



**FINAL MINUTES
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN COMMISSION**

March 15, 2023

Final Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Ilango Ganga, Hervé Marcy, Joel Wolf (VC), John Zhao (C)

Absent: Grace John

Staff: David Stillman, Staff Liaison

Others Present: Cherie Walkowiak, Safe Routes to School Coordinator, Rebecca Coates-Maloon, Santa Clara County Parks, Kelly Gibson, Santa Clara County Parks, Erik Lindskog, VTA BPAC Representative

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. February 23, 2023 Bicycle Pedestrian Commission Minutes

MOTION: Vice Chair Wolf moved, seconded by Commissioner Marcy to approve the minutes as presented.

MOTION PASSED: 3-0, John, Ganga Absent

POSTPONEMENTS

None

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

Commissioner Ganga joined the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

MOTION: Chair Zhao moved, seconded by Vice Chair Wolf to begin the meeting with Agenda Item #5.

Chair Zhao brought this item forward to the beginning because there was a lot of community input.

MOTION PASSED: 4-0, John Absent

5. Finch Avenue/Calle de Barcelona Intersection Discussion (Zhao)

Chair Zhao said this item was brought to the Bicycle Pedestrian Commission (Commission) to begin the conversation about the Finch Avenue and Calle de Barcelona intersection. There was a lot of community input about this intersection because there was a student struck by a car at this intersection. David Stillman, Transportation Manager was trying to gather information about the incident but there were conflicting reports about what happened. He did not want to provide details on the incident until he had better information.

Raashi Sachdeva, public speaker said the Calle de Barcelona and Finch Avenue intersection was a disaster waiting to happen; it was only a matter of time before a big incident happened. She suggested adding a three-way stop at that intersection.

Michelle Hu, public speaker said she was a witness to the accident that happened on January 17. If there was a stop sign, the car would have slowed down and stopped.

Seema Lindskog, public speaker remarked that this intersection was reported on year after year. There were a lot of near misses and now there was a big accident; she requested a stop sign.

Purva Marfatia, public speaker echoed the other comments. She saw a lot of near misses and this issue was easily solved with a stop sign.

Henry Windjaja, public speaker said this intersection was downright dangerous. People sped by, which created unsafe conditions, but a stop sign solved that problem.

Hritvik Shrivastava, public speaker biked through this intersection every day. This intersection was dangerous because cars were not paying attention and they were not able to see cyclists because of the parked cars that blocked their view.

Prachi Marfatia, public speaker was a regular biker. There were many near misses due to the absence of a stop sign.

Kevin Guo, public speaker supported the stop sign installation on Calle de Barcelona and Finch Avenue. In the mornings there were usually long lines of cars on Finch Avenue, which backlogged cars on Miller Avenue.

Lisa Warren, public speaker was familiar with this intersection and avoided it during pick-up and drop-off times. She agreed with the stop sign installation and suggested adding “No U-Turns;” people run the stop signs and students were distracted.

Caller 0288, public speaker said her child had a near miss at that intersection. She supported the stop sign and any other actions that could be taken.

Caller 3626, public speaker witnessed two near misses at this intersection. The recent accident shows there was a problem that needed to be fixed.

Caller 1416, public speaker was not able to stress enough how important the stop sign was. He wanted a three-way stop at the intersection.

Vice Chair Wolf went out and viewed the intersection for a few days before and after school. The intersection was dangerous. The probability of there being an accident at this intersection was very high. Children were not able to ride on Calle de Barcelona and turn left because vehicles were blocking. The crosswalk was on the south side of the intersection, which dropped kids off going the wrong direction when riding home after school. A stop sign was not a bad idea.

Commissioner Marcy thought this intersection was dangerous and maybe it was harder to find someone who did not witness a near miss as opposed to someone who did. He heard mention of six years of reports from Safe Routes to School (SR2S) about the dangers of this intersection and wanted to know where those reports went and what was prohibiting this intersection from being safer.

