

CITY OF WAUSAU BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Time and Date: The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee met on Monday, May. 20, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. in the Maple Room of Wausau City Hall.

Members Present: Pat Peckham, Gary Gisselman, Andrew Plath, Paul Kage, Kevin Eichelberger, Tyler Wildman

Others Present: Brad Sippel, Andrew Lynch, Cord Buckner, Sam Pinzl

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 at 4:01 p.m.

Approve minutes of April 29, 2019 meetings

Motion by Kage/Wildman to approve the April 29 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Discuss Bike to Work with the Mayor

Sippel said that bike to work with the Mayor went well and he counted about 17 people leaving from Marathon Park. Peckham heard the Mayor rode an e-bike. The committee discussed the event. Channel 7 drove along for part of the route. Sippel mentioned that in future years with some advanced planning it would be nice to have more events around bike to work day or week, similar to other communities. Eichelberger said he'd be willing to help somebody with that. Peckham suggested we put Bike to Work week planning on the February agenda for 2020 to plan for the May events.

Discuss current planning projects

Sippel overviewed the recommendations of the Wausau Center Urban Design and Transportation Master Plan. Sippel overviewed the process of adopting the plan. Sippel said if the committee has any comments on the plan they can submit them to him. Plath asked if eastbound Forest Street traffic would still be allowed to continue east on Forest Street through the 6th Street/Forest Street/Grand Ave. intersection. Sippel said that movement should still be possible by going through the roundabout. Peckham asked if there was a plan underway that would include a River Edge Trail extension to Memorial Park. Sippel overviewed the River Edge Master Plan update process, and the tentative stakeholder meeting on Friday June 14, and public input opportunity at the Summer Kickoff Meeting. Sippel asked if the committee was interested in moving the June meeting to have a Friday afternoon stakeholder meeting. Peckham said that seems okay. Plath asked about the west side portion of the River Edge Trail. Eichelberger asked if the River Edge Committee is part of this. The committee discussed that the River Edge committee is no longer active, so this committee and other stakeholder groups are driving the River Edge update process. Peckham mentioned citizen interest in various segments of trail, such as a segment between Oak Island and Memorial Park, and missing segments on the west side between Thomas Street and the Scholfield Park.

Sippel also updated the committee on the South Riverfront Master Plan and Towers Area Master Plan. Sippel noted there will be stakeholder meetings for these plans on June 7 and 8.

Discuss Bike Share

Sippel overviewed the bike share system and the proposal received from Zagster bike share system. Peckham asked when the system would launch. Sippel said they are shooting for July of 2019, but it is a tight timeline to make that. The committee discussed the bike share system.

Discuss 2019 Wisconsin Bike Summit

Sippel overviewed the Wisconsin Bike/Walk Summit occurring in Wausau in October. The Wisconsin Bike Federation is looking for ideas for local rides, speakers and sessions for the summit. Sippel said if anyone has ideas he can relay them to Sippel. Lynch said the Bike Fed is looking to us for local knowledge about where to go, what to do, potential routes, etc. Lynch said the Bike Fed wants to highlight what we have, and mountain biking will be a big part of that. Sippel said he thought a potential session on the River Edge Trail might make sense. Eichelberger said Phil Valitchka had a lot to do with that. Peckham said he would reach out to Phil Valitchka to see if he would be willing to talk about the River Edge Trail. Lynch noted that the Bike Fed is trying to broaden the appeal of the summit to attract more of their members, because they have a large statewide membership in the thousands but typically only get a 100-200 people at a summit.

Discuss bicycle and pedestrian related crashes

Sippel said this item was placed on the agenda partially because of the fatal pedestrian crash on Grand Avenue earlier in 2019, but also to have a broader discussion about crash data and locations. Buckner overviewed the details of the crash that occurred on Grand Avenue at the Henrietta crosswalk. Buckner said it has been asked in conversations with the families of both parties in the crash if there is any type of signal that could be used here that would actually require motorists to stop at the crosswalk. Buckner noted that they do not believe the overhead beacons were flashing at the time of the crash. Sippel asked if the pedestrian was in the lane closest to the curb or the center when they were hit. Buckner said they were in the curb lane, a few steps from the curb. Lynch asked if there was a snow pile issue. Buckner noted that the crash case went to the DA's office and they had crash reconstruction there, and he does not believe they saw circumstances that would lead to a charge.

Peckham asked if there is something that is recommended by the Police Department to improve the crossing at that intersection. It was noted that this is a heavily used pedestrian crossing due to the location of the bus stop and the housing complex located here. Buckner said they do not have numbers, but it seems like the need is here from a population standpoint at this crossing. Peckham asked if there is sentiment among the committee to ask engineering to look at options to improve the crossing, including lighting and a crossing device that requires motorists to stop, such as a H.A.W.K or Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon. Gisselman asked if the transit department would have any statistics regarding bus stop usage. Peckham said they do not have those type of statistics, but do have the driver's experience on each route. Peckham said his impression from using the bus on that route, that most of the ridership boards and alights at this stop.

Motion by GG/KE to have Sippel ask engineering to evaluate options to improve the crossing, including lighting and a crossing device that requires motorists to stop. Motion approved unanimously.

Sippel displayed a map of geocoded bicycle and pedestrian crashes in Wausau on the screen for discussion purposes. Sippel noted that due to the limited number of crashes, it can be difficult to identify any patterns. He said the big takeaways that he notes are that there is a higher concentration of overall crashes in the downtown, where there are more people walking, but the majority of fatal pedestrian crashes shown on the map occurred along high speed arterial streets, such as Grand Avenue, Stewart Avenue, and 6th Street. In 10 years of crash data, Sippel noted there appears to be relatively few major injuries or fatalities. Sippel noted one bike related fatality in the last 10 years on the map, on 17th Avenue.

Discuss Places for Bikes City Rating

Sippel noted the 2019 City Ratings have been released and that Wausau still ranked well this year, although we lost the #2 spot nationwide. Sippel said this was expected because of how much new infrastructure was put in during the ranking period for 2017. The committee discussed the ranking recommendations. Lynch noted we were still ranked one of the top cities in Wisconsin. Lynch noted the ranking looks at three years of infrastructure, the last year, the current year, and planned next year.

Discuss citywide street and sidewalk areas of concern

Peckham said the railroad tracks by the Glass Hat on Third are in poor condition, and were patched. Kage said that the patch was only a couple small pieces of asphalt. Kage said the railroad tracks at DeKalb near Loppnow's are terrible. Kage also said that there were around 75 feet of potholes but then asphalt on the some big potholes were not patched in this area, so was wondering if they ran out of asphalt. Peckham asked if there was a separate number to report potholes. Sippel said the Mayor did set up a pothole phone line.

Kage asked who to contact about pedestrian push buttons not working. Sippel said there is a contact section on the City website for those. Kage said there is a button on Edgewood that was not working.

Bicycle and pedestrian news and education

Sippel included an article about multiple threat crashes. The committee discussed instances of the multiple threat issue they have observed.

Future items for consideration

Gisselman would like to discuss a grade separated crossing of Stewart Avenue near 12th Avenue by the Marathon Park entrance. Lynch noted that applications for Transportation Alternatives will be due in fall. Lynch would like the committee to brainstorm ideas and possibly come up with potential application for the 2024 or 2025 cycle years for the funds.

Future meeting date

The next Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee will meet on June 14 to discuss the River Edge Master Plan Update.

Adjourn

Motion by Gisselman/Eichelberger to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 5:09 p.m.