



CHARLOTTE
BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
February 25, 2020
6:00 PM

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM with eight members present.

Members Present: Eoin Sheil Milton Irizarry Jr. Elizabeth Swanzy-Parker
Adam Raskoskie Caitlin Tobin Jamie Emanuelli
Liza Pratt Veda Evans Debra Franklin

Members Absent: Angela Stoyanovich

Staff Present: Will Washam Keith Sorensen Vivian Coleman Erin Gillespie

Agenda Item #1 Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Raskoskie at 6:07PM.

Agenda Item #2 Introduction of members and guests

Also present were Melissa Brokaw of well-run media, Martin Zimmerman, Eric Zaverl of Sustain Charlotte, Dustin Brannum (attorney), Eric Brody (commuter).

Agenda Item #3 Call to the public

Mr. Zaverl talked about The Plaza Cycle Track ribbon cutting ceremony. Martin Zimmerman offered a correction to the January minutes regarding the Strategic Mobility Plan, noting the full title. Mr. Zimmerman also noted that the Bicycle Friendly Community application is due to be updated in August and CDOT should look at this as an opportunity to look at metrics and incorporate the Streets Map project.

Agenda Item #4 Review of the minutes

Caitlin Tobin moved to approve the January minutes, Milton Irizarry seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously, with the correction offered by Mr. Zimmerman.

Agenda Item #5 Monthly reports

Chair's Report: Adam Raskoskie made a motion to cast a vote to cancel the August meeting and have a bike ride instead because of the unavailability of conference rooms in CMGC due to the RNC. Mr. Irizarry seconded the motion and all members were in agreement. Ms. Swanzy-Parker asked if the ride would be open to the public. Mr. Washam said yes and he will invite Greenways staff from the County too. Mr. Raskoskie noted that three of the four vacancies have been filled but the County Commission appointed seat is still open. He also encouraged new members to join a subcommittee and said we need a replacement for Bob Carter to lead the Education and Encouragement subcommittee. Mr. Raskoskie made a google doc for agenda items to be added.

Staff Report: Will Washam talked about The Plaza cycle track grand opening. He said attendance was good, upwards of 500. The consultant is launching the Bike Charlotte website and he encouraged everyone to share with friends to post events on the site, and to follow on social media. Mr. Washam talked about the pop-up bike park that will be part of Open Streets at Cordelia Park, thanks to the County and Trips for Kids (TFK), and showed a video of how it will work. The project team is consulting with a professional trail builder from Charlotte and will showcase what can be done for recreational bike riding in Charlotte parks. This demonstration project can be used to advance education and encouragement and hopefully build some permanent bike parks. Ms. Swanzy-Parker asked if there will be non-English channels to communicate the message. Mr. Washam said yes, they will do that. Ms. Brokaw reminded the group that retail sales are not allowed at OS704. Mr. Washam talked about the Ward Loop from the Uptown Connects study and said he would like to have the BAC be a part of the planning process.

Agenda Item #6 Subcommittee Reports

Engineering & Evaluation: Ms. Tobin showed the report and shared the survey results that went out to the cycling community asking what people would like to see the BAC prioritize this year. Some of the items that rose to the top of the list were:

- More protected bike lanes
- Safe crossings of highways
- Cut-throughs in landlocked neighborhoods
- Minimum standards for construction zones
- Education about safe passing laws for motorists
- Bike maintenance
- Recognize invisible cycling community (homeless/low-income)
- "Idaho stop"
- Advise Council of driving laws especially speeding/distracted driving

Mr. Raskoskie said they need to digest these responses and figure out how to dig into them. He noted there have been four cyclists killed this year already. He suggested forming ad hoc subcommittees to address and bring policy recommendations to Council. Mr. Irizarry said he would like to see people rally around when poor people get hit and killed on a bike. He would like to see more recognition of this under-represented population. Ms. Swanzy-Parker pointed out that we don't always know the socio-economic demographics and would need more data.

Mr. Raskoskie said the BAC is not equipped to know all the details but can look into something Council can act on. He suggested the BAC can be a part of the conversation but the organize a memorial, and leave that to community groups. Eric Brody said he agrees that it is important to represent all cyclists, not just by-choice riders. Debra Franklin said her request to Angela Berry was to get Vision Zero data to show who is getting hit and killed, especially by big trucks and buses. Ms. Evans said she would like to continue this conversation offline and wants to know what makes sense to bring to Council. Mr. Raskoskie agreed. Jamie Emmanuelli asked what has already been done in these areas. Ms. Tobin replied yes, the BAC has worked on some of these issues already but need to decide what is the priority for this year. Ms. Evans said she wants to make sure the recommendations are realistic in terms of funding available. Mr. Raskoskie asked the group to bring their recommendations to the March meeting.