David Stillman, Transportation Manager, said there were a lot of improvements done at that intersection over the last few years. As a next step, he suggested the pedestrian actuated flashing lights at that intersection. This was deployed elsewhere throughout the City of Cupertino with a lot of success. Before inserting an all way stop, a pedestrian actuated intersection with flashing lights was suggested. Volume and speed counts were done at that intersection a few weeks ago, which he was awaiting the results from.

Commissioner Marcy requested a better understanding of “whether a stop was warranted.” Mr. Stillman relayed that the State of California prescribes specific warrants to be met for an all way stop to be installed. The Manual Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) adopted by each state prescribes permissions and requirements for any traffic control device, be it striping, or an all way stop sign. According to the MUTCD there was certain criteria that needed to be met to enhance the safety of an intersection. This included the number cars and pedestrians that used the intersection, approach speeds, etc. According to the State of California and Federal

Transportation agencies, it was advisable for the installation to follow one or more of the MUTCD guidelines. Chair Zhao asked about the guidelines of the MUTCD and wondered if they were recommendations. Mr. Stillman replied that some were, some were worded as “shall,” etc. There was room for engineering judgement, but discretion was needed; it was prudent to follow the MUTCD.

Commissioner Marcy inquired why near misses were not in the data. Mr. Stillman explained because they were impossible to quantify and were subjective, so they were not figured into the warrant analysis.

Commissioner Ganga recapped all the issues and said staff could compile the data, and then produce a comprehensive solution that was informed. He questioned if there could be a crossing guard situated at that intersection. Mr. Stillman stated there was not enough funds for an additional crossing guard at this time. There was a Crossing Guard Warrant Analysis that was just completed, which evaluated many intersections with guards and many that did not have guards. Based on that data, staff produced recommendations for where the 16 crossing guards needed to be situated. He did not have the ability to add a guard, nor did he want to take a guard away from an intersection that was judged to need one. In the next round of evaluations, he was able to include this intersection in the analysis. Chair Zhao questioned when the earliest implementation would be. Mr. Stillman replied fall of 2025 at the latest. Commissioner Ganga wondered if the budget could be requested from the City Council. Mr. Stillman said yes and brought up that asking Council for the funds did not guarantee a guard at that intersection because there might be another intersection that had a higher need.

Chair Zhao inquired when the crossing guard program was reviewed by the Commission. Mr. Stillman explained that it was not reviewed by the Commission, it was reviewed by staff and the school district. An outreach process was involved because any time someone wanted to take a guard away and move them to another location, the residents that were affected by the guard change were not happy. There was a lot of communication with the school district to ensure it was something they supported. Commissioner Ganga interjected that he understood additional budget was needed but the Commission could try, rather than wait.

Vice Chair Wolf wondered how often the City was sued for being non-MUTCD compliant. Mr. Stillman did not know. Vice Chair Wolf was not sure the MUTCD was applicable to these situations because there was only a small window of time where the stop sign was really needed. Mr. Stillman responded that there was some room for engineering judgement, but the first step was to get the data. Chair Zhao wondered when the data would be available. Mr. Stillman said he should have it in a week.

Chair Zhao wondered if the Commission was able to point out areas for potential improvements once the data was received. Mr. Stillman said yes. Chair Zhao went through the notes he took during public comment and called out potential improvements that people wanted: 1) there were parked cars that were blocking the north side of Finch Avenue, suggested removing some cars to clear the line of sight; 2) installing a stop sign; 3) having a crossing guard; and 4) installing a speed bump. Mr. Stillman said the speed bump was a possible alternative. Commissioner Ganga said flashing beacons was missing from the list. The issue at this intersection was a comprehensive issue, it spilled over to other intersections. Chair Zhao forgot painted lanes from the list of potential improvements.

Mr. Stillman stated that in addition to the things the City was able to do, there was a responsibility to enhance defensive driving/biking, both on the part of the students and the drivers. Commissioner Marcy agreed. Commissioner Ganga added education.

