



MINUTES

City of Flagstaff BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, September 3, 2015 | 4:30 pm

Flagstaff City Hall, Staff Conference Room
211 West Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, Arizona

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:37 pm. On roll call, the following Committee members were present:

Ken Lane, chair
Jodi Norris
Jeff Stevenson
Jack Welch

Members absent:

Dave Blanchard
Richard Hall
Paul Owen

The following City and agency staff was present:

Sara Dechter, comprehensive planning manager
Martin Ince, multimodal transportation planner
Jennifer Mikelson, associate comprehensive planner
David Wessel, FMPO manager

Public present:

Jesse Dominguez, La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Association
Laura Myer, La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Association
Kevin Parkes, Transportation Commission
Michelle Ralston, County Board Member Art Babbitt's office

I. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Announcements

Mr. Welch said he had led a group of about 35 hikers along the new section of the Route 66 Trail near Sportsman's Warehouse. He said the trail was very well done.

Chair Lane asked if there were plans to extend the Hospital Rim Trail east to San Francisco Street.

2. Public Comment

There was no Public Comment

3. Approval Of Minutes

Mr. Welch made, and Ms. Norris seconded, a motion to approve the minutes from the regular meetings of July 2, 2015 and August 6, 2015. The motion was approved unanimously (4-0).

II. OLD BUSINESS

1. Pedestrian and bicycle master plan

This item was not discussed

2. Route 66 FUTS Trail

This item was not discussed

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Plan

Ms. Dechter explained that they are at the start of the public hearing process for the La Plaza Vieja neighborhood plan, and that they are working to provide an updated draft to the City's Planning and Zoning Commission on September 17.

They have already made a presentation to the Transportation Commission, which tabled the item to their October meeting in order to hear from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committees. She briefly summarized the discussion from the Transportation Commission.

Ms. Dechter asked for a recommendation regarding the plan from the BAC. She said if the Committee has comments, they should be included as conditions in the motion.

Ms. Dechter summarized transportation goals from the Regional Plan that affect La Plaza Vieja neighborhood, and explained goals and implementation strategies for transportation from the draft plan.

Ms. Norris said that if Clay becomes a busy street, then access to the planned trail for the neighborhood would be compromised.

Mr. Dominguez said that the neighborhood welcomes walkers and bikers. When people are comfortable walking and biking, it is a sign of a great neighborhood. He explained that the local street scenario is the neighborhood's first preference, but if there is to be a new collector in the neighborhood, it is better on McCracken than on Clay. ADOT needs to do its share to resolve problems on Milton and Route 66. He said they prefer the FUTS connection to sidewalks, and they are looking forward to completion of the Florence-Walnut underpass. There is also a need for additional safe crossings on Milton and Route 66. There are lots of students in the neighborhood who walk and bike, and there is a need for crossings along Milton between Butler and Route 66.

Ms. Myers wanted to make sure that the neighborhood's preference for local streets is clear. The neighborhood does not want the Clay extension at all, but they recognize that options must be considered. Both the Clay and McCracken options would damage the character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Dominguez said that Clay is already difficult to cross for the neighborhood, especially for kids who are trying to get from the residential areas north of Clay to the park and school on the south side of Clay.

Chair Lane said they are also anxiously awaiting the Florence-Walnut Underpass. He said the neighborhood's preferences should be accommodated, as long as bikes and the trail are also accommodated.

A discussion ensued about on-street options for a pedestrian-bicycle connection through the neighborhood to the underpass. The Committee asked if the neighborhood's preference for streets is also the least expensive option.

Mr. Wessel said that the neighborhood's preference for local streets may be the most costly in the long term because of the cost of needed improvements to Milton to alleviate traffic. He explained how Flagstaff's growth was causing a steady increase in traffic, and that future growth to the west would add additional traffic to this area. There are few places where new street connections can be made to build capacity. Not building McCracken or Clay may result in a significant increase in traffic on Milton.

Mr. Stevenson commented that there is an apparent conflict between regional traffic solutions and neighborhood desires.

Mr. Wessel said there is a question how far we can take alternate modes to mitigate traffic, and what it will cost. Flagstaff does not have a very strong grid street network, which presents challenges to connectivity. In this case, connectivity also impacts access to local businesses, as there could be considerable future commercial development in the neighborhood that will need better access and better circulation.

Widening Milton to six lanes would be expensive. The McCracken alternative was devised as a way to support future development and create circulation in a location that has less of an impact on the neighborhood. If commercial properties in the neighborhood were to develop to their full entitlements via zoning, local access traffic would have a significant impact on the neighborhood.

Ms. Norris said that bike rides begin within the neighborhood, so the plan should be supportive of the neighborhood's preferences.

There was a discussion about accommodation of the FUTS trail in the three street scenarios, and options for on-street facilities.

Mr. Parkes said that the Transportation Commission wanted to hear from the pedestrian and bicycle committees. He reported that the Commission wrestled with making a decision, but ultimately they were not comfortable with moving forward before they had input from the committees.

There was a discussion about the Committee's role in making a recommendation, and whether their comments should be limited to bicycle and trail accommodation or include a recommendation regarding the future streets scenario. Good bicycle facilities are possible with all of the scenarios, but bicyclists from the neighborhood should also be encouraged.

Following a lengthy discussion, Mr. Stevenson made, and Ms. Norris seconded, a motion to recommend approval of the La Plaza Vieja Neighborhood Plan to the Transportation Commission, subject to the following conditions:

1. Map 14 should be moved from the appendix to the main body of the plan
2. Preference should be given to the Neighborhood Association's preferred scenario for future streets
3. Implementation of the FUTS through the neighborhood as shown on the Regional Plan is encouraged

The motion was approved by a vote of 3-1.

IV. CONCLUDING GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Reports

There was no discussion on the Reports

2. Concluding Announcements

There were no Concluding Announcements

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27 pm