

**DRAFT**

**SUNNYVALE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**Meeting Minutes – February 21, 2008**

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission met at 6:30 p.m. on February 21, 2008 with Committee Chair Jackson presiding. The meeting was held in the West Conference Room, City Hall, 456 West Olive Avenue, Sunnyvale.

**ROLL CALL/CONSIDERATION OF ABSENCES**

**Members Present:** Kevin Jackson  
James Manidakos  
Ralph Durham  
Andrea Stawitcke  
Michael Reece

**Members Absent:** Richard Warner

**Staff Present:** Jack Witthaus, Transportation and Traffic Manager  
Gerri Caruso, Principal Planner  
Heba El-Guendy, Senior Transportation Planner

**Visitors:** Arthur Schwartz  
Cathy Switzer  
Chad Brower  
Tristan Lawrence  
Murali Krishman

Commission affirmed (5-0) that the member absence was excused.

**SCHEDULED PRESENTATION**

Gerri Caruso, Principal Planner with the City's Community Development Department presented the process of reviewing private developments. Steps of the process are summarized as follows:

1. In most cases, a preliminary review is carried out where the Project Review Committee (PRC), including the Transportation and Traffic Division, provides applicants with information on requirements and expectations of their projects. In addition to holding the PRC meetings, all staff comments are inserted into a Planning Module with copies provided to the project applicants.
2. Based on feedback provided in the aforementioned step, technical studies and plans associated with each project are prepared and submitted to the City as part of a Formal Application.
3. The different elements of a project application get circulated to the appropriate departments

and divisions for their review. Staff comments on on-site improvements are inserted into a Building Module, while comments on improvements within the public right-of-way are inserted into an Engineering Module. Again, the project applicants receive a copy of all comments. Most projects, especially larger scale projects, typically go through two or three submittals before meeting all requirements. Staff are allowed three weeks for the first review, and two weeks for subsequent reviews.

The review of on- and off-site improvements cover all project components such as architecture, on-site parking, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, landscaping, lighting, water, sewer, fire access, etc. Applicants are informed of requirements for dedication of street based on adopted plan lines and other public improvements.

4. When a project is approved by all review departments/divisions, it can be scheduled for a public hearing. The staff report to Commission and/or Council contains all conditions of approval set on the project. All applicable standards (such as City codes, VTA bike parking standards, etc.) are either stated or referenced as part of the conditions of approval. For example, the Planning Commission can decide on leaving or taking out some of the conditions of approval as long as they are not required by the City code or practiced standards.

Commissioner Manidakos – Inquired: If there is a minimum size for a project to go through the approval process; if the required street dedication covers sidewalks; and, if the public gets a chance to comment on construction related plans.

Gerri Caruso - Explained that there is not a minimum size, but the general process being described is for projects that are heading for a public hearing. The street dedication covers all requirements including sidewalks. In addition to the on- and off-site improvement plans, vast majority of projects are required to submit Traffic Control (TC) plans that mitigate the multi-modal project impacts during the construction phase. Although the TC plan having a TC plan that is approved by the Transportation and Traffic Division. A number of plans rely on the discretion of staff who have the technical expertise. If needed expertise is not available in-house, the City could seek the assistance of consultants and possibly charge the developer for expenses. A hearing is not scheduled until a project is deemed complete by City staff.

Commissioner Durham – Inquired about the extent of community notification, and whether or not the notices that are published in the paper get posted on the City's web site. Also commented that he has seen bicycle parking placed at locations that minimize its use, and inquired if the location of bicycle parking gets to be reviewed and approved.

Gerri Caruso – The public notice inform the affected community of the hearing date and provides them with an opportunity to forward comments in case they would not be present at the hearing. For small exempted projects, only the adjacent properties are notified. For larger projects, property owners and tenants within 300 feet are notified. In many cases, staff practiced its discretion and went beyond the 300 feet requirement. The hearing agenda gets posted on the web, but not certain if the notice does. The number, type and location of bicycle parking are evaluated as part of the staff's review of the on- and off-site improvement plans. There is an inspector that checks everything on site according to the approved plans, which is a demanding task for large scale projects. There is also a systematic review after a two-year period to ensure that all requirements are still maintained. Applying corrections at that time can be difficult since by then the City would be dealing with property management, tenants, etc. and no longer the developer.

Cathy Switzer – Inquired if sidewalk widths, slopes, and ramps are checked. Used the Fair Oaks/Tasman area as an example where a wider sidewalk is needed.

