

Jacksonville Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Meeting Notes  
Hybrid Meeting  
April 4, 2024 @ 5:30 PM  
Ed Ball Building – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
214 N Hogan Street – Jacksonville FL

**Attendees:**

In-person: Matt Fall (COJ Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator), Austin Kelm (SORBA JAX President), Angel Kelm, Len Burroughs (NFBC), Peter Borenstein (BPAC Chair), Lauren Rushing (BPAC Vice Chair), Stephanie McCaffrey (BPAC Secretary), Wiatt Bowers

Virtual: Daniel Ashworth, Derek Dixon (FDOT Bike-Ped Coordinator), Kelly Jones, Larry Roberts (JTC Running), Todd Hollinghead (SPAR)

Peter Borenstein chaired the meeting.

**I. Introduction & Adoption of Minutes**

Peter Borenstein moved for the adoption of the March 7, 2024 BPAC meeting minutes. Len Burroughs seconded the motion. The vote to approve the meeting notes was unanimous.

The scheduled presenter, Chad Jacobs from Viva, was not present at the start of the meeting. The committee decided to move forward and discuss the remaining agenda items.

**II. Presentation and Discussion – BPAC Goals for 2024, Lauren Rushing, BPAC Vice Chair**

Ms. Rushing presented potential initiatives for BPAC to pursue in 2024.

**World Day of Remembrance (WDoR)**

- This is an international annual event, typically held on a Sunday in mid-November that commemorates people who have died due to traffic violence.
- The event has an underlying Vision Zero theme that all deaths from crashes are preventable through a Safe Systems approach.
- The event focuses on all victims of crashes, not just cyclists and pedestrians. It provides a powerful avenue to advocate and raise awareness about creating safer streets.
- Ms. Rushing helped host a WDoR event when she worked for the New Jersey Bike/Walk Coalition.
- Ms. Rushing suggested that BPAC could help coordinate and host an event in Jacksonville in mid-November 2024.
  - BPAC could make use of WDoR's promotional materials.
  - Potential ideas for the event include creating a display in a park using flags or other symbols to represent victims, putting together a press release, partners could include City of Jacksonville and North Florida Bicycle Club (NFBC).
  - Mr Borenstein was in support of BPAC hosting the event and stated it aligns with BPAC's values.
- Mr. Burroughs mentioned that the NFBC hosts an annual 'Ride of Silence' in May to commemorate cyclists who have been killed or injured while cycling on public roads.
- Mr. Fall mentioned that COJ may be able to help out with reserving James Weldon Johnson Park for the event. Also, the event provides an opportunity for BPAC to reach

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out to the City Council and the new Administration to raise awareness about traffic safety.

- **Action Items**

- At an upcoming meeting, BPAC can make a resolution to move forward with event planning.
- BPAC will work to identify potential partners/co-sponsors, including COJ, NFBC.

### **BikeWalk Organizations and BPAC**

- Ms. Rushing discussed how many US cities have BikeWalk coalitions, (typically non-profits) that host events and advocate for the needs of people walking and biking. Jacksonville does not have a similar 'BikeWalk' organization.
- Ms Rushing reviewed the history of the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee in Jacksonville. BPAC started as part of the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization, but was disbanded from the NFTPO approximately 10 years ago. There is a City of Jacksonville resolution from 2012 that recognizes BPAC for its advocacy efforts, however BPAC is not an official committee of the City of Jacksonville.
- Ms. Rushing discussed that BPAC officers have considered the possibility of BPAC filling the role of a BikeWalk organization, however, the committee currently sees value in keeping BPAC separate from an advocacy organization and rather would fill more of a technical advisory role. BPAC would like to help support the emergence of a separate BikeWalk organization.
- Ms. Rushing stated that the committee is on a mission to redefine BPAC. She showed an example mission statement from the New Jersey Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Council which fills a technical advisory role in the state.
- Ms. Rushing asked the meeting attendees for their thoughts on how to strengthen BPAC.
- Larry Roberts responded that he would like to grow meeting attendance, bringing it back up to the levels from 6 to 7 years ago. He suggested inviting back organizations that were previously involved, including bike shops, NFTPO, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office as well as encouraging the general public to attend. In 2019/2020 BPAC members were conducting audits of projects recommended in the 2017 Bike/Ped master plan and were gearing up to lobby council in order to secure funding to implement projects.
- Wiatt Bowers stated that he sees value in formally codifying BPAC with the City - it would help in getting certain representatives from different parts of the community to attend. Larry Roberts noted there would be restrictions on BPAC's advocacy role if it were to become a formalized city committee.
- Ms. Rushing mentioned that becoming a formally recognized entity would give more authority to BPAC's recommendations.
- Attendees discussed how BikeWalk organizations are more community focused and often include citizen led bike rides.

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- Ms. Rushing stated it would be a significant amount of work for BPAC to organize community events as well as serve as an advisory committee.
- Mr Burroughs mentioned NFBC has a General Director for Advocacy position as well as a non-profit wing called *Pedaling for Safety* that is involved in education safety campaigns with billboards, signs, etc.
- Ms. Rushing mentioned a major hurdle for BPAC is that it is not a registered non-profit and does not have any funding.
- Austin Kelm from SORBA Jax discussed how their organization is more mountain biking and trails focused but also involves road cycling. He expressed interest in joining forces to break out of silos and accomplish more together.
- Attendees discussed the possibility of encouraging BPAC members to serve within other City boards, such as the NFTPO Citizens Advisory Committee, Context Sensitive Streets Standards Committee, Planning Commission and the Downtown Development Review Board.

