

Notes

Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee

January 20, 2022

313 Luck Ave SW, Roanoke VA

Present

Tim Pohlad-Thomas, Wilderness
Adventure
Wayne Wilcox, Halcyon Planning
Rachel Ruhlen, RVARC
Carol Moneymaker, Virginia Department
of Transportation
Brendan Hall
Ken McLeod, League of American
Bicyclists
Nathan Hilbert, National Park Service
Kathleen Herndon
Matt McKimmy, Ride Amigos
Frank Maguire, Greenway Commission
Phil Hobla

Fayula Gordon, Vinton
Nathan McClung, Vinton
Lisa Cooper, Franklin County
Cecile Newcomb, Roanoke County
Ashley Smith, Virginia Department of
Transportation
Bob Robillard
Andrea Garland, RIDE Solutions
Luke Priddy
Isaac Henry, Roanoke County
Garrett Brumfield, Overcome Yours
Wayne Leftwich, City of Roanoke
David Radcliff, New Community Project
Erik Olsen, Blacksburg Transit

This was an online meeting. The recording is [available here](#).

Ken McLeod called the meeting to order at 3:02 pm.

1. Sidewalk replacement and repair – Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ashley Smith and Carol Moneymaker explained that sidewalks that are reported in need of maintenance are added to the maintenance list and sometimes it may take a few months to get to them as other maintenance issues may be prioritized higher.

VDOT does not initiate building new sidewalk, including filling gaps, and is not allowed to initiate new sidewalk construction. VDOT maintains sidewalk in their right-of-way once it is built. New sidewalk construction may occur through private developers and through projects initiated by counties, and VDOT is responsible for maintaining those sidewalks that are adopted into the VDOT system.

Any projects, including those initiated by counties, that go through VDOT are required to consider bike/ped accommodations and the Salem District bike/ped coordinator, Michael Gray, must sign off on them. There are many exceptions to VDOT requirement for bike/ped accommodations, including replacement of bridges that doesn't include replacing the substructure, a very low volume road, or a road that does not have any pedestrian generators. During scoping, data collection may include bicycle and pedestrian counts.

VDOT collects data on the number of miles of new bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure added to its network every year and has goals to meet.

During routine repaving, existing pedestrian infrastructure is brought up to current ADA standards, which usually means curb ramps. One person in Salem District has the responsibility of monitoring and ensuring that this is done.

For more information, visit these links:

https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/resources/bike_ped_policy.pdf

https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/resources/bike/VDOT_Bicycle_Policy_Plan.pdf

<https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/bikeped/default.asp>

2. What's in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and how can the Roanoke region make the most of it?

Ken McLeod presented an overview of the law, how it affects existing funding programs relevant to bike/ped, and new funding programs it is creating that are relevant to bike/ped.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is \$1 trillion through 2026. In addition to increasing funding to existing programs, there are new requirements for existing programs such as requiring states to spend a portion of certain programs on bike/ped or allowing states to use programs for bike/ped.

The Roanoke area will receive about 50% more in Transportation Alternatives, a program that is (almost) exclusively for bike/ped and transit. Furthermore, this funding stream can be obligated by the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization instead of going through the state as it has in the past. Roanoke typically awards 2-3 projects per year through this program.

Projects are often split into pieces, or phases, to more easily manage it and to increase the benefit-cost ratio of individual pieces by reducing the cost. However, planning is expensive and federal programs can be onerous for localities to take advantage of and so bundling (the opposite of phasing) may be a better approach.

Ken's presentation is [at this link](#).

3. Concerns about crashes near 5th Street and Campbell Avenue

Luke Priddy lives near this intersection and observed that there have been several crashes, including one pedestrian fatality in 2020, at or near this intersection. Recent development has resulted in higher density of residential and retail and that is expected to continue in coming years. Luke had several suggestions of traffic calming:

- "No turn on red" on all legs of Campbell Ave & 5th St (currently only on some legs)
- Road diet (3-to-2 lane) on 5th Street (unfortunately it was repaved just two years ago so there won't be an opportunity for this for a while)
- Pedestrian signal heads with Leading Pedestrian Intervals, it is very confusing for pedestrians to figure out when we are supposed to cross
- Speed feedback sign on Campbell Avenue

4. Comments

Nathan McClung reported that Walnut Avenue, which has three phases, will have a complete bike/ped connection from the Roanoke City Limit to the Vinton Farmer's Market

with the outer two phases complete in 2023 and the middle phase funded. It will include a separated path. The corridor has ample right of way and/or cooperative landowners, but some oddities required creative design.

Nathan also reported on funded midblock crossings with rapid rectangular flash beacons on Hardy Road at an elementary school and on Gus Nicks Boulevard at Gish Mill.

Frank Maguire reported that the Walker Foundry segment of the Roanoke River Greenway will be completed in spring 2023. A segment of Tinker Creek Greenway is underway but two more phases will have to be completed before it connects to the existing Tinker Creek Greenway at Fallon Park.

Cecile Newcomb reported that the County will have more community meetings in April for the comprehensive plan update and another survey. These community meetings are an opportunity to speak directly to County Supervisors. The draft is expected to be available around Fall 2022.

Garrett Brumfield is attending the Safe Streets Summit of the United Health Partnerships in Miami, Florida as a panelist and/or moderator.

Matt McKimmy is attending the Association for Commuter Transportation in Florida.

Erik Olsen reported that Draper Road, which was made car-free during the pandemic, is the subject of a citizen survey and the option to make it permanently car-free is very popular.

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 pm.

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 17, 2022, 3:00 – 5:00 pm.