NO ACTION TAKEN

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

2. Future Agenda Items (Zhao)

Carmen Road Bridge

Education on How to Use Two-Stage Left Turn Boxes

Path between Lincoln Elementary and Monta Vista High School

The Impact of Semi-Rural Designation on Bike and Ped Projects/Priorities

Reassess the Intersection at Bubb Road/McClellan Road

Stevens Creek Boulevard, Phases 1-3

Vision Zero (Workplan Item)

Lead Pedestrian Walk Interval (LPI) (start the pedestrian green before vehicles)

Lawson Middle School Bike Path

Input from Seniors on the Bicycle Pedestrian Improvements

Bollinger Road Safety Corridor Project

AB 43 – Summary and how Commission can support implementation (to what extent we can reduce speed limits)

Bicycle Licensing (to prevent bike theft)

Bicycle Facilities (Workplan Item)

Land Donation from Richard Lowenthal (Carter)

Review Progress toward BPC Objectives (Six months to annually)

BPC Input at the VTA BPAC Meeting Regarding Adult Bicycle Education
(Lindskog/Ganga)

League of American Bicyclists Application – Due 2/2023

Review Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements and Provide Input from the Public

Pedestrian Safety around Shopping Centers

Update from Safe Routes to School (SR2S)

Examine Pedestrian Walkways for Safety

Nomination of a City Representative of the VTA BPAC (Feb)

Pedestrian Focused Area in Cupertino related to the VTA Plan for Pedestrian Safety

Petition for a 3-way stop sign on Calle de Barcelona and Finch Avenue - April & May

NEW BUSINESS

3. Santa Clara County Countywide Trails Master Plan Map Update (Coates-Maldoon)

Rebecca Coates-Maldoon, Santa Clara County Parks gave a presentation on the Santa Clara County (County) Countywide Trails Master Plan Map Update.

Commissioner Marcy requested more information regarding the shift of on-street bikeway designations to transportation agencies. Ms. Coates-Maldoon responded that the original Countywide Trails Master Plan included off-street trails and on-street bike routes. Since that happened there were a few efforts from other agencies to review their master plan. Rather than have redundant information or to avoid confusion of who the lead agency was, they removed most on-street routes and focused more on off-street trails.

Vice Chair Wolf inquired about the map update for the City of Cupertino regarding the primary trails, it was his understanding there was no permission given to install the Southern Pacific Rail Trail. David Stillman, Transportation Manager answered there was a feasibility study initiated about five years ago, but Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) was no longer interested so the City had to discontinue the feasibility study. The City was interested in getting a trail along the track alignment, but that project was on hold right now. Ms. Coates-Maldoon added that the Countywide Trails Master Plan was a long-range vision which focused mainly on connectivity.

Chair Zhao questioned who the intended audience for the map was. Ms. Coates-Maldoon responded this related to trail development and was intended to be a coordinated effort within the County.

James Eggers, public speaker wondered if there was a map for trails off-street, and especially where they might be in sensitive habitats, like riparian corridors.

Vice Chair Wolf wanted to know if San Mateo County had a similar trail map they were setting up and was there going to be connectivity between our two counties. Ms. Coates-Maldoon said yes. Vice Chair Wolf wondered if there would be signage when the two trails met. Chair Zhao thought it was good to have different layers to toggle on the map and to see how this Master Plan connected with neighboring counties.

Commissioner Marcy was interested in knowing how the County measured success. Ms. Coates-Maldoon said because the Plan was not a specific trail implementation plan and so much needed to be worked out on the ground, it was challenging to insert a specific goal but overall, it was connectivity.

Commissioner Ganga wondered if the shared use paths, such as for biking and walking, were marked in the map. Ms. Coates-Maldoon responded that the Countywide Master Plan did set intended uses for each of the trails. Typically, most of the trails were hiking/bicycling/equestrian. Commissioner Ganga asked about prioritization criteria, and how the County produced that criterion. Ms. Coates-Maldoon responded that the prioritization worked differently in the incorporated and unincorporated areas. Individual cities set their own priorities for trail development and the County reflected those priorities in the Master Plan. The unincorporated County had an entire prioritization framework where they assessed the trails on a certain criterion.

Chair Zhao mentioned the recent recommendation to the City Council to rename the I-280 Trail. Mr. Stillman said that was going to Council on March 21.

