



Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 25, 2022 • 5-7 p.m.

FAST Planning Office, 100 Cushman St., Ste. 205

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

By telephone at: 1 (253) 215-8782 Meeting ID: 821-4412-0387

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 (**absent**)

Jackson Fox (absent**)

**Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair

*Travis Naibert

*Jim Richardson

*Peter Stern

*Kim Streeter

**Deborah Todd

*Larry Zervos

Stan Justice

Don Galligan, FNSB Planning

**BPAC Representative, **FAST Planning Staff*

3. Approval of the August 25, 2022 Agenda

Motion: To approve the August 25, 2022 Agenda. (Stern/Richardson).

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

4. Approval of the July 28, 2022 Meeting Minutes

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

Discussion: No discussion.

Vote on Motion: None opposed. Approved.

5. Staff /Working Group/Chair Reports

- The Policy Board approved the FFY23-24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).
- The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update is now occurring, and FAST Planning is accepting project nominations. The #1 ranked non-motorized Illustrative Project that has not been funded is the Bike Lane Signing & Striping Project. The current idea from the City of Fairbanks is to fund a small \$500,000 striping project on part of the network and then get public feedback from the public on whether or not they like it. If any of the projects highlighted on the list in Page 10 of the meeting packet are of interest or you have questions, you are more than welcome to send an email to Jackson Fox at FAST Planning.

6. Public Comment Period:

Stan Justice stated that he was there to comment again on the Ballaine issue with the separated path there that gets buried by snow. Mr. Justice commented that he started out thinking that someone could actually control the Loader Operators, but what he learned through the year was that not even Ryan Anderson can control what the Loader Operator does because he participated in it and, once again, last year he just remembered that the path was entirely buried with mountains of snow. Mr. Justice commented that it convinced him that it really needs a project. Mr. Justice commented that he knew it was probably too late to get it added to the list of projects this year that they had been ranking so well, but he wanted to nominate it for next year. Mr. Justice commented that it needed to be some kind of barrier there, and it needed to be a fence or something to slow the Loader Operator down to keep him from burying the path. Mr. Justice commented that one thought he had was to incorporate a sound wall in there in exchange for 10-15-feet from those property owners because they get a lot of impact from traffic, so maybe they would be willing to swap some land for a sound wall so we would have more room there to move the path further from the road. Mr. Justice commented that there still needs to be some kind of project to keep that path from getting damaged. Mr. Justice commented that he thought it would score well because it is a route to schools. Mr. Justice commented that we have the Safe Routes to Schools program. Mr. Justice explained that it is a safety issue because pedestrians first have to get down onto the road because there are these huge berms, so they have these steep slopes that pedestrians all have to get down onto the road to start with, and then they have to travel on the roadway, on a slippery road, and then they have to get back off to get back to the path. Mr. Justice commented that it is totally unsafe. Mr. Justice commented that it is an embarrassment to have a separated path that it just totally buried like that. Mr. Justice stated that other parts of that path have been repaired at least once. Mr. Justice stated that there was this whole project that rebuilt parts of that path not too long ago. Mr. Justice stated that some of those parts have been done twice because parts of that path kept going underwater so they have to bring in more gravel to bring it up above the water level out in Goldstream Valley. Mr. Justice stated that it gets heavy use, and it is a crucial connection between campus and town and all those neighborhoods out there with people coming to town. Mr. Justice stated that he hoped that next year they could see that project on the list.

Mr. Zervos asked Mr. Justice how long that path was that he wanted to protect.

Mr. Justice explained that it was probably not even a ¼-mile. Mr. Justice explained that it was just that section, because eventually there was lots of room, and the path was way off the road and did not get impacted. Mr. Justice explained that it was right between, what used to be the old Golf Course and he guessed that the church owned that lot now, and Fairway Avenue is a loop road that goes in there, and there is four or five property lots in there, and it is just a very short section.

Mr. Zervos asked Mr. Justice if he had discussed the concerns with the snow getting on that path with DOT and the winter maintenance people.

Mr. Justice explained the Ryan Anderson is a friend of his, so he thought since he was the Regional Supervisor so he could get this fixed. Mr. Justice explained that he had some conversations with him, and he dragged the Loader Operator out there.

