



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 28, 2022 • 5-7 p.m.

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

By telephone at: 1 (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 843-7987-1701

1. Call to Order

Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

*Nathan Belz, Chair (absent)

*Susan Bissell

**Jackson Fox

**Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair

*Travis Naibert (absent)

*Jim Richardson

*Peter Stern

*Kim Streeter

**Deborah Todd

*Larry Zervos

Don Galligan, FNSB Planning

**BPAC Representative, **FAST Planning Staff*

3. Approval of the July 28, 2022 Agenda

Motion: To approve the July 28, 2022 Agenda. (Stern/Zervos).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the June 30, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion: To approve the June 30, 2022 Meeting Minutes. (Bissell/Stern).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Staff /Working Group/Chair Reports

- On June 27, 2022, FAST Planning staff and BPAC members went on a walk/bike audit through the downtown area that was facilitated by Julius Adolfsson, DOT Statewide Bike/Ped Coordinator. They met at the Noel Wien Library on Cowles Street, walked along the south side of Airport Way to Barnette Street, then along 11th Avenue to Lacey Street, and walked back to the library on 10th Avenue. The group stopped at the pedestrian bridge over Airport Way near Lathrop High School and followed active construction project detour signs on Lacey Street that were somewhat confusing to navigate. The group saw examples of both good and poor infrastructure. There were about 15 people in attendance.
- Ms. Lunsford noted that Nathan Belz was on sabbatical and planned to return for the October meeting so she would be chairing the meetings in his absence.

- Ms. Lunsford noted that all future meetings will be hybridized so you can attend both in-person or via Zoom.

6. Public Comment Period:

No public comment.

7. Old Business

a. Prioritization of Non-Motorized Projects (Action Item)

• *Review of Prioritized Project List for Input on Potential Project Bundles and Adjustments to Rankings*

Mr. Fox explained that Page 6 of the meeting packet contained the prioritized list of non-motorized projects and the projects that were nominated to the FAST Improvement Program. Mr. Fox explained that at the last meeting it was discussed that some projects had scored lower due to lack of local government sponsors, match funding, maintenance agreements, right-of-way issues, or other aspects. Mr. Fox explained that the BPAC was tasked with reviewing the list and discussing what projects they thought should be rescored and what projects could possibly be bundled. Mr. Fox displayed the reordered priority lists he received from Mr. Stern, Mr. Zervos, and Mr. Richardson. Mr. Fox requested that Mr. Stern, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Zervos discuss their rankings with the group.

Mr. Zervos explained that his ranking was different than what was presented in the meeting packet. Mr. Zervos explained that his listing was just a chronological listing of 1-26 and when he filled out those rankings, he put them in a different order than what was listed.

Ms. Lunsford explained that Mr. Zervos could email his rankings to her or Mr. Fox or he could rank them and send them to her to put up on the screen during the meeting.

Mr. Stern explained that one of the problems he had with the whole South Fairbanks plan was that he did not see what they were trying to accomplish.

Mr. Stern explained that what he meant by that was that they had the proposed Van Horn Road path, the sidewalk that was supposed to be built down Peger Road. Mr. Stern stated that he just had a major problem with that concept, not only because of the cost of those things, but because they ranked fairly highly a chance to fix what they knew was a safety problem on Geist Road with a setback path and the fact that cars were not stopping for people that were traveling on the path and they were trying to come up with ideas for what to do there. Mr. Stern stated that the Van Horn situation would create that problem all over again with all the driveways and the side streets. Mr. Stern explained that he really thought that whole concept of what to do about South Fairbanks needs to be revisited.

Mr. Stern explained that right-of-way access was not going to be inexpensive.

Mr. Stern stated that it was going to be one of these things that was going to add a lot of lane miles to DOT's responsibilities, then DOT would have to figure out a way to keep Federal Highways happy when essentially saying that they were not going to maintain it. Mr. Stern stated that from the standpoint of a favored route, they should probably look at putting that path in the right-of-way for the Mitchell Expressway which would not have cross streets or driveways to deal with and would provide signalized intersections for crossing at Lathrop, Peger, and eventually South Cushman.

Mr. Stern explained that as far as the Chena Landings Loop Path, he understood the issue of not having anybody willing to do a Maintenance Agreement on that, but it is a path that is important, and it is in bad shape. Mr. Stern explained that as far as he is concerned, it should get a higher ranking. Mr. Stern stated that if they could not come up with a maintenance contract, then just skip over it. Leave it with a higher ranking but just don't act on it. Mr. Stern stated that if they eventually still could not come up with a Maintenance Agreement, then maybe it needs to fall off. Mr. Stern stated that he thought that the Chena Riverfront Commission has made it abundantly clear that they really feel that the north side Chena Path was going to be a project that they want to see move forward and the Chena Landings Loop Path is one that could definitely be incorporated into it, so that is why it is one he feels like that one deserves a higher ranking.

