



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN COMMISSION

April 17th, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Jennifer Shearin, Pete Heller, Erik Lindskog, Gerhard Eschelbeck

Staff: David Stillman City Transportation Manager

Others Present: Roger Lee, Byron Rovegno, Ilango Ganga, Kathy Chole, Gary Wong, Linda Wyckoff, Julia Miyakawa, Dinyar Dastoor, Wil Fluewelling, David Alessio, John Liu

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Shearin moved to approve the February minutes. Seconded by Lindskog. February minutes were approved. Commissioner Shearin moved to approve the March minutes. Seconded by Lindskog. March minutes were approved.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

ORDERS OF THE DAY

1) Regnart Creek Trail

a. Roger Lee stated:

- He was impressed with the feedback received from the public on the trail including good turnout at the Walk Shop.
- The Trail's goal is to provide a safe space for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Recognizes portions of the trail get close to the creek embankment
- There is 12 feet of width available throughout the trail distance with 8' paved.

- Water District will need to have adequate width to allow their trucks to traverse the trail; this will determine where railings can go.
 - Railing could be removable or collapsible.
 - There will be a meeting on April 23rd with the Water District to discuss railings and negotiate where they are possible.
 - Minutes from meeting with the Santa Clara Water District expected by 19-April.
 - Community meeting scheduled on the-24th of April to review progress of design and feedback from Walkshop.
 - Proceeding on planning to get to 65% design phase by May 21st.
 - In advance of City Council meeting, Roger will return to Bike Ped Commission on May 15th.
- b. Public Comments from Gary Wong, David Allesio, Kathy Chole, Ilango Ganga,
- Dinyar Dastoor: How was the cost estimate for Alternative 4 arrived at?
 - David Stillman: \$100K figure was based on costs for striping. Roger Lee expects the number to be appreciably higher based on a more realistic assessment of what is truly required.
 - Ilango Ganga:
 1. Railings are required for safety of children.
 2. Setbacks are too close to homes. Need 10'.
 3. Suggested looking at alternatives in view of definition of the need.
 - David Allesio:
 1. Lives near library.
 2. These trails would be a godsend.
 3. We have prime real estate that is beautiful. It should absolutely be opened to residents to give them the opportunity to meet and enjoy in an auto-free setting.
 - Gary Wong:
 1. There are places that need more than just compacted gravel.
 2. There is a grant deed from 1961 indicating there are areas that are for flood control
 3. Genuine issues of privacy and safety exist.
 4. At one point the gates to the trail were open.
 - Commission Discussion
 1. Commissioner Erik
 - a. I am a daily user of the San Tomas Creek Trail.

- b. There is no fence at all and no one is falling in.
 - c. People behave sensibly and cooperatively on the trail.
 - d. Quality is simply not comparable between on street and cycling versus on a trail from a safety standpoint. The consequences of a collision on the road are often fatal.
 - e. The Trail area is unused space and would be valuable to the community.
 - f. Proposal explained regarding reducing setback distance on home owners land from fence to house. This would be worth millions to homeowners since they could build a larger house or monetize it when they sell.
2. Commissioner Eschelbeck
- a. Suggest lining the trail with hedges or trees to bracket the trail.
3. Commissioner Lindskog
- a. Several residents have gates from their yard with access to the trail; i.e., it is being used today as a de facto private trail for those lucky enough to live alongside it.
 - b. Alternative 4 has not been discussed in the BPC.
 - c. An alternative should at least be comparable to the Trail in terms of safety since we know that cyclists are commonly injured and even killed by vehicles. (We know the ambience will be far less attractive for an on-street facility.
 - d. Cars whip through Pacifica and La Mar. It is not safe to route bicycles on high speed/traffic streets.
 - e. Along both La Mar and Pacifica any alternative should be implemented as protected (Class 4) bike lanes. Doing so would likely involve removal of parking.
4. Commissioner Shearin
- a. In favor of fences along the creek to address the fears of parents. There have not been any safety issues shown with other trails without railings between a trail and creek; this would just be to ease concerns to encourage use.