Mr. Justice explained that the Loader Operator kind of tried to repair the damage one winter but, the very next winter, when December came around it was buried, it was the

same thing. Mr. Justice commented that now Ryan Anderson has gone up even higher, so he still thought the Loader Operator probably does what he wants.

Mr. Zervos asked Mr. Justice if he thought that idea of putting a wall there would prohibit or eliminate the problem.

Mr. Justice responded that he did not know. Mr. Justice commented that the Loader Operator might just take that fence out. Mr. Justice stated that at least he would cause some real physical damage if he takes the fence out. Mr. Justice explained that there was actually plenty of room there to stack the snow there and have a path. Mr. Justice commented if you go out there and look now at the edge of the asphalt, they clear way beyond the edge of the asphalt. Mr. Justice stated that it made no sense that they do that, but they do. Mr. Justice continued that every year they do that, and then say they do not have any place to put the snow. Mr. Justice stated that they could leave it next to the road. Mr. Justice stated that there is no sight distance there to speak of. Mr. Justice stated he guessed they had the Fairway Road comes in there, so you have to keep some sight distance going there, but somehow, we just have to fix that.

Mr. Stern asked Mr. Justice if any of this was happening because of the trucks and the blade blowing snow back onto the path, or if this is always happening because a loader is doing it?

Mr. Justice stated that they could generally deal with the blade coming down the road doing the initial clearing. Mr. Justice commented it throws some gravel on the path, but that is pretty much a level pile of snow that comes onto the path, and the users go over it, and we can usually deal with that snow coming on. Mr. Justice explained that it is when the loader comes and clears the intersection at Yankovich, that is when it gets huge mountains, and they push it all right on top of the path. Mr. Justice stated that it is like 20-feet high. Mr. Justice commented that there are humongous piles of snow that the loader just picks up and drops on the path and it happens every year.

Mr. Stern commented that the Johansen path has a problem with the blower when it goes down through there, and they have put up signs on the fences on the side there saying; "Do not blow in this direction," onto the houses. Mr. Stern commented that he wondered if it might be possible to perhaps have DOT install some signs that indicate; "Do not dump snow here" or something like that.

Mr. Justice responded that he did not know and all he could think of was that it had to be fenced off. A big, tall fence so the loader can see it and hopefully avoid it. Mr. Justice stated that maybe, they need to buy some land there for snow storage. Mr. Justice commented that he was sure that the snow dumps were pretty full this year and they do not really have a snow dump too close to that. Mr. Justice continued that there is one down Farmers Loop Road but if they could look at finding a snow dump because further down the road there is plenty of right-of-way and some land further to the north that they could use for a snow dump and take the snow down there. Mr. Justice stated that he did not know but something needed to happen.

Mr. Zervos asked Mr. Justice what the primary use of this path was in the wintertime.

Mr. Justice stated that it gets used by people commuting back and forth.

Mr. Zervos asked Mr. Justice if he meant by foot, or ski, or snowmachine.

Mr. Justice explained that fat bikes are probably the number one user anymore.

Mr. Justice explained that it does get snowmachines even though it is a non-motorized path, snowmachines regularly go through there. Mr. Justice explained that walkers go through there and it is part of the Skarland Ski Trail that goes all the way

around. Mr. Justice explained that it is a 12-mile ski loop that they do. Mr. Justice explained that when DOT redid that intersection and redid that first part of Ballaine, they lost their ski trail. Mr. Justice explained that the ski trail used to be on the west side of the road, but when that intersection got redone at Farmers Loop and first part of Ballaine, they pushed the road all the way over on top of the ski trail and they told them that they would have to use the path on the other side, so they used the path on the other side and it cut off the Skarland Trail.

Ms. Lunsford mentioned that the nomination period was still open if they thought they could make a project application that would score well, and it would still be worth getting it in just to have it on the organization's radar. Ms. Lunsford explained that Mr. Fox would be happy to help fill out the application.

Mr. Justice requested a project nomination form from Ms. Lunsford.

Mr. Naibert asked if the trail was on an official trail easement.

