

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE

2:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 28, 2017
Fort Myers Regional Library, Room A
1651 Lee Street, Fort Myers, FL 33901
239-244-2220



Meeting Summary

The meeting of the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee (BPCC) was held on Tuesday, February 28, 2017 beginning at 2:00 p.m. in Room A of the Fort Myers Regional Library, 1651 Lee Street, Fort Myers, FL 33901.

Those in attendance included:

From the BPCC

Andy Getch	Lee County Department of Community Development
Carl Karakos	City of Fort Myers
Dan Moser	Injury Prevention Coalition
Dave Wheaton	Member-At-Large
David Wagley	Lee County Department of Community Development
Dominic Konieczki, Sgt.	Lee County Sherriff's Office
Don Donakowski	Cape Coral Police Department
Doug Saxton	Village of Estero
Lee Waller	Lee County Parks and Recreation
Pim Tan	City of Cape Coral
Roger Lloyd	Lee County School District
Salli Kirkland	City of Sanibel
Sean Gibbons	City of Bonita Springs
Simone Behr	Lee County Visitor and Convention Bureau (VCB)
Syndi Bultman	Lee Health Trauma Unit
Tina Sujana	Member-At-Large

Others in attendance included Don Scott and Ron Gogoi with the Lee County MPO; D'Juan Harris with FDOT; Nicole Monahan with the City of Fort Myers; Sarah Larsen with Lee County Community Development; Nancy MacPhee with Lee County VCB; Margaret Banyan, Diane Odeh and Chris Perrigan with FGCU.

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chair Dan Moser.

The members introduced themselves. There was a quorum.

Agenda Item #1 - *Approval of the December 20, 2016 BPCC Meeting Minutes

David Wagley made the motion and Carl Karakos seconded the motion. There were no objections and the motion was approved unanimously.

New Business

Agenda Item #2 - *Election of Officers

Mr. Gogoi introduced this agenda item to call for nominations and elect the Chair and Vice-Chair. He said he received an email from current Vice Chair Jennifer Duffala Hagen, who could not be present at the meeting, in which she expressed her desire to be Chair. Mr. Gogoi continued that if it is the will of

the Committee to appoint her they would need a motion and a second. A committee member asked if it occurs by default unless she declines it and Mr. Gogoi said it does not.

Sean Gibbons made the motion to elect Jennifer Duffala Hagen as Chair. It was seconded by Syndi Bultman. There were no objections and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Gogoi then called for nominations for a Vice Chair.

Doug Saxton nominated Dan Moser for Vice Chair. Carl Karakos seconded the motion. There were no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

At this time, the committee decided to hear the walk on agenda item. Mr. Moser commented there are items that should be brought to the BPCC first but they are presented out of order to the committees due to the meeting schedules. Mr. Scott said this walk on item came from staff and should have been scheduled. Mr. Gogoi said this works because this meeting is before the TAC/CAC/MPO Board meetings in March. Mr. Moser said he could think of a number of times where items came up between the meetings and were brought to the other committees before the BPCC. Mr. Scott gave the example of the Dangerous by Design report and explained that couldn't have waited.

Walk-on Agenda Item – Review and Approval of Preliminary Bicycle Pedestrian Priorities

Mr. Gogoi presented this agenda item explaining that FDOT has requested preliminary lists of priority projects by funding categories to be submitted by March 17th. The final list of these MPO annual priorities will be brought before the BPCC at its May meeting for recommendation before the MPO Board adopts them to meet FDOT's July 1st deadline. Mr. Gogoi showed slides of the priorities and commented on each. These were also included in the agenda packets.

Attachments A and B of the agenda packet include the preliminary bicycle pedestrian priorities for SUN Trail and Transportation Alternative (TA) funds respectively. **Attachment C** of the agenda packet includes the preliminary bicycle pedestrian priorities for SU 'box' funds. There are no new bicycle pedestrian projects for TA and SU funds this year and all projects in the individual lists include the unfunded priorities from last year. For SUN Trail funds the new projects are the Kismet Parkway Multi Use Trail from Del Prado Boulevard to NE 24th Avenue and the FPL Easement Multi Use Trail Feasibility Study in Bonita Springs. There may be additional projects, as these are discussed through the Committees and the local agencies, for the final list of priorities that are adopted in June.