#### **Action Items**

- BPAC would like to organize a forum of existing biking and walking groups in Jacksonville to help start conversations on forming a BikeWalk coalition/non-profit.
- BPAC to explore the process of becoming a formally recognized COJ committee.
- BPAC to investigate the possibility of embedding members on COJ / NFTPO committees.

#### **Update to COJ Complete Streets Policy**

- Ms Rushing stated that BPAC sees a need for a stronger, more detailed COJ Complete Streets policy.
- There is a Context Sensitive Streets Policy stated in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and 2030 Mobility Plan, which created the Context Sensitive Streets Standards Committee in 2013.
- In 2019, Jacksonville City Council passed a Complete Streets Resolution that included high level policy recommendations.
- There are planned updates to the Land Development Regulations and the Land Development Procedures Manual - which may capture elements of complete streets, but are not an overarching policy.
- The City could benefit from a more robust policy with more enforcement 'teeth'.
- Neptune Beach and Wellington, Florida could serve as potential examples.
- Attendees discussed how a new complete streets policy would be implemented. Would this be impacting on what's set in motion with updates to the LDRs and the LDPM?
- Attendees discussed how the new complete streets policy could potentially feed into other city documents that have enforcement 'teeth'.
- The policy does not need to be long.

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- A new complete streets policy could be incorporated into the LDPM as part of its planned annual updates.
- Larry Roberts recommended BPAC members attend the next Context Sensitive Streets Standards Committee Meeting to raise this issue.

#### **Action Items**

- BPAC to determine the process for getting to an update to the policy
- Lauren Rushing is planning to speak at the end of the April CSSSC meeting about the Complete Streets policy.

#### **Lane Repurposing Opportunity - Main Street Bridge**

- FDOT recently announced the Main Street Bridge will close for up to 6 months in 2027/2028 for bridge repairs.
- Ms. Rushing discussed how BPAC could advocate for a traffic study to investigate a lane repurposing project. When the bridge is closed for repairs, there is an opportunity to collect traffic data to study the impacts on parallel routes.
- Information from a traffic study could help make the case for a future lane repurposing on the bridge to allow for dedicated cycling facilities and an improved pedestrian experience linking the Northbank and Southbank through the core of downtown.
- Ms. Rushing asked attendees if BPAC should pursue this as an advocacy campaign?
- Wiatt Bowers mentioned that the state has new rules for lane repurposing projects (refer to [HB 1301](#)).
- Mr Bowers mentioned an option may be to have a three lane section with a reversible lane. During peak hour, two lanes could be used in one direction, with one lane in the other direction, allowing for the remaining lane to be repurposed to a two-way cycle track.
- The group discussed how there are thresholds for vehicle volumes when expanding roadways, but is there anything similar for pedestrians and cyclists? It's hard to predict the latent demand for the facility due to the poor existing conditions for walking and cycling across the bridge.
- A traffic study may show that traffic disperses or uses an alternate route such as the Acosta Bridge, which is currently under capacity.
- The project also raises the question of what do we want our downtown to look like.
- Main Street is a US Route, which may raise some challenges related to jurisdiction and maintenance
- An improved walking and cycling connection on the Main Street Bridge would link directly to the 'Elbow' district downtown, which is a vibrant area that continues to grow. Connecting the district to the Main Street bridge and the Southbank could be a place making opportunity for the area.
- This is a long term effort - potentially a 10 year project
- Main Street in Springfield

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- FDOT is currently resurfacing Main Street through the Springfield neighborhood north of downtown. The current scope includes adding turn lanes, modifying parking and widening sidewalks.
- Todd Hollinghead, former SPAR Board President when the current road diet was proposed, provided some background on the project.
  - FDOT cited that Main Street was a hurricane evacuation route and that traffic counts were the reason why a 4 to 2 lane conversion was not pursued at the time.
- Springfield Preservation and Revitalization (SPAR) is working on a request to FDOT that would request reducing the number of travel lanes from 4 to 2 and adding increased walking and cycling amenities.
  - This is at an early stage. SPAR has been working on the current phase of the road diet for the past 6 years.
- The re-emergence of the lane reduction request came from conversations with Council Member Peluso, Blue Zones and the SPAR Director
- Cost and funding are still major issues, this is a long-term project.

#### **Action Items**

- Investigate if FDOT is interested in pursuing a traffic study .
- Engage with elected officials, downtown stakeholder groups.

#### **Announcements**

- American Planning Association Conference - April 13-16, Minneapolis
- NACTO Designing Cities Conference - May 7-10, Miami
- Matt Fall asked for feedback on a draft public opinion survey for the Core to Coast study
- Next meeting will be May 2nd
- The next Coffee Outside Bike Ride is April 21st -in Vilano/North St. Augustine

Meeting adjourned at 6:48pm.