Ms. Lunsford responded that she could do some digging to make sure it was on the GIS data and see if she could find any information that might help bolster the application.

Mr. Justice stated that all twelve miles of the Skarland Trail is in an easement. Those subdivisions were platted with that trail in there, so it was a rare trail that is completely within the easements and this section is within the road right-of-way.

Mr. Galligan confirmed in the Chat Box that the Skarland Trail was in the Ballaine Road right-of-way.

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***

Ms. Lunsford explained that she received the scoring from Mr. Stern, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Zervos and introduced each of them to individually explain the thought process for their rankings. It was decided by the BPAC to postpone the prioritization process until next month since there was no urgency to decide on it.

Mr. Stern commented that he thought they needed to keep working on their winter maintenance and not disrupt it by adding more lane miles for DOT to take care of.

Mr. Richardson commented that he was in favor of bundling the projects and wanted more details about how that would function.

Mr. Zervos commented that he agreed with Mr. Stern that they should look at this more carefully. Mr. Zervos stated that someone made a list of the criteria that was pretty close to what he came up with and was on Page 12.

Ms. Lunsford suggested a meeting outside of the regular BPAC meeting to discuss the scoring and ranking.

Mr. Naibert liked the idea of a workshop, especially now that we are able to meet in person.

No motion was made. Action was postponed to the September 2022 meeting with the caveat that they would have a work group session prior to that meeting.

b. Mobile and Permanent Bike/Pedestrian Counting Stations

• Suggestions for Locations for Deployment of Mobile Bike/Ped Counters

Ms. Lunsford explained that page 44 of the meeting packet included information on the Eco Counters they inherited from the City of Fairbanks. Ms. Lunsford explained that at the last meeting they asked the BPAC to provide ideas for where they would like to deploy the additional counters. Ms. Lunsford explained that she prepared a draft list of locations for their review.

Discussion:

Mr. Naibert commented that he liked the idea of somewhere on the Farmers Loop path and the Ballaine intersection seemed like a good idea but did not know if it was useful to have two counters at the same intersection to get people coming from multiple directions. Mr. Naibert thought that along the Geist and Johansen paths might be useful as well as Downtown. Mr. Naibert guessed that he did not ride through Downtown often, but his guess was that there were more people riding downtown than he knew of. Mr. Naibert asked how the counters worked and if they just counted one direction or if the counter could not tell whether people were going right or left.

Ms. Lunsford stated that the counters were bidirectional and did not just count going one way and could also differentiate between bikes and pedestrians.

Mr. Stern commented that the counters did measure directions.

Mr. Naibert liked the idea of a workshop, especially now that we are able to meet in person.

Mr. Justice commented that a counter on Farmers Loop path just south of Madcap would count all users. Mr. Justice commented that a counter at Ballaine Road misses the UAF affiliates coming from Iniakuk, Army, and Madcap Roads.

Ms. Lunsford explained that they would add that to the list of possible places to look.

Mr. Naibert commented that he thought the suggestions for permanent counters were good, particularly somewhere north of the University and the Geist Road area that would help us prioritize safety improvements. Mr. Naibert commented that he thought the mobile counters were the really important thing to deploy around potential projects and mobile counters on either side of College Road and on Geist that we can use to prioritize which safety improvement project is higher priority.

Mr. Galligan commented that Geist Road was getting some sidewalk upgrades next year, and it could be a good time to put in the counter.

Mr. Naibert commented that when we commit to a project ranking, we should deploy the mobile counters on projects 6-10 or something so the following year had good data on those projects for future ranking.

Mr. Stern suggested working with AMATS to see if they could order the counters together to get a good price.

8. New Business

a. Non-Motorized Maintenance Priorities Map

Ms. Lunsford explained that there was nothing in the meeting packet for this item and she had started production of a map to click on for information about who to contact about maintenance for a specific area. The map has color-coded roads.

Ms. Lunsford demonstrated by clicking a specific place on the map and finding out details about the road such as when it was constructed, what service district, if

any, it was in, who maintained it, and the name of the road service commissioner. Ms. Lunsford explained that she was still trying to figure out how to map the orphan roads.