Mr. Gogoi noted that bicycle pedestrian projects will be competing with congestion management projects for SU funds. Congestion management projects include both traffic operation improvements and transit projects. Mr. Gogoi added that the purpose of this agenda item was to give the committee an idea of the bicycle pedestrian projects being submitted. The final list of SU priorities in May will include a combined list of bicycle pedestrian and congestion management projects by priority order.

A committee member asked Mr. Harris to ascertain why the priorities needed to be separated and why a bicycle pedestrian project isn't considered a congestion management project from the start unless it is a pure recreational trail. Mr. Scott explained that a certain amount goes to each category – transit, congestion management, and bicycle pedestrian. Mr. Gogoi stated he did not want to have this discussion now but rather in May when dollar amounts can be discussed. Mr. Scott said the purpose of this agenda item for today is to make sure the committee is okay with the way the projects are listed. Mr. Gogoi asked if there were any questions. A committee member asked if the Safe Routes for Schools Cortez project was part of this. Mr. Gogoi said SRTS projects for the year were submitted in late December to meet a FDOT deadline and those are a different set of priorities.

Mr. Gogoi continued with a discussion on SUN Trail projects and regional projects. He said there was only one project on record for FDOT TA "Any Area" funds and it is the Winkler PD&E study. Mr. Gogoi

asked Mr. Harris if pre-applications will be still accepted since the February 2nd submittal deadline had elapsed and Mr. Harris said yes. County staff said they would like more time to examine one of the projects before the MPO moves forward. County staff then asked what the criteria was for the roads and Mr. Scott said they have to be part of the regional roadway system. Mr. Scott said that because it is regional they must work with Collier also. A committee member then asked the status of the Winkler Canal project and Mr. Gogoi said they would talk about it later in the agenda since that project is not part of the current priorities under discussion. Mr. Gogoi said they could propose another project as a backup in case the county pull the McGregor project. Mr. Getch said there is a process that needs to be followed. Mr. Scott stated that if an entity is LAP certified they must do the job and if they aren't LAP certified they should be. Mr. Gogoi added that funding could be based on LAP certification. Mr. Harris said that an exemption could be applied for if the municipality is just starting out like the Village of Estero. There was a brief discussion about the Shared Use Path Feasibility project along the FPL easement, its' project limits, and alternate projects for SUN Trail funds. Mr. Gogoi explained this would be a combined SUN Trail project with Collier County.

Agenda Item #3 - +Update on Southwest Coast Regional Trail Alignments in Lee County

Mr. Scott and Mr. Gogoi provided updates on all developments leading to the FGTS Plan Update and the Southwest Coast Regional Trail Alignments in Lee County.

There have been a lot of recent developments on the Florida Greenways and Trail Plan (FGTS) and also the Southwest Coast Connector (SW2C) in Lee County. The Office of Greenways and Trail (OGT) in Tallahassee is currently updating its FGTS Plan, the Land Trail Opportunity Map and Priority Map.

Mr. Scott said the MPO Executive Committee adopted a Resolution (**Attachment C of the agenda packet**) in support of a Feasibility Study that will evaluate (1) existing bike ped facilities in the SW2C alignment from the proposed extension of JYLP Trail to Littleton Road (2) connections between Downtown Fort Myers to SW2C and (3) pedestrian bridge next to the Caloosahatchee Bridge connecting North Fort Myers and Downtown Fort Myers. This concept was also vetted and approved at the December 20th BPCC meeting. Subsequently, staff has submitted an Appropriation Project Request to the Florida Legislature for \$1.90 million to conduct the feasibility study.

Mr. Scott said he had attended a joint meeting earlier in the day between the City of Bonita Springs and the Village of Estero on the SUN Trail Program. He said there was some discussion on purchasing easements from the railroad and a discussion of construction and funding options of the trail in their area.

