

FINAL

SUNNYVALE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – April 17, 2008

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission met at 6:30 p.m. on April 17, 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
Richard Warner
James Manidakos
Ralph Durham
Andrea Stawitcke
Michael Reece

Members Absent: All Commission members attended the meeting

Staff Present: David Lewis, Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation
Jack Witthaus, Transportation and Traffic Manager
Heba El-Guendy, Senior Transportation Planner

Visitors: David Simons, VTA BPAC/City's Planning Commission
Patrick Walz, Sunnyvale's Board of Building Code Appeals
Chad Brower
Morali Krishuan

SCHEDULED PRESENTATION

A presentation on the "Parks of the Future Plan" was provided by Mr. David Lewis, Director of the City's Department of Parks and Recreation.

David Lewis – Indicated that there is a potential growth of 20,000 to 30,000 in Sunnyvale's population over the next twenty years. This would increase the demand for parks, soccer fields, tennis courts, and other open space areas. Assuming an average of 5 acres of open space per 1000 persons, the population growth would require adding 100 acres of open space. To address this potential deficiency, the City Manager directed staff to conduct an analysis of existing parks including amenities and services, as well as identify future needs. Consequently, the Parks of the Future project was initiated in September of 2007. The ongoing consultant work on this project is based on gathered data, input of formed focus groups, and community input including comments reported on the project's web site. The Department of parks and Recreation is planning an event during the month of June following the release of the draft project report. The Parks of the Future Plan is expected to be presented to the City

Council by the end of this summer.

Commissioner Durham – Noted that most developments seem to be located to the north of Central Expressway, and inquired if there are any to the south.

David Lewis – Explained that there is some potential for providing open space in the southerly part of the City, and the Corn Palace was mentioned as an example of a higher density development to the south of El Camino Real. Added that in some cases it would be a trade off between the provision of developments along with their associated revenues, relative to the provision of open space which typically involves maintenance costs.

Commissioner Reece – Noted that bicycle and pedestrian access and facilities need to be addressed as part of the Plan development. Also noted that the increase of population could increase the need for additional schools where most of the open space is typically provided.

Jack Witthaus – Noted that the project has an inter-departmental committee that he sits on to provide input on transportation related matters.

David Lewis – Explained that based on communication with the five school districts, it does not seem that there are plans to construct new schools. There is the possibility however, that currently closed or privately operated schools to be reclaimed for operation as public schools. Added that some green space was recently lost when an existing public school needed to add new classrooms.

Commissioner Durham – Inquired if there is an agreement between the City and the different schools with regard to the level of maintenance and mentioned San Miguel Elementary and Sunnyvale Middle schools as examples.

David Lewis – Noted that the City in general maintains the open space within schools, and in return be allowed public usage of the space during non school hours.

Commissioner Manitakos – Inquired about the Parks Fee.

David Lewis – Explained that the Parks Fee was established in 1979. Developers could either provide green space or pay equivalent value of 1.25 acres per 1000 persons, which is one of lowest rates in Santa Clara County. Other cities require equivalent of 3 acres per 1000 persons. The on-going Plan development is expected to review this discrepancy.

Chair Jackson – Noted the need for reviewing the adequacy of bicycle and pedestrian access, and bicycle parking. Also inquired about the use of the collected fees.

David Lewis – Explained that the fees cannot be used to cover operational or maintenance costs. The fees are mainly intended to benefit the people who paid them when developing their areas. There are other parks that serve the City as a whole such as the Baylands Park, one dog park, one skate park, and the two golf courses.

Chair Jackson – Commented that smaller size parks provided within communities tend to be within walking and cycling distances relative to the larger parks that serve the City as a whole.

David Lewis – Explained that there is always a need for establishing a balance when looking at the location, number and size of parks. Smaller parks tend to be costly in terms of maintenance. The Parks of the Future Plan is targeting areas with identified deficits in terms of open space. The Plan also relates to other neighboring cities such as the City Mountain View which is taking steps to have parks within walking/cycling distances in neighborhoods.

Chad Brower – Noted that vehicular parking takes too much space, and that under-grounding of parking would free-up land for green space.

Planning Commissioner Simons – Explained that under-grounding of parking in general is more costly relative to the provision of surface parking, or above ground parking structures. Added that there are no policies that require the under-grounding of parking. There are, for example, some restrictions on building heights.

