



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2022 • 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

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

By telephone at: 1 (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 878-4882-5170

1. Call to Order

Dr. Nathan Belz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

*Nathan Belz, Chair

*Susan Bissell (absent)

*Jesse Coleman (absent)

*Carl Heim

*Travis Naibert

*Jim Richardson

*Peter Stern

*Larry Zervos

**Jackson Fox

**Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair

**Deborah Todd

Don Galligan

Stan Justice

Kristen Kelly

Greg Egan

Tupper Becker

***BPAC Representative**

****FAST Planning Staff**

3. Approval of the January 27, 2022 Agenda

Motion: To approve the January 27, 2022 Agenda. (Stern/Richardson).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the October 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To postpone approval of the October 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes to the February 24, 2022 meeting. (Stern/Zervos).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Approval of the November 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To postpone approval of the November 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes to the February 24, 2022 meeting. (Naibert/Zervos).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

6. Staff /Working Group/Chair Reports

Mr. Fox provided the following updates:

- Ms. Lunsford completed updates to the 2022 Bikeways Map and the map was sent to the printer. The maps will be distributed when they are received.
- Two new committee members were added to the Technical Committee: RJ Stump of the Fairbanks International Airport and Lt. Mike Roberts of the Alaska State Troopers. Susan Bissell was also added to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee to replace John Stowman who termed out.
- The Project Enhancement Committee recommended nomination of the Downtown Parking Garage Wayfinding Signs as a new project for the FAST Improvement Program. The funding for this project will be postponed until the outcome is known for the City's proposed sale of the parking garage.

7. **Public Comment Period: Stan Justice** provided recent pictures of the gray electrical box that was moved from the front to the back side of Skarland Trail on Yankovich Road. Mr. Justice showed a picture where snow was pushed over the trail, and he raked it smooth. Mr. Justice commented that at the intersection of Fairway Drive and Yankovich Road, the path was completely covered by the snowplow. Mr. Justice showed another area where two streetlights were notched out by plows, but people still had access to the path. Mr. Justice stated that there were a few driveways along the path that had been notched out to provide access to Ballaine Road which made more berms to deal with. Mr. Justice showed a picture of the second place they crossed at Fairway Drive where the old yield sign and "no motor vehicles" sign was located. Mr. Justice commented that he was tired of the DOT pushing snow on the paths instead of taking it to the snow dump and it seemed like they could do better.

Mr. Zervos asked Mr. Justice who used the path.

Mr. Justice stated that the path had a lot of traffic and people used the path to commute to UAF.

8. Old Business

a. Prioritization of Non-Motorized Projects

- ***Work session on project scoring criteria to be used to prioritize short-term project lists in Non-Motorized Plan and sidewalk/path nominations to FAST Planning Improvement Program***

Mr. Fox showed the list of project nominations to the FAST Improvement Program and Non-Motorized Plan that needed to be prioritized. Mr. Fox stated that scoring criteria needed to be reviewed and discussed. Mr. Fox stated that after discussion, BPAC members could identify criteria they thought was relevant and if any criteria needed to be added. A deadline of February 18, 2022 was set for the BPAC to email their criteria to Mr. Fox to compile.

b. Right Turn Lane Design Consideration at Crosswalk Locations

- ***Selection of a week for working group to meet to discuss and draft a letter presenting design options to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians***

Mr. Fox explained that a work group was formed to draft a letter presenting design options to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians at crosswalk locations, but they had not met yet. Mr. Fox will send a Doodle Poll to select a meeting date for the work group.

9. New Business

a. Election of Chair and Vice Chair (Action Item)

Mr. Fox explained that annually a Chair and Vice Chair were selected for BPAC. Mr. Fox explained that if FAST Planning staff were selected for the Chair and Vice Chair positions they would not be able to vote. If BPAC members are elected they were not allowed to make motions unless they passed the gavel but were allowed to vote on motions.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Motion: To nominate Nathan Belz as Chair and Olivia Lunsford as Vice Chair. (Richardson).

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

b. Road Shoulders vs Dedicated Bike Lanes, Paths, & Other Cycling Facilities

Mr. Fox reminded everyone about an email discussion regarding the 4-ft. shoulders on the Old Steese Highway Reconstruction Project that was currently in design. Mr. Fox explained that the discussion was about whether the shoulders should be considered bicycle facilities.

Mr. Naibert commented that he did not see how a shoulder in an urban part of town was a safe or inviting place to put a bicyclist. Mr. Naibert commented that as an experienced bicyclist, he could not imagine an inexperienced bike rider using the shoulder on the Old Steese Highway.

Mr. Stern stated that he was not sure the lane widths in some areas allowed for dedicated bike lanes.

Mr. Richardson commented that it was a complicated issue.

Mr. Heim explained that the problem on the Old Steese was if you put an 8 ft. sidewalk there, it was tough to find a place to put snow, and a 10-ft. shoulder would require expensive right-of-way acquisition. Mr. Heim added that similar to College Road, if there was no place to put the snow, it ended up on the sidewalks.

Dr. Belz commented that he had no problem with them saying that a shoulder could be used for bikes, but he did not think they should have it as a dedicated as a bike path.

Mr. Becker commented that some of the ground in North Pole was really bad and some of the past bike paths were not built for longevity, so he hoped the path they put on the Old Steese was not put in without this consideration.

Mr. Naibert wondered why they needed to have a symmetrical roadbed, and whether they could have a bike path on one side and a smaller walking path on the other side. Mr. Naibert commented that they might want to have it as an action item at the next meeting.