Mr. Stern asked Ms. Lunsford if there was any information that showed the comments that were made on a specific road.

Ms. Lunsford explained that she had not yet completed the Citizen Reporter App and that the map would be available on the FAST Planning website.

b. Winter Non-Motorized Path Grooming Pilot Project

Ms. Lunsford explained that she and Mr. Fox were brainstorming about the Eco Counters, and he mentioned the idea of trying to groom or compact snow on Chena Pump or Farmers Loop to prove that those paths get usage once a usable space is made available. Ms. Lunsford explained that they both felt that the BPAC could potentially pull this off to do a pilot project on either Chena Pump or Farmers Loop. Ms. Lunsford explained that where things got a little bit tricky was that they did not have the maintenance equipment to do that. Everyone knows someone who does something like this. Ms. Lunsford mentioned donating tools to the Chena Tool Library and people could check them out to do the trail grooming.

Mr. Zervos asked what was meant by grooming.

Ms. Lunsford explained that it was compacting the snow so walkers, skiers, and bikes could use it easier if it was compacted enough.

Mr. Justice commented that he made grooming drags and groomed from the Golf Course and out Ballaine Path until Skarland 12-Mile leaves the path.

Ms. Lunsford asked if doing some type of pilot project on an area not currently maintained would be an idea.

Mr. Justice thought it was a great idea to groom some of these paths because a lot more people would use them because they were not rough and bumpy.

Ms. Lunsford asked Mr. Justice what the level of respect was by users who used those groomed trails.

Mr. Justice explained that the more it was used, the better the surface became until it snowed again. Mr. Justice thought it might be better to rototill the path rather than use a roller.

Mr. Stern explained that when the State did the Johansen path and left one or two inches of snow, it was really difficult to walk on and to pedal on for the fat bikers. Unfortunately, snowmachines do not have a respect for the path. Mr. Stern thought a drag situation would work best and was in favor of trying it.

Ms. Lunsford indicated that she would follow up on it and was pleased that there was interest in it.

Mr. Stern suggested talking with the Ski Club about what works and what does not work for grooming trails.

9. Other Issues

Ms. Lunsford explained the status of the upcoming Winter Maintenance Forum.

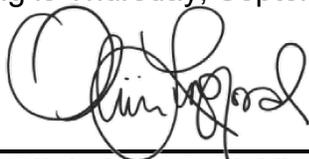
10. Committee Member Comments:

- Mr. Richardson commented that working with the tool library and stated that there were a lot of four wheelers on Farmers Loop, and if they would run down Farmers Loop path it would certainly help.
- Mr. Richardson commented that he lived near Cowles Street between the river and the airport, and that road is getting much more use lately. Mr. Richardson stated that it has gotten to the point where they might need a way to separate traffic so that people could cross the street safely like one stoplight somewhere coordinated so that there would be a break in traffic.
- Ms. Lunsford explained that the stakeholder process would come up soon for that and she would talk to Mr. Fox about that corridor and how it was getting more use.
- Mr. Stern commented that the project that the State is proposing to put a sidewalk down the east side of Peger Road and asked where the money for that project was proposed to come from.
- Ms. Lunsford stated that she did not know the answer to that.
- Mr. Stern stated that he wished there were a concerted effort being made to try to figure out that mess and a solution for that. Mr. Stern commented that there is also whatever is going on with the Chena River project and sidewalks being built on the north side of Peger and then there is not going to be an easy way to connect all that stuff. Mr. Stern commented that the idea of a tunnel underneath Peger Road pretty much died and the proposal to run ore trucks down Peger Road is not going to make things any safer for sure. Mr. Stern thought that there needed to be brainstorming done on that to figure out if it is feasible to put a pedestrian path on the east side of the Peger Road bridge or build a separate bridge there to get the pedestrians across. Mr. Stern commented that he would sure like to know what the plan was for that.
- Mr. Zervos thanked Ms. Lunsford for all her work at the meetings.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn. (Richardson/Stern). The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m. The next BPAC meeting is Thursday, September 29, 2022, 5-7 p.m.

Approved: _____



**Olivia Lunsford, Vice Chair
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee**

Date: 09/30/22