- b. San Tomas Aquino and Saratoga trails which already exist have far less width and align to creeks. There are no reports of injuries from either.
- c. Need to see an overhead view of where railings are possible.
- d. Asked whether the access point could be moved. Mr. Stillman responded that it isn't realistic due to very expensive environmental review as it is a riparian area.
- e. Asked what the 1 on 1 meetings with residents are like and whether residents have been willing to discuss mitigation. Mr. Stillman responded, "they are going well. We answer questions about the trail or history. It has been very enlightening to get a better understanding of concerns. Even with higher fence doesn't always mitigate concerns." Met with all that scheduled meetings. Others are less able/interested. Primary concerns boil down to kids falling in the creek; how to keep mischief off trail; vandalized fences; noise.
- f. Asked whether the trail can be opened as is just to walkers. Mr. Stillman responded it would still need to get the full Joint Use Agreement and be approved by City Council. No difference to doing a full trail.
- g. Asked what the plans for closing the gates are. Mr. Stillman responded No plans for closing the gates.
- h. Asked the cost of opening closing the gates. Mr. Stillman responded that info could be obtained. Commissioner Shearin requested that it be available by the next BPC meeting.
- i. Asked whether the path could be lowered in places to reduce visibility. Mr. Stillman responded there would be very significant challenges with that approach.

5. Commissioner Heller

- a. Suggested that making perfection the enemy of the good should be avoided. The city should employ a scheme whereby fences would be installed where there is enough room and leave gaps in the few places where there is not enough width.

6. Commissioner Eschelbeck

- a. Stated that while we are discussing Regnart Creek Trail today, we are not planning a vote on the trail today. That's because we do not have sufficient information about the options until we review the 65% design, which will be presented to the commission at our May 15th meeting.

- Following the discussion Commissioner Lindskog proposed the following motion. "The Bicycle Pedestrian Commission is hereby going on record as being opposed to Alternative #4 for the Regnart Creek Trail. That is because Alternative #4 is not included in either the Bicycle Transportation Plan or the Pedestrian Transportation Plan, both of which are approved by City Council. Furthermore, should any other alternative be considered, it must provide similar safety characteristics as Alternative #1 by providing physical separation between bicycles and automobiles; i.e., it must be implemented as a Class 4 bicycle lane."

The motion was voted on and passed 3-0 with Commissioners Lindskog, Shearin and Heller in favor. Commissioner Eschelbeck abstained.

2) BPC Work Plan

- a. Mr. Stillman requested that feedback on the work plan be provided to him prior to April 30th.
- b. Mr. Stillman will compile the inputs and review them with the commission during the meeting on May 15th. That meeting will be used to finalize the plan.

3) Staff Report (David Stillman)

- a. McClellan Class IV: Construction contract award approved by City Council.

4) VTA BPAC

- a. The expressways will be rebuilt. Commissioner Lindskog pointed out that this will be the ideal time to add protected bikeways. Similarly, where there is lane separation needed that should also apply to the bikeways.

5) PR subcommittee

- a. Discussed the Earth Day bike rides.
- b. Decided to consolidate down to just the family ride to focus on the bigger event.
- c. Commissioner Shearin requested Cheri to promote the ride directly to the schools in the future.

- 6) Bike to Work Day
 - a. Will be held May 9th.
 - b. Commissioner Lindskog agreed to acquire the coffee cake and food.
 - c. Commissioner Heller agreed to contact the Abundant Life Assembly of God church to secure permission to place the tent in their driveway.
 - d. Commissioner Shearin will bring the coffee.
 - e. Commissioners Lindskog, Eschelbeck and Shearin agreed to man the station.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1) Items for Future Meeting Agendas
 - a. None
- 2) Next Meeting – Information
 - a. May 15, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 10:19PM.

SUBMITTED BY:



Pete Heller, Commissioner