Gerri Caruso – Explained that the inspector probably checks such design elements, and a nexus is needed for any requests that go beyond what is required by Code.

Jack Witthaus – Added that the City did require wider sidewalks in some areas. In general, the City strives to balance the different needs. For the Fair Oaks/Tasman area, the City tried to save trees and still have sidewalks that meet standards.

Chair Jackson – Noted that bicycle and pedestrian needs are not getting enough visibility. The earlier such needs are considered in the planning process, the better it would be. Also noted that there may be a need for changing plan lines.

Jack Witthaus – Explained that plan lines are identified based on extensive surveys to dedicate the right-of-way along with all associated legal requirements. Without conducting the supporting studies, such a change in plan lines would not make sense. For example, there are a few instances when a change in plan lines can be justified based on environmental analysis.

Commissioner Stawitcke – Inquired if the plan lines are ever reviewed.

Jack Witthaus – Explained that there has not been a need. The City used the Opportunity Study for some streets.

Commissioner Manidakos – Asked if the projects Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) include pedestrian counts and evaluation. Also if special needs in the vicinity of schools, senior centers, etc. are considered.

Jack Witthaus – Noted that pedestrian facilities and connectivity issues are evaluated from an environmental (CEQA) perspective. Pedestrian volumes are typically small. Thus codes and requirements serve the City more than relying on counts. Used a number of example projects (Fair Oaks/Tasman, East Sunnyvale Land Plan, etc.) some of which have dedicated budget for pedestrian related improvements.

Arthur Schwartz – Requested changing the City standards to require a sidewalk width of 6 feet rather than 5 feet.

Chair Jackson – Noted that some locations would be better served by wider sidewalks, not necessarily due to higher volumes. Also indicated that BPAC will address this matter later on in the year for consideration as a Study Issue. Thanked Ms. Caruso for her presentation.

## **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

- 1.A) Approval of Draft Minutes of the January 31<sup>st</sup> BPAC Meeting
- 1.B) [Approval of the February 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting Agenda](#)
- 1.C) Approval of the 2008 BPAC Calendar Update

Chair Jackson – Commented on the BPAC calendar update by indicating that the review of the Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials scheduled for February is not the “Annual” review and that the annual review of this matter actually takes place in July.

Consent calendar item 1C was approved 5-0 as amended.

The BPAC meeting on February 21 lasted for four hours. It was decided in the later part of the meeting to postpone Agenda Item #3 to the BPAC meeting planned for March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008. This is to allow for a better opportunity to review and discuss the Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed

Officials.

Consent calendar item 1B was approved 5-0 as amended.

Chair Jackson – Requested to add a “Note” at the beginning of the meeting minutes indicating that the minutes are not detailed as defined by Council on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Also explained that it is more effective to allow BPAC members to express decisions and opinions in person at public hearings.

Jack Witthaus – Explained that the Division does not have the resources to prepare detailed minutes, and that the policy will be checked to identify what would constitute detailed minutes.

Chair Jackson – Revised a part of the third to last paragraph on Page 2 to read “Thus, the meeting minutes public hearing needs to be detailed to avoid any biases or misunderstandings”. Also part of the third paragraph on Page 6 to read “Most people drive because they feel that they do not have other options”. The second paragraph on Page 7 to read “Mentioned that she ~~was about to~~ nearly hit a pedestrian jaywalking across El Camino Real and dressed in black from head to toe”.

Consent calendar item 1A was approved 5-0 as amended.

### **STAFF RESPONSE TO PRIOR PUBLIC COMMENTS**

A public member noted during the BPAC meeting of January 31<sup>st</sup>, that the bicycle racks near Macy’s/Farmer’s Market are in bad shape and that they need to be either maintained or replaced. BPAC staff liaison, Heba El-Guendy, explained that these racks are privately owned and are located on private property. Within a few months, these racks would not be accessible due to ongoing construction in the area. However the public concern will be addressed as part of the gradual construction of the Town Center development, along with associated new bicycle parking (racks and lockers) in the area.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Arthur Schwartz – Noted that the bike racks in the vicinity of Macy’s have been inadequate since day one, and requested that the City specify acceptable rack types/models to developers. Also noted that he is planning to suggest at the next Council meeting that Board and Commission members be allowed to speak at Council as long as they give advance notice to their Board/Commission chair, and that the chair would be present at the Council meeting. The Board/Commission Chair and members would each be allowed 3 minutes.

