



MINUTES

Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

2:00 pm January 4, 2019

313 Luck Ave SW, upstairs conference room

Members present

Erik Olsen, Montgomery County
Anita McMillan, Vinton
Wayne Wilcox, Roanoke County
Robert Robillard, North Cross Elementary
Colie Touzel, Virginia Tech
Kristine McCormick, Roanoke IMBA
Greg Walter, Greenway Commission
Jeremy Holmes, RIDE Solutions
Andrea Garland, Roanoke City
Jessica Preston, Salem
Lisa Wever, Fallon Park Elementary
Michelle Via, RAVE
David Radcliffe, Botetourt County
Pete Peters, Vinton

Michael Gray, VDOT

Members absent

Jim Lee, community volunteer
Garrett Brumfield, Overcome Yours
Vickie Browning, AARP
Lisa Cooper, Franklin County

Staff present

Rachel Ruhlen, RVARC
Amanda McGee, RVARC

Others

Steve Hankey, Virginia Tech
Ben Tripp, Salem

Colie Touzel called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm.

1. Approval of October 30, 2018 minutes

Motion by Wayne Wilcox that the minutes be approved as amended, seconded by Greg Walter. Motion passed.

2. Announcements

- The Dec 10 bike audit of Grandin Rd was rescheduled due to snow for Jan 14 at 2:45 pm. Rachel Ruhlen asked for 2-3 volunteers. She will be in touch with those who raised their hands.
- The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission is proud to announce that it was designated a Bronze Level Bicycle Friendly Business in its renewal application. This is the second time it has received bronze.
- Kristine McCormick serves on the State Trails Advisory Committee created by the General Assembly two years ago. Noting that their recommendations were being ignored, the committee created the Virginia Trail Alliance. She encourages anyone who has anything to do with trails or trail use – including Greenways – to join. This group will receive action alerts and updates and information about the recommendations from the State Trails Advisory Committee and can take action to see the recommendations become changes. Visit <http://www.virginiatrails.org/>.

3. Locality Chat with Salem

Ben Tripp, Salem planner, presented information about the [Salem Downtown Plan](#). Adopted in 2016, the plan had more citizen input than any previous effort in Salem. The estimated cost is \$10 million, of which \$8 million has been allocated, and it will take about 5 years to

implement. Improvements will make the downtown more appealing and friendlier for pedestrians and generate economic development. Staff from other localities were interested in the bollards, how buses might handle the narrow streets (they don't), parking meters (none), and changes in number on-street parking spaces (no changes). There will be plenty of bicycle racks in downtown Salem. Jeremy Holmes reported that the Zagster expansion into Salem will probably launch in April.

4. Bike/Ped Count Research at Virginia Tech

Steve Hankey presented the results of an 18-month research project on bike/ped counts. The counts were used to prioritize infrastructure improvements and verify bikeshare station locations. Committee members remarked that other outcomes of bike/ped counts are to justify grants and monitor changes over time. Ben Tripp noted that the greenway counts were critical in getting support for greenways by showing city council members and others how many people were using the greenways. Jeremy Holmes commented that the current census data on mode split is insufficient, even though it is used a lot, and that counters could give better data.

Seasonal variation was stable across the reference counters. Otherwise the reference counters need to split between factor groups, such as recreational and utilitarian. Dr. Hankey has over twenty counters, pneumatic, infrared, and radio beam, which took over 240 hours of manual counts to calibrate (approximately 10 hours per counter). With the permanent counters as reference counters, one week of counts was good enough for reliable data from the temporary counters. After the research project ended, one permanent counter on the trail is still in place. Michael Gray mentioned that VDOT counts vehicles on all roads once every 3 years and only has a small number of reference counters for that program.

Dr. Hankey still has the counters from the research project. He is interested in partnering with the region to research bike/ped counts in the Roanoke Valley. Anita McMillan commented that Virginia Tech will need justification that for the research.

5. Committee members report on Dec 3, Dec 10, and Dec 19 Bike/Walk/Disability Audits

The Dec 3 audit was Ferncliff Ave in front of William Fleming High School, from Routt Rd to Hershberger Rd. Andrea Garland said that as a result of the audit, Ferncliff is a candidate for getting bike lanes this year. The audit noted that the pedestrian button at Hershberger isn't working and when she followed up it was determined that it would be very difficult to fix, but the Gridsmart Traffic Camera mounted on the signal mast could be modified to detect pedestrians and call the pedestrian button. The audit had noted improvements needed to the Hershberger intersection; this would cost up to \$150,000 and could be submitted to the Highway Safety Improvement Program for funding. An immediate consequence of the audit was that Andrea requested street sweeping to clean debris from the sidewalk.

The Dec 10 audit of Grandin Rd was postponed due to snow.

The Dec 19 audit was Washington Ave from Pollard St to Blair St (for walkers) and Glade Creek to Bypass Rd (for bicyclists). Greg Walter noted that the cross slopes at drives were very difficult for the wheelchair. Anita McMillan remarked that parked vehicles encroached on sidewalks because there is no delineation between parking lot and sidewalk. Sidewalks

around drainage inlets had shifted so there was a significant bump. The broken pushbutton pedestrian signal at Pollard St will be upgraded as part of the grant Vinton just received. For future audits that are in Roanoke or Botetourt Counties, Michael Gray mentioned that VDOT personnel should be involved as VDOT is responsible for county roads. Lisa Wever asked if the committee could submit locations to be audited, particularly Ogden Rd. Rachel Ruhlen answered that the on-road neighborhood connections to Greenways are first because the list is already compiled, but there will be more, and Andrea Garland has requested a disability audit of downtown streets in advance of repaving. As these are wrapped up, the committee will need to prioritize, with localities & VDOT, audits for the hundreds of locations listed in the Pedestrian Vision Plan.

6. Updates

Individual committee members updated the committee on items of interest.

Andrea Garland – The state set aside \$8 million of the Highway Safety Improvement Program funds this year for shovel-ready pedestrian projects. The City received almost \$1 million of that. Williamson Rd at Preston Ave, Truman Ave, and Compton St will have pedestrian signals and ADA ramp upgrades. Downtown, 14 intersections that have traffic signals will receive upgraded pedestrian countdown signals. One of these will have push buttons while the others will have the pedestrian phase integrated as part of the cycle. She noted that the intersection of Franklin and Elm had become a priority as a result of feedback from groups like Old SW and RAVE.

Anita McMillan – Vinton also received funding through the same program for pedestrian improvements at Washington Ave & Pollard St and Hardy Rd & Vinyard St.

Amanda McGee – The Rural Bikeway Plan update has begun. There is no further update yet on the Valley-to-Valley trail.

Jeremy Holmes – As Zagster bikeshare approaches its 2-year anniversary, they are reassessing station performance. The three stations with the lowest use have the highest vandalism and will need to be moved: Goodwill, Brown-Robertson, and Fallon Park. Lisa Wever asked how people without banks use the system, and Jeremy replied that RIDE Solutions is negotiating with Zagster on that. Erik Olsen commented that the \$10 cash pass option has not yet been used in Blacksburg.

Erik Olsen – Blacksburg bikeshare is coming up on 1 year old and they are most likely going to renew their contract with the current vender.

The meeting adjourned at 4:08 pm.

The next meeting will be March 29, 2019, 4:00 – 6:00 pm.