Chair Jackson – Thanked Director Lewis and noted that the Parks of the Future Plan will provide useful feedback when completed.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Jackson – Announced that he volunteered earlier that day (on April 17, 2008) by staffing one of the skill stations in the bike rodeo sponsored by the County's Traffic Safe Communities Network (TSCN). The rodeo was held at the Columbia Neighborhood Center in Sunnyvale. The event was successful and the volunteers helped students in the third through the seventh grades to learn about bicycle safety and improve their riding skills. Noted his hope that these students would become a younger generation of skillful cyclists.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1.A) Approval of Draft Minutes of the March 20th BPAC Meeting
- 1.B) Approval of the April 17th Meeting Agenda
- 1.C) Approval of the 2008 BPAC Calendar Update

Jack Witthaus – Requested dismissing Public Hearing/General Business Item #3 from the meeting agenda.

Consent Calendar item 1.B was approved 6-0 as amended, and Consent Calendar item 1.C was approved 6-0.

Chair Jackson – Requested the following change to the first paragraph on Page 7 of the March 20th Meeting Minutes “.....Added that the new ~~speech research~~ poses restrictions on public speaking and *also* discourage participation.....”. Also requested revising the fourth paragraph on Page 8 to the following “Inquired about the resurfacing schedule of Wolfe Road. As he recalls, it was planned to be resurfaced within five years. ~~Noted that the planned 11-foot resurfacing should be extended to 13 feet.~~ *Requested when resurfacing the road north of El Camino Real, that the Shared Lane between vehicular and bicycle traffic be widened from 11 feet to 13 feet.* In addition, noted that motorists regularly park within the transition area south of El Camino Real, which is dangerous”. In addition, requested revising the last paragraph on Page 9 to the following “Announced that the ~~Yuba Drive~~ ceremony *of the Stevens Creek extension under El Camino Real at Yuba Drive* is on April, 12th, 2008. ~~and that the Cupertino Bridge~~ *In addition, the Mary Avenue bicycle/pedestrian bridge over I-280 within the City of Cupertino* is expected to be opened for use by December 31st, 2008”.

Consent calendar item 1A was approved 6-0 as amended.

STAFF RESPONSE TO PRIOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chad Brower – Indicated that reducing vehicular traffic volume would reduce the vehicular miles of

travel, which in turn would have positive impacts on the environment. Accommodating fast and long distance cycling trips could help achieve a reduction in the vehicular miles of travel. Fast cycling facilities could be accommodated on expressways and major roads, while safe cycling facilities are more suited on residential streets, trails and bike paths. Noted that experienced and prospective cyclists are in need of fast and safe cycling facilities.

David Simons – Provided an update on the ongoing VTA work with regard to the expressway system upgrades which have a pedestrian element. Consistent with the project’s mission statement, the VTA BPAC are currently working towards establishing a list of projects that could be funded. Unfortunately, there are some issues of concern. For example, the City of Santa Clara is not very proactive with regard to the expressway system improvements. Also noted that he applied for a Caltrans – District 4 position.

Chair Jackson – Thanked Planning Commissioner Simons and requested from him as the VTA BPAC representative to keep the City’s BPAC informed with current updates.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

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

Jack Witthaus – Explained that all changes that were discussed in previous BPAC meetings were incorporated as part of the policy update. Staff will retain flexibility in deciding on projects if they do not result in any changes to the existing road accommodations. Road reconfiguration that will result in changes to the existing accommodations will be decided by the City Council. Staff report on this policy document is scheduled to go before Council on May 13, 2008.

Chair Jackson – Thanked Jack Witthaus and noted his believe that staff did their best efforts within the existing circumstances.

Jack Witthaus – Noted that the updated policy document has strong staff support.

Chair Jackson – Requested that the policies listed on Page 2 of the staff Report to Council (RTC) be amended to include the Land Use and Transportation Element Policy C3.4.6: Manage on-street parking to assure safe, efficient traffic flow. Also noted on Page 6 of the RTC that the BPAC meeting was held on February 21st, and not the 20th.

Commissioner Reece – Requested from Chair Jackson to express views of some of the BPAC members and the public when providing his presentation to Council. This is with regard to enhancements to the pedestrian facilities which would also address a concern noted by Vice Mayor Hamilton.

Commissioner Warner – Requested from Chair Jackson to take the “elevator” approach when structuring his presentation to Council. Meaning to start with the summary, and then provide details.

Chair Jackson – In addition to the three-minute public speaking, indicated his plan to provide an explanation letter to the Council members which he would share in advance with the BPAC members. This is to avoid having to mention all points within a three-minute presentation.