Chair Jackson – Noted that the Council’s first effort was done in good faith, but it did not get the job completely done.

Cathy Switzer – Requested marketing the Borregas bridge, bicycle route signage in the vicinity of the Sunnyvale entrance to Baylands Park, relocation or addition of filler to the storm drain in the southbound direction on Fair Oaks Avenue just south of Tasman Drive, and clean-up of H Street from construction debris associated with the Moffett Towers.

Chad Brower – Asked if the City Council or BPAC has a policy that explicitly differentiate between recreational and commute cycling. Also asked if there is a way to measure public demand for bike lanes, as public demand for parking is being measured. In addition, asked whether or not projects in Sunnyvale are considered a priority in VTA based on BPAC and/or staff recommendation.

Jack Witthaus – Explained that the Land Use and Transportation Element of the City’s General Plan has sections relevant to alternative modes of transportation. Also the City’s Bicycle Plan is another source for relevant policies.

Chair Jackson – Noted that BPAC attempts to bring matters to the attention of City Council since it is not possible to reach all cyclists users. Also noted that the Expenditure Plan is how big projects such as the Borregas bridge get done, and that Mr. David Simons is the representative on the VTA BPAC.

Tristan Lawrence – Noted that he has been living in Sunnyvale for a year and commutes to his work in Mountain View. Commended the City Council on the bike lanes established on Evelyn Avenue and requested better connection to the Stevens Creek Trail across State Route 85 south of El Camino Real.

Jack Witthaus – Explained that the city of Mountain View is planning a grade separated crossing of SR 85 near Heatherstone Way which is planned to be in place in 2010. The City of Sunnyvale also plans to establish a bike connection near Remington Avenue as the City of Mountain View completes its trail connection in 2012.

Chair Jackson – Noted that in between BPAC meetings, the public could report their comments on the web site by going to “Biking in Sunnyvale.com”.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **2. DISCUSS: Proposed Policy on the Allocation of Street Space**

Jack Witthaus – Started by explaining the staff’s desire to achieve a mutual agreement with the BPAC members on this policy item even if it takes a number of BPAC meetings. Also expressed the desire of Mr. Marvin Rose, Director of Public Works, to proceed with any repair work and his preparedness to meet with the BPAC members. The policy approach suggested by staff mainly consists of the following: (a) Staff would evaluate alternatives of road configuration including an alternative that provides minimum safety standards for all modes; (b) Public comments would be presented independently of the technical analysis of the alternatives; and, (c) City Council would have the final decision on selecting a preferred alternative/combination thereof. Although this approach is suggested, it should be noted that it takes away some staff flexibility. For example, Sunnyvale Avenue was re-stripped on a week’s notice. Such staff actions would not be possible since Council would have the final say on all potential changes. It was also noted that softening some of the Policy language could assist in its acceptance and approval.

Chair Jackson – Explained that BPAC wanted the policy to sound strong because it was likely that it would be watered down as part of the approval process. In general, the intention is not to soften the policy language to an extent that would minimize its effectiveness just to get an agreement. Expressed ideas for policy changes include: (a) To revise the title and/or intent to clarify that the policy is not for providing bike lanes; situations may require bike lanes or do nothing on residential streets; (b) Provide more details on public support for policy changes; (c) Staff need to dismiss the notion that the policy limits options or that it is bikes versus vehicular parking; (d) Emphasize bike supply/demand surveys; (e) Reduce the use of strong words such as “priority” and for example use instead “more consideration”; (f) Refer to bike technical guidelines and best practices (ex. best practice is to reduce travel lanes in terms of number and widths where feasible); and, (g) Use DD64 and ACR 211 as supportive documents.

Commissioner Reece – Noted that comments made by the Vice Mayor with regard to pedestrians need to be addressed. Write-up concerning pedestrian facilities needs to be added to the policy which could be under the safety section. For example, a relevant reference could be that bike lanes act as a buffer between sidewalks and vehicular travel lanes.

Commissioner Stawitcke – Noted that staff and BPAC need to get together and present matter in a unified front.

