CITY OF WAUSAU BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Time and Date: The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee met on Monday, Mar. 25, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. in the Maple Room of Wausau City Hall.

Members Present: Pat Peckham, Gary Gisselman, Andrew Plath

Others Present: Brad Sippel, Andrew Lynch, Cord Buckner, Samantha Pinzl, Susan Schmidt, Grace Mueller, Penny Happli, Pam Engelmeier, Kari Flater, Sandy Volhard, Kathi Zoern

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and transmitted to the Wausau Daily Herald in the proper manner.

Welcome and introductions

Peckham called the meeting to order without a quorum present at 4:05 p.m. Everyone present introduced themselves.

Approve minutes of Feb 25, 2019 meeting

This item will be deferred to the next meeting when there is a quorum present.

Discuss Accessible Pedestrian Signals

Sippel overviewed the previous discussions about audible/accessible pedestrian signals (APS). Pinzl explained that she has been working through the Marathon County Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) coalition on walk audits, and as part of those walk audits has been working with members of the community with visual impairments. Several residents with visual impairments or representing people with mobility or vision impairments were in attendance and spoke in favor of the accessible pedestrian signals, praising the addition of an accessible pedestrian signal at the intersection of Scott Street and 2nd Street.

Peckham asked if Zoern changes her route to use the audible signal at Scott and 2nd, and Zoern said she does because it’s really nice. Peckham noted that it is planned to include audible pedestrian signals at the intersection of 3rd Ave. and Thomas Street when that portion of Thomas Street is reconstructed. The cost of adding accessible signals was discussed, and Sippel noted that the cost can depend on whether the signal is already being replaced as part of a project, and on the age of the signal and whether there is capacity to add the additional equipment needed to install an APS. Pam Engelmeier (7:15), a retired physical therapist said it would be nice for people to be made aware of the APS that are out there. Engelmeier also noted that several businesses in our community might be willing to sponsor an APS. Several residents noted they were not aware of the APS at 2nd St. and Scott St. Peckham asked about ways to get the word out. The Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Wausau School District were mentioned as potential sponsors.

Peckham and Gisselman asked if there are certain locations that would be most beneficial. There was consensus among the residents in attendance that 3rd Street and Scott Street would be the most important intersection to add APS. Zoern said the intersections along Bridge Street, such as 3rd Avenue and 1st Avenue are also important. Zoern said that changes to the State Highway to route it along Scott Street makes her nervous as it is already a difficult street to cross. Other intersections were mentioned by the residents in attendance. All four legs of 6th and Washington are difficult to cross, and it is near the transit center. Peckham mentioned the conversations between the City and the Library looking at improving the crossing at 1st Street and Jefferson Street.

Several of the residents shared anecdotes about close calls with motorists turning into their path as they walk across the street with the walk light, struggling to get across busy streets without walk lights, and a driver running over one resident’s cane and breaking it as she was crossing the street with the walk light.
Gisselman asked if the countdown timers are helpful or if the audible component of it is necessary. Most residents in attendance said that the audible component is necessary, and one shared that she would not be able to see the numbers on the countdown.

Zoern shared concerns about children crossing 1st Street at the library, having seen a teacher bring her own stop sign to get cars to stop as they were crossing. Sippel asked if anyone has used the skywalk to cross 1st Street between Jefferson St. and Scott St. to get to and from the Library. Most were not aware that the skywalk was open to the public and accessible by elevator, and thought it would be inconvenient to have to go into the parking ramp to get across the street.

**Discuss 2019 priorities**

Sippel opened a discussion about priorities for the committee for 2019, continuing from the previous meeting. Sippel overviewed a spreadsheet about potential priorities for the committee. Peckham noted he particularly liked the idea of establishing a budget for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The committee discussed traffic calming requests and a formal policy for this, and Gisselman said with some of the requests for stop signs and traffic calming that come through CISM, some neighborhoods might be willing to have a special assessment to install traffic calming. Sippel will bring the spreadsheet back to the committee next month and treat it as a working list. Lynch mentioned a policy for bike rack locations would be advantageous to make it easy to place them where they are needed, and also have a procedure if a business requests a bike rack. Schmidt said she would be interested in learning more about the AARP Age Friendly Action Plan.

**Discuss National Bike to Work Week and Bike to Work with the Mayor (May 13-19)**

Sippel overviewed National Bike to Work Week, which is May 13-19 in 2019, and the Bike to Work with Mayor event. The committee consensus was to hold the Bike to Work with the Mayor event on Monday, May 13. Departure time would be 7:45 from Marathon Park. The Committee discussed start locations, and noted that the Scholfield Park location has not been attended well, but there was a significant group of riders that have come from Rib Mountain.

**Discuss 2019 Wisconsin Bike Summit**

Sippel shared that the Wisconsin Bike Federation is planning to hold the 2019 Wisconsin Bike Summit in Wausau. This committee could help with the planning and could help come up with ideas and or resources for sessions and rides. In the past, the summit has been more about advocacy and knowledge sharing, and the Bike Fed would like to incorporate more riding and learning by experience in this year.

**Discuss Friends of Mountain Bay Trail**

Sippel updated on the Friends of the Mountain Bay Trail group. Polley is holding a special meeting for people interested in the Mountain Bay Trail on April 24 at 5pm. The location is yet to be determined. Sippel will share more information with the BPAC when it is available.

**Discuss citywide street and sidewalk areas of concern**

None discussed.
Bicycle and pedestrian news and education

Sippel included an article about bicycling in winter cities. If committee members find anything interesting they can send them to Sippel to include in the packet.

Future items for consideration

Peckham would like to have the crossing at Alexander/Airport park on the next agenda. Plath mentioned progress on the River Edge Trail development on the west side.

Future meeting date

The next Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee will meet on April 29, 2019.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.