



FINAL

SUNNYVALE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMISSION Meeting Minutes – March 18, 2010

The Sunnyvale Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission met at 6:30 p.m. on March 18, 2010 with Commission Chair Kevin 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
Cathy Switzer
James Manidakos
Patrick Walz
Ralph Durham
Richard Warner

Members Absent: Andrea Stawitcke

Staff Present: Acting Lieutenant Andrew Laveroni, Department of Public safety
Heba El-Guendy, Sr. Transportation Planner, Dept. of Public Works

Visitors: Joanne McFarlin - Volunteer for the Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition
Camie Hackson – Sunnyvale resident and member of the Stevens Creek Neighbors Neighborhood Association
Fritz Stawitcke – Sunnyvale resident and member of the Cherryhill Neighborhood Association and Friends of Stevens Creek
Isaac Porras – Sunnyvale resident and member of the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

Commissioner Stawitcke informed the BPAC members and staff liaison during the February 18, 2010 meeting of her inability to attend the March 18, 2010 meeting due to her absence on business leave. There were no objections by the BPAC members and the Commissioner's absence was excused.

SCHEDULED PRESENTATION

Ms. Joanne McFarlin – A biologist and volunteer for the Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition provided a presentation on Public Access to Urban Creeks and Wildlife Compatibility. Main points made include the following:

- One of the Coalition's missions is to educate the public on living creeks as an ecosystem which does not stop at cities' boundaries.
- Noted three creek myths and miss-conceptions: (1) There is no need to protect creeks in the valley because there are many protected up in the hills; (2) If creeks look pretty then they probably have ecological integrity; and, (3) The establishment of trails do not affect creeks.
- A riparian area is the area next to the creek which is vital to the vast majority of the wild life species. Some of the studies performed concluded that there is a need for 100 feet on each side of a creek to protect the creek habitats, and 300 feet to protect diverse amount of terrestrial habitats. In general the more protected, the better the ecological integrity.
- Although we already have a degraded habitat, adding a Stevens Creek Trail could further degrade the ecosystem. Studies show that raptors are present in larger numbers at creeks that do not have side trails. The human disturbance and use of the trails are key causes in the adverse impact.
- A study conducted on the sand flat at the Bay concluded that trails do not impact habitats. A key factor behind this conclusion is that habitats have open space behind them and they can easily move. This is not the case in trail areas.

Ms. McFarlin provided the BPAC members and staff liaison hard copies of additional information on the presentation subject, as well as comments on the proposed Stevens Creek Trail Feasibility Study.

Chair Jackson – Noted that anyone who is in favor of non-motorized transportation and recreation is typically a natural ally for protecting the natural elements of the environment. Admired the work being conducted by the City of Cupertino for naturalizing the creek channel. Added that some of the future segments of the Stevens Creek Trail within Sunnyvale and Los Altos would not be next to the creek at all and would be along public streets. Other segments of the Trail could be along the trail at variable distances of the creek, with the other side of the creek inaccessible to the public. Requested from Ms. McFarlin to continue informing committees and public members as the Trail project progresses to ensure that a more informed decision is made. Also, inquired if initiatives of the Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition are consistent and coordinated with the Water District's plans for flood control.

Ms. McFarlin – Noted that the Water District conducted a poll a number of years ago which concluded that majority of the community members are in favor of the natural forms for flood control in Santa Clara Valley.

Acting Lieutenant Andrew Laveroni – Currently in charge of the DPS traffic section provided the requested feedback with regard to a recent collision involving a 16-year bicyclist. This cyclist chose not to use the bicycle lanes and instead was cycling on the northerly sidewalk heading eastbound (i.e., counter flow) on Fremont Avenue at SR 85, and was struck by a turning vehicle/motorist that did not expect or see him. The cyclist was not wearing a helmet and had to be transported to the hospital, but was released

on the same day. Public Safety staff is concerned about safety of young cyclists and continue with their educational efforts at schools. Lieutenant Laveroni offered to provide statistical data on collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists and requested from the BPAC members to identify locations of concern.