Commissioner Manidakos – Noted a number of points as follows: (a) The focus on parking should be lessened since the intent is not to develop an anti parking policy; (b) Insert “Safety” in the title; (c)

The "Modal Balance", especially on collectors and arterials, should reference the Bicycle Plan which is an already approved policy; (d) Change "Equal access" to "Safe access"; (e) Likes Staff's idea to provide an alternative for safe transportation; (f) Where appropriate, staff need to present at least one alternative for "safe access" of all modes; and, (g) Staff are hired for their expertise and there is no reason that prevents them from recommending an alternative.

Commissioner Durham – Indicated that BPAC members and staff already noted most concerns. Also noted that City Council is formed of elected officials and BPAC members realize that Council makes the ultimate decision. However, BPAC and staff need inform Council of safe standards and practices.

The public hearing was opened.

Arthur Schwartz – Noted that there is a design issue that needs to be addressed with regard to limited sidewalk width and sharp slopes in order to better accommodate the movement of wheelchairs, infant strollers, etc. Although this is a design issue and not space related, it still needs to be covered. Also noted that there may be a need to clarify that the policy is intended for collector and arterial streets since local residential streets are not of an issue.

Commissioner Durham – Added that some design elements such as utility and sign poles sometimes act as an obstruction and take away from the space available for pedestrians.

Jack Witthaus – Noted that the policy could indicate that the City consider enhancements of the design standards.

Chad Brower – Suggested replacing the wording "Equal access" with "Safe and efficient access". Also requested to generally soften the policy language. For example, the word "Priority" needs to be dropped not to limit staff's flexibility to implement capacity improvements when necessary. "Historical precedence" should also be dropped not to limit the Council's flexibility.

Tristan Lawrence – Requested to add a statement that the intention is to reach a "Balance" which is not presently expressed in the policy's title or content.

The public hearing was closed.

Jack Witthaus – Noted that staff thankfully received a significant amount of information and will accordingly modify the policy and bring-it forward for the next BPAC meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>.

3. DISCUSS: Code of Ethics and Conduct for Elected and Appointed Officials

Due to the late hour and need to discuss this matter in details, this item was postponed to the March 20<sup>th</sup> BPAC meeting.

4. DISCUSS: Bike to Work Day (May 15, 2008)

BPAC members and staff of the Transportation and Traffic Division will continue to participate in this event as per previous years. The BPAC staff liaison was directed to prepare sufficient distribution products such as copies of the Bicycle Plan, pins, reflective strips, etc.

5. DISCUSS: Utility Bill Stuffer Concepts

Commissioner Durham – Recommended notifying the Arizona Department of Transportation and utilize their booklet on "Sharing the Road with Pedestrians".

Commissioner Manidakos – Noted that pedestrian safety is a concept that BPAC needs to focus on.

Commissioner Reece – Noted that relevant laws need to be stated. Also noted that if reaching the

Arizona Department of Transportation becomes difficult, the City can still use the booklet as long as the reference source is stated.

Chair Jackson - Noted that the message used needs to be important and attention grabbing for the recipients not to dismiss it. For example, "Potential killer in your neighborhood" with a sketch of distracted drivers along with pedestrians walking without realizing the danger that they are faced with.

Heba El-Guendy - Suggested using the concept from a positive perspective and adding it to the information published in the "Sharing the Road with Pedestrians" booklet.

6. DISCUSS: Earth Day (April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008)
7. DISCUSS: Health and Safety Fair (May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008)

Available BPAC members will participate in these events. For each of these events, it is anticipated that two BPAC members would participate per each two-hour shift.

BPAC staff liaison will arrange for having a booth/table in each of these events, and in providing the distribution products. Also responsible for informing staff organizers of issues observed during the 2007 Health and Safety Fair such as lack of access to the distribution schedule of free helmets, and limited organization between distribution of helmets and helmets fitting.

#### **NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS**

##### **· BPAC ORAL COMMENTS**

Commissioner Durham - Shared with BPAC members and staff photos that he took during his trip to France that illustrate multi-modal street design elements, and a variety of bicycle parking devices.

##### **· STAFF ORAL COMMENTS**

None.

#### **INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS**

8. Update of the City's Handbook for Boards, Commissions and Committees
9. Home Care Guide published by the County's Public Health Department
10. BPAC E-mail Messages
11. Active Items List

Chair Jackson - Inquired about any updates with regard to the Stevens Creek Trail Connection.

Heba El-Guendy - Noted that the City of Los Altos is presently reviewing five alternative alignments, and that she would provide feedback following her meeting with Los Altos staff on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted by:

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Heba El-Guendy  
Senior Transportation Planner  
Division of Transportation and Traffic

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