

MINUTES

Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

October 17, 2019

313 Luck Ave SW, Roanoke VA

Members present

Cecile Newcomb, Roanoke County
Andrea Garland, City of Roanoke
Jim Lee, community volunteer
Greg Walter, Greenway Commission
Erik Olsen, Montgomery County
Lisa Cooper, Franklin County
Angela Yarbrough, community volunteer
David Radcliff, Botetourt
Jeremy Holmes, RIDE Solutions
Jessica Preston, Salem
Kathleen Herndon, SPCA
Matt McKimmy, Ride Amigos
Anita McMillan, Vinton
Robert Robillard, North Cross High School

Others present

Wayne Wilcox

Staff present

Rachel Ruhlen, RVARC

Members absent

Lisa Wever, Fallon Park Elementary
Garrett Brumfield, Overcome Yours
Ken Mcleod, League of American Bicyclists
Carol Linkenhoker, Virginia Dept. of Transportation

Cecile Newcomb called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

1. Approval of August 15, 2019 minutes and minutes of the Procedures Subcommittee meeting on September 19, 2019.
Motion by Greg Walter that both sets of minutes be approved, seconded by Jim Lee. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Announcements

- A) Virginia Dept of Transportation (VDOT) Temporary Bike/Ped Count Program
VDOT will be training Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission and locality staff on Tuesday, October 22, 10 am at the Regional Commission on installation of the temporary counters. Andrea Garland suggested that the bike/ped committee help prioritize these locations submitted by locality staff for counts.

The Regional Commission has also partnered with Virginia Tech professor Steve Hankey, who provided counters and will assist with data analysis. Pedestrian counters are in place on 10th St NW and on Campbell Ave SW.

- B) VDOT Permanent Bike/Ped Count Program
Erik Olsen reported that the VDOT permanent Bike/Ped Count Program in Blacksburg is underway and counters are installed. Blacksburg is also participating in the temporary count program (see A, above).

Jim Lee inquired about the purpose of the count programs. The answers were:

- a) Having data for a specific location makes stronger grant applications.
- b) Having a regional bike/ped count program makes the data for specific locations more reliable and makes stronger grant applications.
- c) Andrea Garland commented that as more marked crosswalks appear, citizens begin requesting crosswalks in places that don't always make sense. Locality staff need pedestrian count data to guide and support their decisions.
- d) Andrea also commented that VDOT Research Council has requested before & after count data on new projects.

David Radcliff mentioned that according to a recent [New York Times article](#) driving is increasing around cities; this information comes from vehicle count programs.

3. Procedures Subcommittee Report

Cecile Newcomb reported that the Procedures Subcommittee met on September 19, 2019 and developed a procedure for electing new members.

Feedback from the Bike/Ped Committee was that members weren't sure of the purpose of the committee. The Bike/Ped Committee is an advisory committee to the Technical Committee. The Procedures Subcommittee met on October 10, 2019 with chair Cody Sexton & vice-chair Ben Tripp of the Technical Committee to discuss the purpose of the bike/ped committee. This discussion resulted in three action items:

- a) The Technical Committee will have a standing agenda item for updates from the Bike/Ped Committee.
- b) The Chair of the Bike/Ped Committee should have the authority to provide letters of support for locality grant applications for external funding. (Internal funding can pit one locality against another and that could put the Bike/Ped Committee in an awkward position.) This will require changing the Procedures which explicitly forbid this action. The Bike/Ped Committee Procedures can only be changed by the Technical Committee.
- c) Most importantly, the Bike/Ped Committee should keep and regularly update a list of priority bike and ped projects, such as what is in the Bikeway Plan and the Pedestrian Vision Plan.

In addition, the Procedures Subcommittee felt that one-year officer terms are too short since the Bike/Ped Committee only meets 4 times a year and recommends amending the Procedures to two-year terms.

There was some discussion about how the Bike/Ped Committee Chair would handle a request for support of a project that shouldn't be supported. Members felt that it could be handled by the Bike/Ped Committee Chair and the Technical Committee Chair.

There was a question about the quorum for the Bike/Ped Committee being 6. Because attendance varies, this was thought to be a reasonable number for a quorum.