Mr. Scott explained that as part of the OGT led Priority Trail Update, the MPO has been working with OGT staff at considering an east west regional trail that will connect Fort Myers to West Palm Beach possibly using corridors already identified in the Land Trail Opportunity Map. An east west regional trail provides us with an opportunity to include another corridor on the SUN Trail Network thus allowing us to tap into more SUN Trail funds. An east west connection linking the east and west coast in South Florida has become critical with the River of Grass Greenway now becoming a non-starter. There are two alternatives suggested, one along SR 80/ SR 78 and one along the Abel Canal in Lehigh. Mr. Scott said there will be more discussion on this especially after they reach out to Hendry and Palm Beach Counties. Mr. Gogoi said OGT would like the final selection from Lee and Hendry County by June of this year.

Mr. Gogoi explained that as part of the Priority Trail Update, MPO staff is also pushing the elevation of the Coastal Loop alignment (**Attachment A of the agenda packet**) from a Land Trail Opportunity Corridor to a Priority Trail Corridor. This concept was vetted and approved by the BPCC at its December 20th meeting. The MPO Board has now endorsed the concept at its February 17th meeting and adopted a resolution urging the Florida Greenways and Trails Council to include the alignment in the Priority

Trail Map (See adopted Resolution in **Attachment B of the agenda packet**). The Coastal Loop will provide a more leisurely coastal detour to the SW2C.

Agenda Item #4 - Lee County VCB Presentation

Ms. Behr presented a power point presentation that provided takeaways from the National Bicycle Tourism Conference that she attended in St. Petersburg from the 2nd to 4th of November last year. She said there were over 200 attendees. Ms. Behr added that there were trends showing increases in bicycle related activities and also in the networks of paths provided to cyclists. She said in Europe there are bicycle routes that have bicycle friendly hospitality networks along the way.

Ms. Behr also highlighted the agency's bicycle pedestrian related activities. She said they have increased their social media presence through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. She stated they have also changed their website to include bicycle events. They have been tracking the users of the website and they have seen an increase in frequency and time spent on the biking and hiking page. They have also been offering a stipend to a resident artist/photographer/videographer that is local and they choose a different photographer every quarter. The photographer produces video and photos for the VCB. She showed a few of the pictures that were recently taken and some of the pictures are on their website. They have added new links on their website and have new marketing campaigns. She showed one of their marketing campaigns geared toward millennials. She explained the national Bike Your Park event in September and this year will be the second year they have participated in the event. The event promotes our area, our parks, and cycling. Another event is the Travel Rally and it is sponsored by the VCB and celebrates tourism. It is May 2nd at Lakes Park. She also let the committee know there is funding available for marketing and events.

Mr. Gogoi asked about the Beach and Shoreline program and Ms. MacPhee of VCB explained it is a maintenance CIP program. The primary goal of the program per state statute is to repair, enhance, and protect the beach and shoreline. Beach accesses have been funded and bike paths that connect users to the beach could be eligible. The cycle closed on February 17th and she didn't see anything submitted by Fort Myers Beach. Mr. Gogoi said the Town would be submitting next year and Ms. MacPhee said to have them send it to her and she will get it vetted by the county attorneys prior to that. Mr. Scott asked if the TDC decides. Ms. MacPhee said there is long review process and the TDC decides the amount that is allocated.

Ms. Behr continued with her presentation stating that this year's National Bicycle Tourism Conference will be in St. Petersburg Beach again in November. Ms. Behr and Ms. MacPhee are planning to attend and are hoping some local partners will also attend. They may be able to put together a presentation on what is happening in Lee County. Ms. Behr concluded her presentation and asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Scott asked if Lee MPO could use the VCB's pictures. Ms. Behr said yes.