Agenda Item #7 New business

Opportunity Zones: Erin Gillespie gave a presentation on the topic, explaining what “opportunity zones” are and how the program works. She said the business must be tied to and invested in the local community in order to qualify for the tax breaks. The geographies include the west side, Wilkenson Blvd and Freedom Drive. The program is similar to any other type of investment in terms of having an equity stake. Unless coming thru the rezoning process, the City does not really have a direct role. The City does not have any capital gains. The program operates more at the federal level. It was an opportunity at the state level by North Carolina opted out. The City tries to make sure any would-be investors are aware of the program, geographies, community goals and vision—such as strategic area plans. Ms. Tobin asked if it can be used to fund infrastructure investments. The answer is that it could be possible, but typically this program is used to acquire real estate. Ms. Swanzy-Parker asked, can’t infrastructure equipment qualify if it’s for the business. Ms. Gillespie replied this is not so clear from the IRS. Mr. Sheill asked about the logistics and details of how it works; he wanted to know if we can ask for bike facilities as part of a project. Ms. Gillespie replied, if the facility falls on their property and an existing plan supports it. She said there is not a direct link from opportunity zones to bike infrastructure, but this could be explored. Ms. Swanzy-Parker stated it is not even in the tax code yet. Ms. Gillespie said it is still a work in progress. Ms. Swanzy-Parker asked if investors could ask for bike stuff if they wanted it. Ms. Gillespie replied sure, why not.

2020 Bicycle Projects and Events Pipeline: Adam Raskoskie said we want to get a better idea of where the money is coming from, to understand the funding structure to better answer community members. He said the BAC would like to know what is coming sooner. Will Washam said he can share information on the projects managed by the bicycle program. Ms. Swanzy-Parker said she would like to track projects monthly to know progress made, where the money is coming from, to better understand who is bringing how much money to the table. Mrs. Coleman commented that is a lot of information to gather, the Design Section is managing over two hundred projects. She said we don’t have staff resources to create new databases. Ms. Tobin suggested maybe it is more important just to know what is funded verses unfunded, that it’s not just about how the bike program money is spent but what the needs are. Mrs. Coleman stated the bike program is much more complex in terms of what we are going to put on the ground when and where. Ms. Tobin said we already have a list of eighteen projects from last year and that it is more about identifying priorities and advise Council to give CDOT the money

to get it done. Ms. Swanzy-Parker said having this data would be part of the BAC's lobbying effort and is a matter of portfolio management. Eoin Sheill asked do we know what we want to do at the plan level, or do we come in at the design stage? At what level do we come in? How can the BAC be most helpful? Ms. Tobin replied she thinks focusing on high-priority, shovel-ready projects is best. Planning-level visioning is important to but she thinks the BAC should focus on shovel-ready. Adam Raskoskie stated everything does ultimately come down to money. He thinks we should focus more on getting the projects we want moving and less about influencing the actual design. Will Washam brought to perspective that just a couple years ago the BAC was having much different conversations related to bicycle infrastructure funding as only named capital project constructed bicycle facilities, not a funded bicycle program. He suggested the group not get too much into the weeds of project design, rather focus on advising council on policies and strategies related to bicycling. Caitlin Tobin asked where are we most effective in the process, and said there is more to the BAC's role than tracking dollars in a spreadsheet. Eric Zaverl suggested looking at the Strategic Mobility Plan and how to get involved in that. Adam Raskoskie said let's figure out what is relevant to our purpose and priorities. We don't need to have every single street resurfacing but need to think critically about it. Elizabeth Swanzy-Parker said she wants to be able to see the interdependencies between projects, and iterated that Will Washam does not need to fill out this spreadsheet. Debra Franklin said she would like to see a list of bike projects beyond the bus/bike lane. She wants to have more info to be able to speak intelligently about what is going on. Adam Raskoskie said the group probably needs more than one meeting to digest the survey results and establish priorities for the year. He will send out a doodle poll.

Agenda Item #8 Member topics

Eoin Sheill said he recently attended a community meeting for the Silver Line and Jeff Jackson was there. There was a coalition of neighborhoods wanted bike access on the east side of Charlotte. They don't want the Independence Blvd corridor to be an express way. They want a rail trail like the South End.

Agenda Item #9 Adjourn meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11PM. The next BAC meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2020.