The Procedures Subcommittee presented an amendment to the Procedures. Jeremy Holmes moved to recommend that the Technical Committee approve the amendment, seconded by Lisa Cooper. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Bikeway Plan and Pedestrian Vision Plan

Rachel Ruhlen presented an overview of the [Bikeway Plan](#) (2012) and the [Pedestrian Vision Plan](#) (2015), including the interactive maps ([Bikeway Plan map](#), [Pedestrian Vision Plan map](#)).

- Existing conditions are out of date for both plans. If documenting existing conditions is valuable, it should be done more often than every ten years.
- The recommendations are locations but there is a need for identifying the problem at each location.
- There was some effort at prioritization in both plans.
- Conditions and trends can change rapidly. Examples are equity, bike share, e-bikes, and e-scooters.

The Procedures Subcommittee had discussed with the Technical Committee chair & vice-chair the possibility of hiring a consultant to work with the Bike/Ped Committee to update & combine the plans into a dynamic document that the Bike/Ped Committee reviews regularly. Angela Yarbrough mentioned that the Bike/Ped Committee could determine what the problems are at locations already identified, building on the current plans. Andrea Garland commented that the Bike/Ped Committee could determine the criteria for priorities, such as transit, schools, multimodal centers.

5. Get to Know Our members

Matt McKimmy and Kathleen Herndon gave brief presentations about their backgrounds.

Matt McKimmy is the Director of Support for Ride Amigos, a transportation demand management software company that is about 10 years old. Transportation demand software allows organizations to link incentives to commute behavior. Ride Amigos has clients all over the USA. Matt has telecommuted from Roanoke since he moved here in 2016. Matt rides an e-bike and is a long-time bicyclist.

Kathleen Herndon had a 14 year career in bike shops and focused on removing barriers to women bicycling. She managed shops in Richmond and Northern Virginia before coming to Roanoke in 2014. For Feeding America Southwest Virginia, she learned about income difference in the region and managed a senior feeding program. She is currently in fundraising with SPCA and appears with pets on WFXR and WSLs weekly. She helped make the Big Bikes sculpture (her husband was the artist) on Mill Mountain.

6. Updates

Andrea Garland – Lime is on fast-track for e-scooters at GoFest.

Anita McMillan – Localities must have e-scooter ordinances in place by January 2020 or risk having e-scooters come in with no regulation, so Vinton is developing an ordinance.

Glade Creek Greenway Phase II will begin construction in November.

Walnut Ave sidewalks will enable residents of Indian Rock Village to access downtown Vinton.

Erik Olsen – Virginia Tech has 300 e-scooters. Virginia Tech Transportation Institute is collecting data with a \$500,000 grant.

VDOT selected a consultant for the Valley-to-Valley trail study, an 80-mile, mostly off-road trail connecting Pulaski to Roanoke.

Blacksburg has a contract to expand Gotcha Bikes bikeshare to 150 bikes and upgrade to e-bikes.

Blacksburg Transit received Best Transit System (<4 million riders) award from the American Public Transit Association.

Greg Walter – The new Hinchee Trail connects Hanging Rock to Carvins Cove.

Cecile Newcomb – Roanoke County is applying for funds for improvements to the park and ride at Orange Market, which can be used for parking for the new Hinchee Trail.

Loch Haven Lake has proposed a new campground close to the Hinchee Trail.

Jeremy Holmes – Unfortunately, bikeshare stations in underserved areas performed poorly and were most frequently vandalized so they are being moved. The new station in Salem at Eddy Ave is now the 3rd highest use station.

The Tweed Ride is Nov 9 in Vinton, registration at 10:30 am at Vinton Museum.

Jeremy attended the Distracted Driving Summit. Distracted driving has outpaced drunk driving crashes. Distracted driving incidents are almost entirely phone-related. The Hands-Free phone ban passed both Houses last legislative session but still failed. Jeremy belongs to Drive Smart Virginia and will forward action alerts.

David Radcliff – The ribbon cutting on the Northend Greenway in Harrisonburg supports the New Community Project Sustainable Living Center there and helps people without vehicles access downtown Harrisonburg.

Jim Lee – Go Fest (Oct 18-20) will be on the other side of the river from where it usually is.

Jessica Preston – The Cook Drive part of the greenway in Salem is now open.

The Roanoke Blvd sidewalk across from the VA has been approved.

Construction on East Main St is building new sidewalks. Police have been enforcing the hands-free in work zones, the only part of the hands-free bill that made it through state legislation last year.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.