Mr. Stern explained that as far as the path on the south side of the Chena that the Fairbanks North Star Borough nominated, his problem there was that he walked that and basically the surface is in really good shape, especially compared to a lot of the other area paths that have significant surface degradation, so he is not so sure that one needs to be a high priority. Mr. Stern stated that when you get down to the Dog Park on Second Avenue there is a section of path there that is not in great shape. Mr. Stern stated that would be a small project that he thought could be bundled with another project somewhere else.

Mr. Stern stated that the pedestrian crossings at South Cushman and at Van Horn are kind of a puzzle. He understands the desire to get something there. His problem there is that there is no sidewalk between 30th and Van Horn, and there are no real sidewalk connections from South Cushman sidewalks that are north of the Mitchell Overpass. Mr. Stern stated that he guessed it is likely that the DOT project that builds the Richardson Highway bike path would terminate in that area in which case the crossings at 30th and South Cushman make a lot of sense. and there is no pedestrian access to those intersections.

Mr. Richardson explained that he missed reorganizing the order. Mr. Richardson stated he thought they were just combining projects, so he did not give any thought to ranking them.

Mr. Zervos explained that he tried to look at this from a perspective of increasing the bike facilities and connecting them. Mr. Zervos stated that he thought the Van Horn Bike Facility project was good. Mr. Zervos explained that he also looked for safety projects. Mr. Zervos explained that his first five projects were basically the kinds of projects that connected things and/or dealt with safety. Those projects were: College Road Safety, Geist Road, Van Horn/Steese, Old Steese Highway/Johansen. Mr. Zervos stated that he just went through the criteria listed in the forms and those were the projects he came up with.

Mr. Stern asked if there was a rush to get this done and whether the members could get more time to do this.

Ms. Lunsford explained that this item could be left on the agenda and there was no rush to make a decision or take action on it. Ms. Lunsford stated that there was no formal process for that, and they could just keep it on the agenda if they wanted to.

Mr. Zervos commented that he liked the idea of postponing this until the next meeting.

Mr. Stern stated that he thought the numerical ranking of the projects was more important than bundling the projects.

The general consensus from the group was to keep this item on the agenda for the August 2022 meeting.

8. New Business

a. Mobile and Permanent Bike/Pedestrian Counting Stations

Mr. Fox explained that he added this to the agenda at the request of Mr. Stern. Mr. Fox explained that FAST Planning purchased a total of six Eco-Counters that count bikes and peds in 2017 for the City of Fairbanks to install and deploy. The counters can be installed temporarily and permanently. The two permanent stations are located along the Chena Riverwalk near Pioneer Park pedestrian bridge and the other one is in the Golden Heart Plaza along the pedestrian bridge in downtown. Mr. Fox explained that one station is still fully operational and collecting data. The other station needs a battery replacement. Mr. Fox explained that Andrew Ackerman with the City of Fairbanks, has taken a position on the East Coast and will be leaving the City on August 15, 2022. Mr. Fox explained that he asked Mr. Ackerman if FAST Planning could take over and continue deploying those counters and collecting data. Mr. Fox explained that they deployed the counters in different locations in downtown Fairbanks. Mr. Fox explained that currently, one counter is still deployed on Cushman Street near 1st Avenue which can be deployed to another location. Mr. Fox explained that the meeting packet included a technical page for the counters. Mr. Fox explained that two counters, one stationed near Pioneer Park, and the other at the Chena Riverwalk populate data that is uploaded to a website in the Cloud and data can be downloaded at any time. Mr. Fox explained that two counters are still battery operated and were installed by Star Electric on behalf of the City. Mr. Fox explained that FAST Planning now has four mobile counters called Pyros. Mr. Fox explained that the mobile counter is a box that can be strapped to a streetlight or power pole, or the outside of buildings at a certain level to count and can distinguish pedestrians and bicyclists separately with pneumatic tubes that can be placed on the sidewalk. Mr. Fox stated that the units cost a total of \$5,000 each and have a number of accessories that go with them. Mr. Fox explained that the counters we have from the City of Fairbanks are in good shape and had extra batteries to go with them. The City provided the log-in information to access the data that they had collected, and he presented a graph of the data collected from Golden Heart and Pioneer Park counters.

Mr. Stern stated that he thought there was discussion at one of the meetings where they might possibly purchase additional counters. Mr. Stern stated that he thought it would be beneficial to start gathering data off of the paths like: Chena Pump, Farmers Loop, Hanson Road, Laurance Road, and the path into Chena Lakes to obtain some data on how those paths are being used since we have had trouble getting volunteers to count those areas. Mr. Stern explained that it could give us a much better handle on seasonal use of these paths. Mr. Stern stated that if Mr. Fox felt that the counters, they had were enough that was fine but if he thought they might need additional portable counters, they could purchase more of those.

