

REPORT OF CITY BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN STREET SAFETY COMMISSION

March 06, 2019 – 9:00 AM

Police Department, Room 122 – 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI 54481

PRESENT: Commissioners Roark, Fehrenbach, O’Meara, McComb, and Borski.

ALSO PRESENT: Director Beduhn, Tim McKnight, and Will Stites.

INDEX:

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

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following:

3. Report of the December 5, 2018 meeting
4. Becoming a Bicycle Friendly Business (educational)
5. Walter street pedestrian accommodations
6. Review and prioritize recommendations within the Portage County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
7. Staff updates
8. Adjourn

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1. Call to Order.

Present: Roark, Fehrenbach, O’Meara, McComb, Borski

Excused: Corbin

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

Commissioner O’Meara suggested drafting a resolution regarding automated, non-driver vehicles, and having the Common Council review it. He noted the dangers that could result in allowing them on City streets as they had difficulty identifying pedestrians,

Chairperson Roark noted that many individuals who rode their bicycles in the winter were having a hard time finding uncovered bicycle parking. He noted the importance of, and encouraged, that bicycle parking be uncovered in the future.

Commissioner O’Meara stated that City sidewalks could also use improvement.

Will Stites, resident, stated that there was no safe way to walk at the corner of Emy J’s on the east side, noting that the roadway was wide enough to accommodate a sidewalk, to which Chairperson Roark stated that the area may be included within the Downtown Master Plan for redevelopment.

Discussion and Possible Action on the Following:

3. Report of the December 5, 2018 meeting

Motion by Commissioner Borski to approve the report of the December 5, 2018 BPSSC meeting with the following amendment(s):

1. **Page 2 & 5: “Aldersperson Jennings (District ~~Nine~~ One)”**

seconded by Alderperson McComb

Motion carried 5-0.

4. Becoming a Bicycle Friendly Business (educational)

Chairperson Roark referenced page 12 of the agenda packet and summarized two programs that existed for businesses who wished to advocate for bicycling. The goal of the programs would be to make businesses more bicycle friendly and potentially provide additional patronage through incentives:

1. Bicycle Friendly Business (BFB) Designation Program: Designated businesses were recognized for their efforts of being bicycle friendly through an award system. Each business was reviewed and had a report drafted to indicate how they could become more bike-friendly. Small to large corporate businesses were encouraged to apply.
2. Bicycle Benefits Program (BBP): Enrolled businesses would encourage and reward biking through incentives/rewards. Businesses would sell \$5 program helmet sticker, both to support and promote the program, but to also use for incentives by the rider.
3. Noted that while the local university had applied for a BFB designation, they had not been awarded one, but the effort was ongoing.

Commissioners had the following comments:

1. Suggestion of having a community meeting to introduce the benefits of the programs.
2. Suggestion of including a presentation of the programs during a BPSSC Open House.
3. Positive comment about the programs benefiting businesses, noting local businesses involved with the BBP.
4. Suggestion of involving the Portage County Business Council, and perhaps getting on one of their agenda to present.
5. Suggestion in collaborating with UWSP, CREATE Portage County, and Ignite Portage County.
6. Alderperson McComb, previous owner of Sugar Doll downtown, summarized her experience of being a part of the BBP.

There was a general consensus and interest in moving forward with introducing the existing programs to the public. No action was taken.

5. Walter street pedestrian accommodations

Director Beduhn summarized the proposed Walter Street pedestrian accommodations project. He summarized the area's limitations near the township, current traffic issues, and potential political issues stemming from the possible improvements. The Director was looking for feedback for the proposed project in order to better narrow the details and budget. Commissioners had the following comments:

1. Walter Street
 - a. Clarification requested on the map provided within the agenda packet in where the improvements would be made, to which Director Beduhn indicated from Walter Street to Brilowski, as well as along Golla Road and Sandy Lane.
 - b. Noted Town of Hull had adopted a statute to clear now. Inquiry on whether the Town would clear the sidewalks if they were installed by the City on the Hull side, to which it was confirmed that Hull would need to clear snow.

