

BPAB Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2015

Members Present: Todd Ake, Emily Walter, Amanda Potter Cole, Greg Reddin, Peter Mehl, Michael Yoder, Jess Henry Spayde, Scott Lucas, Matthew Murphy

Members Absent: Jim Bruce

Others Present: Bob Cole, Jack Branscum, Johnny Mullens.

August Minutes: Peter Mehl requested some changes to the August minutes. On the section regarding the BFC Application, the second sentence changed to state that we were “not able to get certain information from the Street Department.” Also, it was decided that the notes should reflect that 56% of current bike master plan has been implemented. Michael Yoder moved to approve the minutes as amended, Jess Henry Spayde seconded. The measure passed unanimously with two abstentions.

Johnny Mullens Flood Plain Safety: Johnny Mullens works in flood plain management, specifically with flood plain safety. His goal is to improve safety on trails. The more people use trails in flood plains, the less they tend to try and build in flood plains. He reported that he uses the Tucker Creek Trail a lot but doesn't always see a lot of people. Some people reported to him that they saw someone in the woods exposing themselves. His desire is to increase safety. He has traveled to many trails and collected a lot of information. Mullens considers safety in terms of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and proper behavior with regard to wildlife interactions. He suggested that the city should do public service announcements dealing with animal interactions that may occur on local trails. The PSAs should note distance from wildlife and respect for wildlife. Mullens has worked with crime victims since 2003. He emphasizes situational awareness. He noted that Springdale has volunteers who partner with local police and walk trails to report trouble. There was some discussion about this as local law enforcement agencies have not seemed supportive of this idea in Conway. Greg Reddin mentioned that the board might be able to learn how Springdale implemented this. Mullens also mentioned some YouTube videos on trail safety from Reston, VA, San Antonio, TX, and Edmond, OK. Regarding CPTED, he suggested the city should low-hanging limbs in trail areas to help increase visibility. Also, it's good to take care of graffiti. When nothing is done, this kind of activity and criminal activity increases. Lighting and landscape are important. Mullens reported he has been asked about more lighting on Club Lane near the trail entrance. He also suggested that a phone number should be posted where trail users can report things.

Walk to School Day: Emily Walter reported that she is looking for volunteers to help with Walk To School day on October 7. Volunteers would pass out snacks, coloring books, stickers, etc. She agreed to put together a paragraph for the group and something to Amanda Potter Cole to communicate to schools. Emily raised a motion to allocate \$200 for the Walk to School event to get backpack clips and other related items. Jess Henry Spayde seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Bike Share Program District Ct. Todd Ake reported that he met with Beth Thomas. Thomas has an idea to institute a bike share program for DWI offenders in the sobriety court. The goal of the sobriety court is to be an alternative treatment for offenders with the goal of rehabilitation. Fines can be waived through the program. Many participants lose their license and can't travel to work. The idea of the bike share is to provide a transportation alternative. Todd reported that they talked about cost, liability, maintenance, and education. He mentioned that Erik Leamon discussed the idea of providing service if they buy new bikes. Todd suggested there should be a fee to use the bikes because the users will be more likely to take care of them. Jack Branscum suggested a mandatory turn in time for maintenance and such. Todd will write a proposal.

AR Bike/Ped Plan: Todd Ake went to a presentation regarding the Arkansas Bike and Pedestrian Plan. A draft has been released for a review period in September. All are encouraged to look the plan up online and review it.

Meadowlake Rd.: Jack Branscum reported on the city's plan for the section of Meadowlake between Washington and West St. The current plan notes that there's not enough room for a standard 36' build and suggests a 27' roadway with curb and gutter, two vehicle travel lanes, plus a sidewalk on the north side. The plan calls for no bike lanes and a "Bikes may use full lane" sign. Jack noted that there may be a possibility of a 33' roadway with 5' bike lanes if the vehicle lanes are reduced to 10' in width. Greg Reddin stated that the only positive thing about this plan is the addition of a sidewalk. That would make this stretch of road usable for pedestrians. Every other aspect of the plan could reduce its bike friendliness below what it is even now. The group noted that this corridor is not heavily traveled by cars, but is an extremely useful corridor for people walking and riding bikes. It provides a low-traffic alternative to Donaghey and accesses several shopping areas. Jack stated that he believes (but is not entirely sure) the street is classified as a neighborhood street. Greg mentioned that it is used like a connector street because it is straight and long. Because of this people tend to drive rather fast. Greg fears that a widened car lanes and fresh pavement would encourage that fast driving without providing any facilities for cyclists. If the street was indeed built like a neighborhood street and traffic calming measures were used to slow drivers down, extra bike facilities might not be needed. Jack also noted that this section of the street will be used as a template for improvements that will eventually be extended all the way to Donaghey. The board developed the following proposal for Meadowlake: Meadowlake should be built with minimum 5' bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the street. The reasoning for this is because Meadowlake is a major corridor for cyclists and pedestrians that provides access to several shopping destinations in the area, and there are no trails or other cycling facilities in the area. A secondary reason is because of the way the road is used by people driving cars – they tend to drive at collector street speeds. Amanda Potter Cole made a motion to recommend the above proposal to the City Council. The motion was seconded by Michael Yoder and passed unanimously. Todd agreed to type up the recommendation and send it to the Ward 2 aldermen and the Mayor.

Bike Route Expansion: Jack Branscum provided the requested map of the signed bike route expansion originally presented by Todd Ake. The board agreed to ask We Craiglow to write an ordinance to approve the funding. Jack said he will clean up the map and send it to Todd.

Communication Report: Amanda Potter Cole presented the communications report. She is still trying to get in touch with the current website owner. She has fixed some missing things on the site. Amanda asked everyone volunteering at Ecofest on October 10 to complete the survey noting the times they can help. The survey is attached to the event on the Facebook page. She scheduled pedestrian tips to go out on Mondays at 8AM and noted that Jim Bruce had sent out bike tips to UCA. The email newsletter is not working currently, but people are doing surveys. Amanda also is planning a tiny survey to use at Ecofest.

Fence at UCA: Todd reported that he met with Larry Lawrence at UCA regarding an oddly placed fence at Alumni Dr. that keeps pedestrians from crossing the street. Even though the fence is very strangely located, it makes some sense because the area is very dangerous to cross and very crowded with pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic. Todd suggested rerouting the sidewalk around the entrance to move pedestrians out of the high vehicle traffic area. There is currently a dirt path in this space already because people have been using this route as an alternative. Lawrence said it's possible to do this next summer.

Art: Michael Yoder reported that he is meeting with the public art people. UCA has talked about building a promenade from UCA to connect to downtown. Michael would like to expand that to include all three colleges and pick up a low-income area. There has been discussion of an art-walk type of thing. Michael contacted a guy from Phoenix who does this. Todd suggested that Michael should become a liaison with the UCA committee. He also noted that a new public art board has been formed with a funding stream.