NO ACTION TAKEN

The Commission took a break from 8:54 to 8:58 p.m.

4. Cupertino Safe routes to School Program update (Walkowiak)

Cherie Walkowiak, Safe Routes to School Coordinator gave a presentation on the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Program Update.

Vice Chair Wolf wondered why more kids did not walk or ride to school. Commissioner Marcy noticed an increase up until 2016, then the numbers went down; he wondered why. He also asked if the numbers were the same across all schools in the City of Cupertino. Ms. Walkowiak had not done a comparison of the numbers. David Stillman, Transportation Manager said there were some school-by-school statistics. Ms. Walkowiak said Lawson Middle School had an increase but thought there were higher rates of walkers and bikers at schools where there were parent champions.

Chair Zhao commented on the addition to the infrastructure improvements and thought the street layout might play a role. Ms. Walkowiak thought that might make a difference and cited some examples of different topography at different schools.

Commissioner Ganga mentioned Lawson Middle School and wondered if moving the bike racks had an effect. Mr. Stillman said there would be details on that at tomorrow's Lawson Middle School meeting.

Chair Zhao asked if people could provide ideas or suggestions. Commissioner Ganga brought up that in the past, the Bicycle Pedestrian Commission (Commission) wanted to work closely with SR2S. Ms. Walkowiak said if there was a topic that came up in the working group meeting that interested a commissioner, she offered to bring that topic to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Ganga suggested refreshers and discussing risky intersections regarding biking and walking. Chair Zhao agreed and said targeted intervention was helpful, but there was a question of capacity and who was able to implement.

Chair Zhao wondered what role SR2S played in recruiting parent volunteers to be unofficial crossing guards. Mr. Stillman answered that due to liability, parents were not able to volunteer as crossing guards. There needed to be training.

Vice Chair Wolf asked about having the parent ride with the student, he suggested a reward or some recognition for biking or walking. Ms. Walkowiak said there were some days called Walk and Roll Days where kids received tickets if they walked their bike and whatever class had the most tickets got the golden sneaker for the month. Chair Zhao suggested drop-off spots before the school, to lessen traffic and suggested asking students for input. Commissioner Marcy suggested cross-school competitions to incentivize students to ride or walk to school.

Commissioner Ganga asked how student behavior could be changed. When infrastructure projects were completed, what happened with walking and biking trends for students. Ms. Walkowiak thought there was going to be a big uptick after the School Walk Audit, but COVID-19 hit, and things fell apart. Commissioner Ganga suggested data to help in the decision making.

Chair Zhao asked about the Transportation Mode Survey and wondered if it was all purely quantitative or were there questions about why a certain mode of transportation was chosen. Ms. Walkowiak said the student survey was all quantitative, the parent survey included questions about transportation barriers.

Vice Chair Wolf wondered what other schools did, such as the City of Palo Alto. Ms. Walkowiak said Palo Alto's was one of the first programs in the area and their education program was more robust. All of Palo Alto's bike and pedestrian education happened during school hours. Cupertino offered their education after school. She was working with the school district to do education during the school day.

Commissioner Ganga asked to have the data from each school next time. Ms. Walkowiak pointed to where data was available online.

Chair Zhao asked about students walking to school with other kids in their neighborhood and about the walking school bus. He wondered if there was going to be more walking school busses or more routes.

This item ended at 9:45 p.m.

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

6. Staff Update and Commissioner Activity Report (All

Erik Lindskog gave a VTA BPAC update from March 8.

Commissioner Marcy attended the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) and Mayor's Meeting for March.

Commissioner Ganga mentioned the Centers of Research Excellence in Science and Technology - CREST awards nomination. There was a meeting invite for 5 p.m. on March 27.

David Stillman, Transportation Manager did not have any staff updates.

Commissioner Marcy offered to take the Mayor's meeting and SR2S meeting for April.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 10:06 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

David Stillman

David Stillman, Staff Liaison

Note: Any attachments can be found on the Cupertino Website
<https://www.cupertino.org/our-city/agendas-minutes>