Agenda Item #5 - Presentation on Walking Audit Final Report

Dr. Margaret Banyan and Diane Odeh of FGCU presented this non-action item. Dr. Banyan introduced the walking audit team. She gave a power point presentation of the Final Report on the Walking/Bike Audit of the Tice and Dunbar neighborhoods. On January 17th, BikeWalkLee (on behalf of all three partners involved in the project-- BikeWalkLee, FGCU, and Goodwill Industries), released the [Walking Audit Final Report: A Collaborative Community Project, Jan. 2017](#). This collaborative community project, funded by a Southwest Florida Community Foundation grant, was focused on working with residents of the Tice and Dunbar neighborhoods to assess their walking and biking environments and to facilitate engagement in the community. Dr. Banyan explained that the one of the goals of the audits is to educate the community about safe walking/biking environments as well as inform them who they can contact to correct any issues. The other goal is safer streets. Dr. Banyan said at the center of it

all is equity in transportation. The reason they chose the walking audit locations was because in these areas most people walk or bike because they need to. Safer walking and biking environments increase equity and quality of life. Dr. Banyan had a report packet passed out to the committee that explained the walking audits and included maps. She said they used the well-established AARP model which entails getting people out on the street and looking at their infrastructure. They used the model because it was replicable. It also had a toolkit and could be standardized. They conducted 11 total audits with seven being done in Tice and four in Dunbar. Walking audits had been done previously at Tice Elementary and Dr. Banyan noted that sidewalks have been added since then. They also looked at Orange River Elementary in Tice and Franklin Park Elementary in Dunbar. In addition, they looked at a church along Nuna Avenue where many people walk to church.

Dr. Banyan turned the presentation over to Ms. Odeh who explained the positives and negatives found during the audits. She said there were secondary consequences of the audit in that people were connected with helpful services provided through Goodwill and churches. Also, bicycle safety may be introduced to school through a parent volunteer. During the walking audits, they handed out easy to understand request for assistance cards.

Dr. Banyan discussed research and the 42 questions they formulated to ask about quality of life. She explained that many of the people on the walking audit couldn't read or only spoke Spanish or Creole. She added this made it difficult to ask the questions. They scaled the questions back to only seven total key pre and post questions. The results indicated that everyone learned something but they learned the most about civic engagement. Dr. Banyan felt the results also indicated that most of the people knew how to walk safely but they may not know how to bicycle safely. They also studied the differences between English and Spanish speakers. English speakers started out at a higher knowledge level but they all learned the same. A committee member asked if the study was broken down into age groups and Dr. Banyan said they only surveyed those over 18 since it was an FGCU study. They surveyed 59 people total.

Ms. Odeh continued the presentation with some suggestions like slowing traffic, providing better drainage, and better placement of bus stops. She explained that the overall infrastructure could be improved with sidewalk repairs, fixing curbs, and updating signage. She said maintenance of overgrown grass would be helpful to promote accessibility. Dr. Banyan said they made calls to the county and the reported issues were fixed.

Ms. Odeh commented on the next steps which include working with FGCU colloquium and sociology classes in April to replicate walking audits to enhance civic engagement among FGCU students. Dr. Banyan added that the research questions they developed in the January walking audits are good and can be used by the students. She is interested in studying if it makes a difference who participates in the walking audits. She encouraged the committee members to conduct walking audits and to contact them for help with the audits. Dr. Banyan also sent the report to AARP. She concluded the presentation and asked if the committee had any questions.

A committee member suggested a walking audit of San Carlos Park and commented that some of these issues found in the Tice/Dunbar walking audits might be ADA violations for the local jurisdictions. Ms. Odeh mentioned that there were concerns from the elderly about getting around in wheelchairs or individual motorized transportation.

Another committee member voiced concern over the lack of sidewalks near schools but said when issues are reported to the county they are fixed quickly. Ms. Odeh said that was part of the education piece, letting people know they can call issues in to the county to be fixed. A committee member added the Lee County School District should know where there is a gap in the two-mile walking radius around the school and they should have plans in place to fix them. Dr. Banyan mentioned the Dangerous by Design report and said hopefully over time the walking audits can highlight the issues, they can be corrected, and we won't be number one for dangerous walking/biking conditions again.

A committee member liked the cards the walking group developed and handed out. He also agreed that the county is quick to act when RFAs are submitted. Ms. Odeh said when she went back to take more pictures at Franklin Park Elementary, some ADA curbs were already installed.