Dr. Belz recommended it be on the next Agenda as Old Business. Dr. Belz added that the BPAC could then form a subcommittee to draft alternative design options for the Old Steese and decide whether they wanted to make it an action item.

Mr. Fox explained that the project was slated for construction in 2023 and did not know if DOT would be open to new input on the project since they already held numerous public meetings about it.

Mr. Heim explained there were 4-ft. shoulders, 7-ft. sidewalk with curb and gutter on the project. Mr. Heim noted that the project was in the final design phase so it would be difficult to decide which side of the road they would make wider.

Dr. Belz commented that he did not think novice cyclists would use that shoulder.

Mr. Galligan commented that the project had already received Local Planning Authority approval from the Borough and if a different configuration was approved, it would have to go back to the Borough for approval.

Mr. Naibert asked Mr. Heim what the point of the open houses and public comment were if the project had already received approval.

Mr. Heim explained that he did not know, but he didn't think that novice cyclists were going to use the sidewalk in that area because there were other routes to accommodate them.

Mr. Becker commented in the chat box as follows: "Why do we build roads for all levels of driver but our infrastructure for pedestrians has a skill level attached?"

Dr. Belz asked if this item should be left on the Agenda as Old Business.

c. Winter Maintenance of Sidewalks/Paths

Mr. Fox proposed postponing Agenda Item 9.d. to the next meeting to allow BPAC to focus on the winter maintenance agenda item.

Mr. Stern asked Mr. Fox if a joint meeting with the Seasonal Mobility Task Force and the BPAC would be beneficial.

Mr. Fox explained that he could set up the meeting and asked whether March or the last two weeks of February was acceptable. Mr. Fox explained that he would send out a Doodle Poll.

Mr. Richardson commented that he thought they should consider having a separate group take over sidewalk maintenance that was currently done by the three entities.

Dr. Belz commented that he knew the idea had been brought up at previous meetings.

Mr. Fox explained that he received sample contract documents from both the City and Borough for contracting out the winter maintenance, but there were liability issues associated with that and no dedicated budget for it. Mr. Fox thought it was a good idea and wanted the BPAC to continue voicing their opinion about it.

Mr. Naibert commented that he did not ride his bike much in November and early December but rode to work on December 16 and 17 which was five or six days after a snowfall of 6-8 inches. Mr. Naibert stated that at that point, the Johansen bike path and all the College Road sidewalks were unplowed, including all the bus stops. Mr. Naibert stated that it was difficult to ride, even with his fat bike, so he ended up riding on the road. Mr. Naibert was disappointed that after they went through the priority routes that even five or six days after the snow fell, the Johansen and College bike paths were not cleared.

Motion: To extend the meeting to 7:15 p.m. (Richardson/Stern).

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

Dr. Belz commented that after the discussions they had about prioritizing the routes, they were told to go through a season to see what they were able to achieve. Dr. Belz encouraged the members to keep notes about when clearing

occurred and how long it took after snowfall events to clear those paths. Dr. Belz added that it was worth revisiting when they were discussing prioritizing winter maintenance on the non-motorized routes. Dr. Belz commented that there was so much packed snow that it blurred the differentiation between the road lanes and the sidewalks.

Mr. Richardson stated that another approach to this issue was to point out that they spent money beautifying the City during the summer for visitors, and what could they do for bicyclists and pedestrians that lived here in the winter.

Mr. Richardson commented that it needed to be a community response and that what they wanted was to be able to get around in the winter even if they were in a wheelchair or had to walk with a cane.

Mr. Stern stated that he kept a log every winter of the path conditions. Mr. Stern noted that College Road got ignored for a long period of time and it had been horrible to get to the crosswalk control Mr. Stern added that when you crossed Illinois, you had to get onto the berm to get to the pork chop. Mr. Stern explained that when you started walking down College Road, by the time you got to Aurora Drive, you ran out of sidewalk and had to be on the road. Mr. Stern explained that on University Avenue from Indiana to Wegner Street, there was a narrow right of way there where they had to put the snow right on the sidewalk and you had to walk on the roadway. Mr. Stern explained that the problem on College Road was between Aurora Drive and Old Pioneer Way where you had to walk in the roadway. Mr. Stern explained that most of the drivers gave him a fair amount of distance, but he was surprised that some drivers gave him no room at all. Mr. Stern stated that on Geist Road, because the road was completely covered with snow there was no center turn lane, so when you were trying to turn there was only a limited area to do so.

Mr. Zervos stated that this last snowfall event, in his opinion, was extreme.

Mr. Zervos explained that he was not trying to say that it excused the lack of attention that was going on, but it was an extraordinary event. Mr. Zervos thought that they really had to take those kinds of extreme events into account.

Dr. Belz thought that part of the problem was that the plowing did not initiate until the snow stopped which was not the norm in other states which made it packed and harder to clear.

d. Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) Overview

This agenda item was postponed to the February 24, 2022 meeting.

10. Other Issues

Mr. Stern urged BPAC members to read a book called "Confessions of a Recovering Engineer" that had to do with transportation planning and was available at the library.

11. Committee Member Comments

- Mr. Zervos requested the previous meeting minutes so he could review them.
- Mr. Stern offered to help Mr. Zervos with the meeting minutes.

12. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn. (Richardson/Zervos). The meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m. The next BPAC meeting is Thursday, February 24, 2022, 5-7 p.m.

Approved: 
Nathan Belz, Chair
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Date: 3/3/22