- c. Surprise was noted that sidewalks were not currently installed. Inquiry on whether students walked in the street, to which Director Beduhn confirmed that the students used the street as the pedestrian accommodations did not exist. The Director also noted that vehicle drop-offs were an issue as it was crowded, and pedestrian accommodations could assist in alleviating drop-off issues as providing additional safety could encourage other methods of drop-off.
- d. Statement that the proposed sidewalk on the north side of Walter Street would be a safer choice as the southern end had multiple driveways.
- e. Comment on removing the possibility of having a paved shoulder instead of a proposed sidewalk.
- f. Commendation for Alderperson Kneebone's efforts in pursuing the installation of sidewalks in the area. Inquiry on whether raised sidewalks could be considered on the school property itself, noting that an installation of a sidewalk was positive, but issues still remained with the internal flow of traffic on the site, to which Director Beduhn stated that they could attempt to coordinate improvements with the school. Recommendation 4.1.7 was referenced on page 19 of the agenda packet.
- g. Brief discussion on the benefits of a multi-use path instead of paved sidewalks in terms of usability, cost, and maintenance.

Motion by Commissioner O'Meara to endorse the Walter Street pedestrian accommodations as proposed with the following:

- 1. Consideration be taken to install a paved sidewalk on both sides of Walter Street in lieu of a multi-use path.**

seconded by Commissioner Borski

Motion carried 5-0.

There was a brief discussion on the benefits of a multi-use path instead of paved sidewalks in terms of usability, cost, and maintenance.

Motion by Commissioner O'Meara to amend his original motion to include the following:

- 1. Consideration be taken to install a paved sidewalk or multi-use path on both sides of Walter Street.**

seconded by Commissioner Borski

Motion carried 5-0.

- 6. Review and prioritize recommendations within the Portage County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Chairperson Roark explained that they are looking to prioritize the recommendations within the PCBPP, specifically on pages 22-35 of the agenda packet. He noted that the plan had originally been approved in 2014 by the County, and the City of Stevens Point in 2015. The pricing starting on page 29 would be considered outdated, but they would still be looking for additional feedback in reorganizing the priorities listed. Doing so would assist in highlighting items that the commission and Engineering department could focus on. However, he also noted that setting priority didn't necessarily mean that the items would occur first, but rather set their importance. Commissioners made the following comments:

1. Commissioner Borski volunteered to fill the Lead Agency/Dept. column in the Urban Area Infrastructure Recommendations spreadsheet.
2. Recommendation to prioritize Urban Primary Streets Needing Sidewalks Table 51 by the Crash and Use columns.
3. Comment that an indication of low or moderate use in Table 51 could reflect difficulty in use of the street, to which there was general agreement.
4. Clarification that the commission did not necessarily need to prioritize every row, but rather provide a general direction to the Public Works Department.
5. Inquiry if any items listed had been included or were a part of the TAP Grant, to which Director Beduhn confirmed that they had highlighted items associated with other projects. The original document would be forwarded to the commission, he stated.
6. Inquiry if the City had an annual sidewalk inspection program, to which Director Beduhn confirmed that the City was currently on a 5-year rotation. However, they were testing new items in the current year that could allow them to inspect them faster or every 3 years.

Chairperson Roark asked Commissioner O'Meara if he would be willing to draft policy guidelines to assist in prioritizing the recommendations per Director Beduhn's suggestion. Commissioner O'Meara agreed to draft the guidelines, as well as chair the following meeting due to Chairperson Roark's anticipated absence.

No action was taken.

7. Staff updates

Director Beduhn provided updates on the following:

1. TAP Grant awarded and current status.
2. Railroad project update.
3. SEH change order requested.

Community Development staff had nothing further.

8. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 10:13 AM.