Chair Jackson – Referenced a campaign adopted many years ago by the Highway Administration called “Crashes are not Accidents”. Added that using the term “Accidents” could imply that the collisions could not have been avoided. Indicated that there were two incidents of deliberate harassment of cyclists that were brought to his attention. Motorists honking their horn or driving in front of cyclists then stopping suddenly because cyclists were using the whole width of the lane where they found it too narrow to share (locations referenced on Hollenbeck Avenue and on Mary Avenue near the Caltrain tracks). Requested that Public Safety officers be aware of such events and to talk to motorists when feasible. With regard to school areas, noted that parents and students should be educated and given incentives to use alternative modes of transportation, such as the eco pass, rather than deploying police enforcement that could build resentment. Added his desire for Council to fund the study issue on school area safety.

Commissioner Walz – Requested to join the Public Safety staff, if possible, when they visit schools as part of their educational efforts on walking and cycling safety.

Acting Lieutenant Andrew Laveroni – Will check on Commissioner Walz’s request.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Isaac Porras – Noted that on May 15th from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM there will be an event called Mattson Technology San Jose ViaVelo which will involve closing of San Fernando Street from the Caltrain Station to the Martin Luther King library in San Jose. This is part of a global movement to open up City streets to the community for walking, cycling and other human-powered fun.

Commissioner Switzer – Noted that the City of San Francisco has similar events (eight in total this year) in which streets are closed for automobile traffic.

Chair Jackson – Announced that the VTA BPAC is organizing the Over and Under Tour of new bridges and tunnels which will take place on May 15th and can be coordinated with the aforementioned San Jose event.

Camie Hackson – Announced that Google now offers bike route directions between given points which includes 1200 bike trails within the US, and there is also opportunity on the web site to report problems.

Commissioner Switzer – Noted that there is a difference between commuting relative to recreational cycling. Added that she tried the Google directions which were mostly utilizing streets with heavy volumes of traffic.

Commissioner Walz – Noted that he participates in Leadership Sunnyvale, and the group is willing to fund and staff an energizer station on Bike to Work Day. An intersection corner of interest could be either Hollenbeck/El Camino Real or Wolfe/El Camino Real. Commissioner Walz requested that the City supplies tables and chairs with the understanding that a member of Leadership Sunnyvale would pick them up and return them.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1.A) Approval of Draft Minutes of the February 18, 2010 Meeting
- 1.B) Approval of Agenda of the March 18, 2010 Meeting
- 1.C) Approval of the 2010 BPAC Calendar Update

Commissioner Switzer moved a motion seconded by Commissioner Walz to approve Consent Calendar items 1.B) and 1.C). Motion was passed 6-0.

Chair Jackson – Requested expressing his fourth Utility Bill Stuffer concept described on Page 4 of the minutes to indicate “4. The Road Hog: A giant SUV with smoke and fumes coming out leaving a trail of destruction of damaged plants, animals, pedestrians and cyclists and its driver speaking on the phone and indicating that “It is true that it costs a fortune to run this thing, but you cannot put a price on safety”.

Commissioner Switzer moved a motion seconded by Commissioner Walz to approve Consent Calendar items 1.A) as amended. Motion was passed 6-0.

STAFF RESPONSE TO PRIOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS

- 2. DISCUSSION: Study Issue – Establishment of Guided Bicycle Routes Through Neighborhoods

Staff liaison handed out at the meeting draft criteria for selecting the neighborhood routes as prepared by staff and listed below:

- A. Connectivity with major traffic generators (such as a school, large clinic, business park, shopping center, etc.) and transit stations (such as the Caltrain Station)

either directly or through direct connections with the main bicycle routes within the City.

- B. Routes selection needs to provide the most direct connections (i.e., the shortest distances) to the key locations listed under Item A, and when possible select routes that are parallel to arterial streets serving vehicular traffic.
- C. Supplements the existing and planned Class I, Class II, and Class III bicycle facilities within Sunnyvale and the neighboring jurisdictions, taking into consideration locations of the bicycle/pedestrian bridges.
- D. Actual or observed low vehicular traffic volumes (daily and/or peak hour volumes).
- E. Low posted speed limit along the selected routes.
- F. Good safety conditions based on observations and collision statistics.
- G. Acceptable visibility conditions along the routes with minimal blind spots and obstructions.
- H. Routes can be established through residential or industrial areas depending on the traffic volumes and safety conditions.
- I. Minimize number of intersections with major roads and heavily used commercial driveways. Also minimize number of intersection controls (such as stop signs, traffic signal, etc.) to reduce the potential for delays.
- J. Minimize routes that contain vertical traffic calming devices such as speed humps.
- K. Minimize capital and operational costs associated with the implementation and maintenance of the routes.
- L. Public acceptance.

