fox explained that based at the June meeting of the Seasonal Mobility Task Force a number of revisions were made to the Mobility Recommendations Report and they wanted to list the accomplishments that were made as well as new recommendations for the future which were included in the meeting packet.

Mr. Fox stated that the recommendations would be looked at further at the August meeting.

b. Annual Bicycle & Pedestrian Count Program

- *Review of 2011-2021 data and trends*

Mr. Fox explained that the meeting packet included the data summary for the bike/pedestrian counts for bicyclists who went through intersections during a two-hour time frame from 4-6 p.m. on one day in May from 2011-2021. Mr. Fox stated that the gray areas indicated intersections that were not counted in a particular year. Mr. Fox explained that graphs were created with the data for each individual intersection. Mr. Fox stated that a common theme in 2020 was the increase due to COVID which a spike in the numbers at the different intersections.

c. Nominations to FAST Improvement Program (Action Item)

- ***Review and discussion of surface upgrades to Mitchell/Parks, Geist & Farmers Loop paths***

Mr. Fox introduced Peter Stern of BPAC to present and explain and show photos of the paths he thought should be considered for inclusion in the FAST Improvement Program.

Mr. Zervos asked if the other projects shown in the photographs were in competition with the two projects that were being nominated.

Mr. Stern stated that he just took pictures of the various projects to show the damage on some of them.

Mr. Galligan thanked Mr. Stern for taking the path photos and thought it was a great start for an inventory and appreciated all Mr. Stern's work on it.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To nominate the "Geist Path South Side [Fairbanks Street to Parks Highway]" and "Farmers Loop Path [Taku Drive to Ballaine Road]" to the Fast Improvement Program as new contingency projects. (Stern/Zervos).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

d. July 18th Accident on Johansen Expressway Path

- ***Collision between motorbike and bicyclists; consideration of drafting a letter to local law enforcement agencies***

Mr. Fox explained that emails included in the packet were sent by Donna Gardino regarding the accident that resulted in minor injuries, but no citations were issued by law enforcement to any of the parties involved. Mr. Fox stated that they added it to the agenda in case the BPAC wanted to take action or possibly draft a letter to law enforcement.

Dr. Belz explained that he thought this incident was clearly a ticketable offense, the bike was significantly damaged and thought it was a great opportunity for the BPAC to weigh in and share their concerns for the lack of accountability in this incident.

Mr. Zervos stated that they knew that the Troopers would ticket this sort of thing, but he wasn't comfortable without having firsthand information.

Mr. Stern stated that one of the things that they needed to determine was whether it was a roadway and whether law enforcement had the ability to write a ticket since there was nothing in Administrative Code that placed a fine on it and if the motorbike was subject to licensing and registration which depended on the type of road it was on.

Mr. Heim stated that it was on the bike path.

Mr. Zervos stated that then it was a ticketable offense and thought it was appropriate to write letter about it but did not know what entity of law enforcement was responsible for it.

Mr. Heim stated that it was on Facebook and happened on July 18th.

Mr. Zervos stated that they could ask the Troopers if there was an incident report on it.

Dr. Belz stated that he thought they should ask if there was an incident report from the Troopers on it before they drafted a letter about it.

Mr. Richardson stated that to his thinking it was inside the City limits.

Mr. Heim stated that the limits kind of changed on College Road.

Dr. Belz asked Mr. Fox if he could make a request of the Troopers for a report.

Mr. Fox stated that he would reach out to both the City Police and State Troopers Public Information Officers to find out if it was a City officer or a State Trooper.

Dr. Belz stated that they should ask whether it was an enforceable offense or not and if it was a ticketable offense, it set a dangerous precedent if it was not ticketed.

Mr. Heim stated that he might have been cited but the damage to the bike was a civil matter.

Mr. Zervos agreed with Mr. Heim.

Dr. Belz stated that they would wait until Mr. Fox received a response from law enforcement and could put it on the August agenda.

9. Other Issues

Mr. Heim explained to Mr. Galligan that he contacted Sarah Schacher of DOT and she confirmed that the language in the DSR was correct, and they were not going to maintain that path in the wintertime unless they got budget increments for it so that statement was probably going to stand.

Mr. Stern stated that he would have another nomination to make at the next meeting so that could be an agenda item. Mr. Stern asked if they should suggest having BPAC make a recommendation about having summer maintenance priorities looked at and prioritized by the Seasonal Mobility Task Force.

Mr. Fox stated that he would bring that up at the next Seasonal Mobility Task Force Meeting and include it on the next agenda. Mr. Fox asked that for clarification that they were talking about sweeping, brush clearing, pothole maintenance and things of that nature when they talked about summer maintenance.

10. Committee Member Comments

- Mr. Richardson commented that he wasn't sure if the BPAC was the correct entity to pursue it, but the Borough had a requirement that any corner property not have any obstruction between 2.5 feet and 8 ft. above the ground (if you have a hedge) on any corner of the property. Mr. Richardson stated that he had been cited for this because his house had two corners and thought it was excessive and wondered if anyone had any comment on it since he wanted to pursue it himself.
- Dr. Belz stated that he thought there were line of sight requirements at some intersections.
- Dr. Belz commented that there was a detour sign placed directly in the shoulder on Peger Road just before Egan Avenue and thought that it was an interesting

dichotomy for when they were designing widened shoulders. Dr. Belz stated that after he posted about it, the DOT went out and moved the sign and he wanted to say for the record that he appreciated DOT for taking care of that problem.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn. (Stern/Richardson). The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m. The next BPAC meeting is Thursday, August 26, 2021, 5-7 p.m.

Approved: 

Nathan Belz, Chair
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Date: 07.02.2021