Mr. Fox explained that they had four mobile counters that they could deploy to four different locations to collect data, but if there was more interest in obtaining additional permanent counters, those could be purchased and deployed possibly next summer. Mr. Fox stated that his only question was what facilities they wanted counts for and what the focus would be for the data collection. Mr. Fox stated that he thought it would be interesting to put one of the mobile counters on one of the student overpasses on either Geist Road or Airport Way during the school year to see how many students used those since they are not ADA compliant. Mr. Fox stated that it would be good to know how much use they get so it could justify the cost of additional counters.

Mr. Zervos stated that he thought this equipment was valuable and may give them a lot of data.

Mr. Fox stated that we own the counters now and could deploy them wherever the BPAC felt they were needed. Mr. Fox asked if they wanted to pursue buying more of them or if they want to set up more permanent stations at some locations such as Chena Lakes and maybe the entrance to Tanana Lakes. Mr. Fox explained that they thought the Chena Riverwalk was a good location so they could see what the use of that was. Mr. Fox explained that the BPAC could make action items in the future as to where they would like to deploy counters and whether to purchase two more permanent stations.

Mr. Stern thought one of the things that a permanent location might help with is looking at sidewalk utilization to determine how much importance that path might have for winter maintenance. Mr. Stern stated that the College Road sidewalk would be an area that he would be interested in gathering data on. Mr. Stern stated that as far as the Geist Road sidewalk paths he knew that they got plowed regularly every winter, but it could determine other paths that needed to be prioritized during the winter.

Mr. Galligan explained that one of the areas that the Borough had difficulty getting counts for was in North Pole so that might be a good area to deploy the counters to get more bike/ped data.

Mr. Fox explained that Anchorage owns several counters they deploy on the coastal trails. Mr. Fox explained that Julius Adolfsson, on behalf of DOT, has plans to obtain more of these Eco-Counters to develop a more robust data set throughout the State so they can share the data they collect.

9. Other Issues

No other issues.

10. Committee Member Comments

- Mr. Stern commented that he talked to Mr. Fox about the map database for trails, trail conditions, and maintenance and was told that Ms. Lunsford was going to be working on that in the near future. Mr. Stern commented that he wanted to make sure the BPAC got regular updates on the progress on that. Mr. Stern commented that he thought it was a really important project that would be beneficial so that they could weigh in on trail conditions during the winter. Mr. Stern commented that the other thing he wanted to mention was that when John Netardus of DOT gave the presentation with him about path conditions, one of the things that was talked about was making sure that when a road project had a separated path or sidewalk near it that was being worked on that the path should also be incorporated in that. DOT has

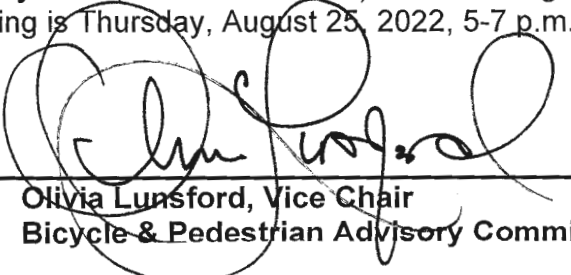
a project to resurface Chena Ridge and Chena Pump Road within the next year or two. Mr. Stern commented that he had talked to Mr. Netardus about the problems with the bike path that was resurfaced a couple years ago, specifically the area around Amherst and the longitudinal cracks that had developed there in less than a year. Mr. Stern explained that Mr. Netardus explained that the road project is not a mill and pave project, and it is a treatment of the asphalt surface which is kind of like a chip seal and he was going to look into trying to incorporate that into the project.

- Ms. Lunsford thanked Mr. Stern and explained that she would be working on that map and hoped to put something together that BPAC members would be able to use to report incidents.
- Ms. Streeter commented that if they did have bike paths and trails file or map, they could put that into a 911 system. Ms. Streeter commented that this would allow them to track incidents and accidents that happen along the bike path all year long. That way they could track the number of incidents and compare it with the usage of the bike path that was collected by the bike/ped counters.
- Ms. Lunsford explained that she could get them the bikeways shape file that they used for their bikeways map. Ms. Lunsford explained that they did not have any trail data and she wanted to make it clear to everyone on the BPAC that the data collected would not have any trails. It would just be the paved paths within the FAST Planning boundaries.
- Ms. Streeter thought it would be great to have the bike layer.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn. (Stern/Richardson). The meeting adjourned at 5:58 p.m. The next BPAC meeting is Thursday, August 25, 2022, 5-7 p.m.

Approved: _____


Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Date: _____

08/30/22