Commissioner Manidakos – Noted with regard to Criteria J that unlike speed bumps, the referenced speed humps do not adversely affect the movements of cyclists. Other types and designs of traffic calming devices, such as the bulbouts on Mary Avenue, could adversely impact cyclists. Also requested from staff to evaluate the need for environmental review because of a potential that the study issue would result in rerouting some of the traffic.

Commissioner Durham – Requested a pilot project to replace stop signs on the neighborhood bicycle routes with yield signs.

Chair Jackson – Recommended the following routes:

- Tantau Avenue (in Cupertino) - Quail Avenue – Dunford Way – Norman Drive – Bryant Way – Henderson Avenue – Iris Avenue – Sequoia Drive (then bike lanes on Reed Avenue and Wolfe Road). This route is to avoid traveling along Lawrence Expressway and Wolfe Road.
- Wright Avenue – Yorktown Drive – Lime Drive – Remington Drive – Mango Avenue – Lynn Way – Mulberry Lane – Mary Avenue. Also Olive Avenue – Leota Avenue – Carson Drive – Mary Avenue.
- Sunnyvale Avenue – Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road – Alberta Avenue – Bittern Drive – Inverness Way – Lochinvar Avenue.
- Bike path at Fair Oaks Park – Duane Avenue – San Juan Drive – bike/pedestrian bridge across US 101 - John Christian Greenbelt

Commissioner Walz – Requested the provision of directional signs to connect between the main traffic generators in the area. Key locations would include the two Caltrain stations, Downtown Sunnyvale, light rail stations within Sunnyvale, the Borregas Bicycle/Pedestrian bridges, and the Moffett Park businesses district.

Commissioner Switzer – Requested a bicycle route that connects between south Santa Clara and Downtown Sunnyvale including the Caltrain station, which would allow Caltrain patrons to save a zone in the train charge.

Staff liaison was requested to bring the item again for discussion during the April BPAC meeting. In the meantime, BPAC members will e-mail staff their ideas about other potential routes.

3. DISCUSSION: Utility Bill Stuffer Concepts

Commissioner Switzer – Believes that a key message of the utility bill stuffer could be “Consideration for Others” namely pedestrians and cyclists. Noted the need for taking a positive approach such as “What is right with this picture” motorists respecting others’ right-of-way, cyclists using bicycle light and visible cloths, etc.

Chair Jackson – Noted that the message needs to educate motorists since drivers’ education is generally lacking and they can simply renew their licenses without even retaking the DMV test. Prefers a puzzle type message to help attract people’s attention.

Staff liaison was requested to bring the item again for discussion during the April BPAC meeting. In the meantime, BPAC members will e-mail their ideas before the end of March, 2010.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

• BPAC ORAL COMMENTS

Commissioner Durham – Recommended members’ participation in the San Francisco open street events and to go early. Noted that the road is damaged by tree roots in the northbound direction of Mary Avenue between Corte Madera Avenue and Maude Avenue”.

Commissioner Switzer – Disappointed with the quality of the Borregas Avenue repaving and requested a follow-up to Mr. Tony Pineda’s reply regarding the street resurfacing in April/May of 2010. Also inquired about when construction of Murphy Avenue would be completed.

Chair Jackson – Noted that there will be a presentation on electric bicycles on KQED (Talk of the Nation Program) from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Inquired about the possibility

of people signing-up to receive e-mail notifications when BPAC agenda packets and meeting minutes are posted on the City's web site. Requested from the BPAC members to think about how the City can upgrade its Bronze Level as a Bicycle Friendly Community as part of a yearly update, or at the end of the current award period in year 2012 which also marks the 20th anniversary of establishing BPAC. Also requested to highlight collectors and arterials on the road resurfacing list since they are of concern with regard to the Street Space Allocation policy. In addition, confirmed the BPAC staffing of events including: Tour de Aims on April 21st, Earth Day on April 24th, Bike to Work Day on May 13th, Over and Under Tour on May 15th, Health and Safety Fair on May 22nd.

- **STAFF ORAL COMMENTS**

E-mail inquiries received from the public along with staff responses were provided as part of the Agenda packet.

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

4. FY 2010/11 Road Resurfacing List accepted as submitted in the Agenda packet.
5. BPAC E-mail Messages and/or Letters along with associated staff responses were accepted as submitted in the Agenda packet.
6. BPAC Active Items List accepted as submitted in the Agenda packet.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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