The public hearing was opened.

Patrick Walz – Requested a general explanation of the City’s decision making process with regard to pedestrian and bicycle related projects.

Jack Witthaus – Noted that Council establishes policies, while staff handles the daily operations along with associated decisions. BPAC is a hybrid between policy and operations. Due to the belief in the 1970’s and 1980’s that staff lacked the expertise on bicycle and pedestrian related matters, BPAC was

given the authority to advise staff on operational matters. BPAC also advise Council on policy matters.

Chair Jackson – Added that staff work under the authority of the City Manager, not the Council. In the event that BPAC and staff conflict in their views on projects, Council has the ultimate decision.

Patrick Walz – Added a final note that when evaluating alternatives the preferred alternative by staff will look best 95% of the time, which places a big responsibility on the staff's part.

The public hearing was closed.

3. DISCUSS: Draft Report to Council – 2008 Transportation Development Act Article 3 Funds Allocation.

This item was removed from the meeting agenda and staff provided the following clarification.

Jack Witthaus – Explained that the VTA request for projects for TDA fund allocation had a quick turn-around deadline. Consequently and in the interest of meeting the VTA deadline, staff immediately prepared a Report to Council (RTC) recommending projects for the allocation of a available fund. However, staff later realized that Council already dedicated the TDA fund for the Mary Avenue foot bridge project. The pending reallocation of the additional \$64,000 in TDA funding referenced in the staff RTC will be decided on at a later date.

4. DISCUSS: Earth Day, Health and Safety Fair, and Bike to Work Day Shift Schedules.

Earth Day: Planned for April 26th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. as part of the Farmers Market on Washington Avenue between Murphy Avenue and Sunnyvale Avenue. It was decided that Commissioner Stawitcke and Commissioner Durham will attend from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. It was also decided that Chair Jackson and Commissioner Reece will attend from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Health and Safety Fair: Planned for May 10th from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Columbia Neighborhood Center. It was decided that Commissioner Reece and Commissioner Manidakos will attend from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. It was also decided that Chair Jackson and Patrick Walz (Member of the Sunnyvale's Board of Building Code Appeals) will attend from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Bike to Work Day: Planned for May 15th from 6:30 to 9:30 a.m. with five Sunnyvale energizer stations to be set at Wolfe Road/El Camino Real, Nasa-Bayshore light rail station, Caltrain train station, Mary Avenue/Maude Avenue, and the Baylands Park. It was decided that Chair Jackson will attend at the light rail station, Commissioner Durham at Baylands Park, Commissioner Manidakos at the Caltrain station, Commissioner Stawitcke at Mary/Maude, and Board member Walz at Wolfe/El Camino Real.

BPAC staff liaison Heba El-Guendy will prepare all materials to be provided to the public including:

- The City's Bicycle map, flyers on Walking and Cycling Safety Tips;
- VTA bus and light rail service maps and schedules;
- Air District Spare the Air and other educational materials;
- 511 Ride Share and Guaranteed Ride Home programs, Bay Area transit services, and other information materials;
- Giveaway helmets offered by the County's TSCN (Health and Safety fair only);
- Bike to Work Day bags and educational materials offered by the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and sponsored by a number of public and private agencies; and,
- Available promotional materials from the different agencies to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transit.

The public hearing was opened.

No public comments were made on this matter.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

· BPAC ORAL COMMENTS

Commissioner Reece – Noted that he will not be able to attend the May BPAC meeting due to work commitments.

Chair Jackson – Requested discussing with representative of the Department of Public Safety means for enforcing the new law which will become in effect on July 1st prohibiting the use of handheld cellular phones while driving, and prohibiting drivers under the age of 18 years from the use of cellular phones. In addition, noted that he sincerely hopes that there would not be any additional delays by the contractors working on the construction of the Borregas Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge.

· STAFF ORAL COMMENTS

Heba El-Guendy – Provided a summary update on three active work items namely: (a) The signage request at the Baylands Park; (b) Slurry sealing a storm drain in the southbound direction on Fair Oaks just south of Tasman; and, (c) Relocation of the e-lockers at the Caltrain station and installation of additional signage.

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

5. Utility Bill Stuffer – To be e-mailed to the Commission members.
6. BPAC E-mail Messages
7. Active Items List Update

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Heba El-Guendy

Senior Transportation Planner
Division of Transportation and Traffic