

**EAU CLAIRE  
BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting of June 20, 2017**

The meeting was chaired by Aaron Salmon in the North Conference Room and called to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Aaron Salmon, Dick Johnston, Scott Kmetz, Eric Nelson, Catherine Lee, Marian Ritland, Andy Becker, Brian Jenquine

**Members Absent:** Kirk Jansen

**Staff Present:** Leah Ness, Pat Ivory

**Visitors Present:** Jason Duba, Darryl Farmer, Jeremy Gragert, Kate Beaton

**Minutes.** The minutes from the May 16, 2017 meeting were approved as written.

**1. Summary of Bike Week.** Aaron Salmon provided a summary of the Bike Week activities held from June 5<sup>th</sup> through June 11<sup>th</sup>. It was noted that approximately 350 people participated in the events during the week. Most of the events were well attended with the exception of the Saturday events involving the parade in Altoona. The event scheduled for Sunday was cancelled due to poor weather. Jeremy Gragert thanked all of those that were involved and indicated that a meeting would be held to review the events held during the week.

**2. Discussion of Complete Streets Program.** The Committee had a discussion regarding the Complete Streets program. The Committee's work program states, *"The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan recommends that the City discuss the feasibility of implementing a Complete Streets policy. BPAC plans to discuss this topic and forward recommendations to the Engineering Department and City Manager."* The Committee had an initial discussion on the topic in April and since that time, examples of Complete Street policies from La Crosse and Minneapolis were distributed to the Committee. Leah Ness initiated the discussion by providing an overview of the City of Eau Claire's current practices and procedures to ensure that all modes of transportation are considered with each street project; noting consideration of such factors as the ADA requirements, sidewalk and bicycle route connectivity with the existing infrastructure, safe routes to school designations, the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and the City's crosswalk and sidewalk policies. Leah also provided a summary of existing bicycle-related infrastructure that has been completed from 2012 to 2017 (bike lanes – increase from 2.7 miles to 8.3 miles, sharrows – increase from 1.3 miles to 6.6 miles, and off-road trails – 27 miles to 36 miles).

The Committee discussed reasons why a Complete Streets policy should be considered:

- reaffirm the City's commitment towards considering all modes of transportation;
- formalize the City's existing policies and practices into a written format;

- emphasize the importance of non-vehicular modes of transportation and transit in the design process;
- ensure that every street is considered equally;
- recognize that non-vehicular modes of transportation have an important health component in promoting more active life styles and the reduction of chronic disease;
- would promote more discussion of the best facilities that should be included in a project;
- could result in a higher level of facility actually being constructed (i.e. bicycle lanes vs sharrows)
- incorporates a procedure where an exemption would have to be documented in order to omit a pedestrian or bicycle-related improvement by providing a more rigorous review and discussion procedure.

The Committee continued their discussion noting that it would be beneficial to include other groups as part of the discussion. Examples of groups that should be included in the discussion included: transit, the healthy communities coalition, senior center, etc. It was noted that the timeframe to discuss ideas and formalize a recommendation should not be rushed in order to build a coalition of support for the concept.

The Committee decided to undertake additional research of similar sized communities such as La Crosse and determine how these communities built coalitions, and addressed concerns to such polices. (Information gathered should be forwarded to staff to disseminate to the Committee.) Darryl Farmer indicated that he would discuss this with the healthy communities committee and pull together research and data demonstrating the benefits of having a more pedestrian/bicycle friendly community. Aaron Salmon stated that he would work on preparing a draft mission or goal statement.

At the next meeting, the Committee will continue their discussion, which will include deciding how to involve other groups in the process. Leah noted that City Engineer, Dave Solberg could attend a future meeting when the Committee has gathered the needed information.

**3. Discussion of Update of Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.** The Committee continued their discussion of the update of the bicycle routes in the 2010 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. As noted at previous meetings, one of the goals of the update is to provide convenient routes for bicyclist within the City, balanced at a level that would be sustainable for the City to maintain in the future. Pat noted that some revisions had been made since the previous meeting, which he reviewed with the Committee. This included the addition of several "areas needing further study" and some changes in route locations. Narratives for each of the "areas needing further study" will be prepared and reviewed by the Committee at their next meeting. Pat added that the maps of the draft routes were on display during the Bike Week at the opening day gathering and during the Wednesday evening open house. He indicated that they had received several comments and suggestions, which he then reviewed with the Commission.

The Committee noted their general concurrence with the maps and thanked Leah and Pat for their work on the project. They did discuss several specific areas and whether some minor revisions should be considered. One in particular pertains to the routes within the East Side Hill Neighborhood. The Committee indicated that they would discuss this area again at their July meeting and finalize the proposed routes.

As noted at the May meeting, the narrative of the plan needs to encourage flexibility in allowing additional streets to be added as routes when development patterns change or other demographic shifts in cycling habits occur.

4. Other items.

- a) **Update on 2017 street projects.** Leah provided an update of several of the street projects currently under construction.
- b) **Pedestrian Safety Employee Brochure.** Leah informed the Committee she worked with the City's Human Resource Department in preparing a brochure relating to pedestrian safety. The brochure was distributed by email to all City employees. The Committee thanked Leah for her work on the brochure and asked for a copy to be sent to each Committee member.
- c) **Downtown Bicycle Racks.** Leah noted that she planned to be meeting with businesses in the North Barstow Street area regarding the placement of the additional bicycle racks.
- d) **Bike Education.** Leah indicated that she had been contacted by the Police Department and they are inquiring as to whether any person from the Committee might be interested in assisting in volunteering to assist in conducting bicycle safety rodeos at the schools. These rodeos at one time were sponsored by the Police Department, but were dropped in recent years due to budget cuts. Anyone interested should contact Leah.
- e) **Reports to staff on safety issues or concerns.** Pedestrian safety concerns were noted along Crescent Avenue in the Shawtown neighborhood related to the concerts held at the Country Jam concert grounds. Many people are walking along the street to get to the concerts, in some areas where there is no sidewalk. Aaron Salmon noted a potential pedestrian/bicycle connection to the concert grounds would be at the south end of Ferry Street and north of the City's wastewater treatment plant. There is a bridge for Interstate 94 in this area that has the potential for a trail that could extend under it into the concert grounds.
- f) **Future agenda items.** None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Submitted by:

*Catherine Lee by PJA*

Catherine Lee, Secretary