

REPORT OF BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 10, 2017 - 9:00 AM

Conference Room, County-City Building
1515 Strongs Avenue - Stevens Point WI 54481

PRESENT: Tori Jennings, Bill Fehrenbach, and Scott Cole

STAFF PRESENT: Associate Planner Kyle Kearns, Director of Public Works Joel Lemke

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1. Call to Order.
2. Minutes and Actions from the December 13, 2016 regular meeting.
3. Persons who wish to address committee for up to three (3) minutes on a non-agenda item.*

Consideration and Possible Action on the Following:

4. Staff Update.
5. Discuss Department of Transportation (DOT) Transportation Alternatives Grant (TAP)
6. Discuss BPAC goals and objectives for the upcoming year.
7. Plan and confirm date of March BPAC Open House event.
8. Schedule next meeting.
9. Adjourn.

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1. Call to Order.

Chair Tori Jennings called the meeting to order at 9:05 A.M.

2. Minutes and Actions from December 13, 2016 regular meeting.

Motion by Scott Cole, second by Bill Fehrenbach to approve minutes. Motion carried 3-0-0.

3. Persons who wish to address committee for up to three (3) minutes on a non-agenda item.*

Tori Jennings presented the Motorists' Handbook published by the DOT and commented on the lack of information about how drivers should interact with bicyclists and pedestrians.

Scott Cole mentioned possible changes and expansion of the Green Circle Trail north of McDill Avenue.

Tori Jennings presented a copy of the current tax bill literature and pointed out that one side is blank. She asked if this space could be used to print bike/pedestrian safety information per public input and Portage County County-Wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan recommendations next year. Kyle Kearns said he has spoken with the Treasurer about the possibility of including safety information in future mailings. Tori Jennings will add this item to the February meeting for further discussion.

Consideration and Possible Action on the Following:

4. Staff Update

Kyle Kearns explained the status of the Canadian National (CN) railroad land acquisition for rails-to-trails. The railroad has offered the former section of rail line to the city, however the asking price is currently too high. Discussion between Michael Ostrowski and CN is ongoing.

5. Discuss Department of Transportation (DOT) Transportation Alternatives Grant (TAP).

Kyle explained that Joel Lemke will be the interim Director of Public Works following Scott Schatschneider's resignation. Kyle is now the primary contact on the TAP grant. He will work with Joel to make sure everything is moving forward. The next step in the process is the RFQ (request for qualifications) to bring a design consultant on board. This should be done in April and the RFQ should be complete in January or February in order to keep the project on track. Kyle and Joel both agree that BPAC should review the RFQ and the final design. BPAC will then make their final recommendations to Plan Commission.

Bill Fehrenbach asked for clarification on how the TAP grant lane routes were selected. Kyle Kearns explained that the facilities were drawn from the Portage County County-Wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Kyle further explained the selection process for the design consultant and how the DOT has a list of companies they recommend.

6. Discuss BPAC goals and objectives for the upcoming year.

The committee discussed goals and objectives and the need for a street plan or 'complete streets' policy for any street resurfacing or new road construction project.

Kyle Kearns explained that the city has a street policy for swales and regulations exist for curb and gutter and other road engineering features. Following further discussion, Kyle concluded that the city should adopt a 'complete streets' policy. He added that BPAC could do some research to see what other communities are doing regarding 'complete streets'.

Tori Jennings asked Bill Fehrenbach if he would research complete streets and bring information back to BPAC so the committee can make an informed recommendation to Plan Commission.

Scott Cole said he would assist Bill Fehrenbach in researching complete streets.

Tori Jennings showed the 2016 tax bill insert and how one side is blank. She said the public asked for safety information to be included in municipal communications and suggested this might be an economical way to do it.

The committee further discussed goals and objectives including future bike and pedestrian counts, crosswalk safety activities, the results of the BFC award, bicycle rodeo/skill clinics, assistance and implementation of the TAP grant, and the need to continue recommending road diet 4-to-3 safety conversions where appropriate.

Tori Jennings expressed her confusion about the process of decision-making regarding Stanley Street. She wondered why Council appeared to be waiting for a recommendation from the Director of Public Works, and the Director appeared to be waiting for direction from Council. Kyle Kearns explained that staff directs Council to act, and Council decides whether or not they will act on a recommendation put forth by staff.

Joel Lemke added there are a couple components to this. First, he recommends that we propose goals for 2017 and ask the Plan Commission to approve those recommendations, that way we have it in writing. He explained that the efforts of BPAC can be made more visible and Public Works and Utilities will be made aware of priorities that may not otherwise be on their radar. Joel said one goal might be getting together with individual directors to better understand their priorities. He said that bringing together the thoughts of everyone would be a really good initial goal. Joel continued by explaining that a lot of what happens in the capital budget gets there by habit. There is not an absolute black and white way to get things done. The capital cycle is constantly changing and the process of getting things done is constantly changing as a result of elections and other issues. The best approach is to talk with staff. BPAC needs to take its priorities to staff to see how these goals and objectives fit with department priorities. There are a lot of people involved in these decisions so knowing where to begin is important. Before agenda items are added to monthly meetings, a solid proposal should be put forward and it should be clear that staff have given thought to the proposal. This saves time and insures that the item is acted upon.

The committee further discussed the benefits of restriping Stanley Street and the DOT proposal for a roundabout at I-39 and Green Avenue, which was suspended due to the state budget. The roundabout would serve as a traffic calming structure before vehicles merge into the 3-lane roadway.

Motion by Bill Fehrenbach to recommend to the City Plan Commission the following BPAC goals and objectives for 2017: ‘complete streets’ policy; crosswalk enforcement activities; March BPAC open house; include education material in municipal communications; work to move the city from bronze to silver BFC status; conduct another bike count in May and September; organize bike skill clinics; implement the TAP grant; continue to recommend 4-to-3 conversions where appropriate; and provide a specific statement about Stanley Street. Seconded by Scott Cole. Motion carries 3-0-0.

7. Plan and confirm date of March BPAC Open House event.

The committee discussed possible features of the open house including a gear swap, bike fix-it clinic, a video, best 10 rides in Wisconsin, and introduction to cycling. The purpose of the meeting is how to move the city from bronze to silver status based on the BFC report card. The committee agreed upon Thursday, March 2nd. The event would include a swap to draw people to the event, presentation on the BFC and city’s designation, and community interactive activities.

8. Schedule next meeting.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, February 15, 9:00 AM.

9. Adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 A.M.