Mr. Gibbons asked when they could schedule the walking audits and Dr. Banyan said to contact her.

Mr. Getch urged the committee to let the county know if there are issues that need to be dealt with. He also encouraged them to attend the BPAC meeting.

The committee decided to hear the report on the Winkler Canal shared use path.

Agenda Item #7 - TIGER and Other MPO Project Updates/Developments

Ms. Monahan gave the report on the Winkler Canal Shared Use Path. She said there is a LAP agreement the City has with FDOT for a feasibility study to look at east west corridor options for a connection between McGregor and US 41. She noted there was a huge outcry against the Winkler Canal pathway from the neighborhoods in the area of the Winkler Canal. Those residents also voiced their concern at a Fort Myers Town Council meeting. At that meeting, the council voted to take the Winkler Canal corridor off the table. The City went back to FDOT and told them they would like to use the programmed funds of \$150,000 but aren't sure how to proceed since the Winkler Pathway is not going to happen. They have decided they will go through with the study but the Winkler Canal corridor is a no build option. This is keeping with the original LAP agreement that allowed and encouraged them to look at other options.

David Wheaton expressed his disappointment at how the City of Fort Myers Council bowed to a local minority group by taking the best and cheapest route off the table. He reminded the committee that the property does not belong to those people, it belongs to the City of Fort Myers. Ms. Monahan said the study wording takes into account security and privacy of residents but she agreed that the Winkler Canal shouldn't have been taken off the table before the study was even conducted.

Dan Moser left the meeting and asked Doug Saxton to take over as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Mr. Harris said the next step is to find a consultant. Ms. Monahan said they are advertising and the scope is the same.

A committee member asked if a portion of the original Winkler Pathway configuration could still be used since part of it is not residential. Ms. Monahan said she needed to look at the petitions and see who signed them.

Another committee member asked Mr. Harris if they needed an extension and Mr. Harris said they were good until the end of the year.

Agenda Item #6 - Discussion on Bike Ped Inventory Data Sharing

Mr. Scott stated that the MPO is currently updating the existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities maps and we are asking each jurisdiction to provide recent additions to the system since the last time this was requested (last updated September 2015).

Mr. Getch said the county would be happy to coordinate.

Old Business

Agenda Item #7 cont. - TIGER and Other MPO Project Updates/Developments

Mr. Gogoi provided an update on the Able Canal PD&E Study. The study is running in to the same kind of issue as the Winkler Canal Pathway feasibility study. Lee County Parks and Lee County MPO reached staff out to the Town Lakes homeowner's association and they were mainly against the pathway on their side of the property. They said they would support the pathway if it was on the other side, or the south side, of the canal. Mr. Gogoi discussed the alternative possibility with FDOT regarding building the pathway on the south side of the canal. There was a brief discussion about the John Yarbrough Linear Park Trail and the similar issues they had encountered with its construction. Mr. Gogoi said they could possibly use the existing bridges along the Able Canal to switch from the north to the south side to avoid the Town Lakes sub division.

Mr. Scott spoke briefly on the TIGER Wayfinding project and said letters went out to the local jurisdictions about maintenance of the signs. He added the estimate for installation and fabrication should be in this week.

Mr. Scott said he would speak on the Dangerous by Design Report at next month's meeting. Related to that, the MPO Board directed staff to update the Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Action Plan.

Mr. Gogoi said the Bike Ped Master Plan for Fort Myers Beach had one project advisory committee meeting and a public outreach meeting. A committee member asked who their consultant was and Mr. Gogoi said it was Jacobs and Alta.

Mr. Getch asked when would be a good time to update the cost feasible bike ped trails component of the Long-Range Transportation Plan maps to reflect the Regional Lee/Collier pathway network. Mr. Scott said the regional network needed to be updated based on what happened with the River of Grass Greenway. Mr. Scott added that now would probably be a good time.

Agenda Item #8 - Local Government Reports on Bicycle Pedestrian Related Projects

Ms. Kirkland commented that there were a lot of bikes out on Sanibel. She said a study had been conducted in the recent past which suggested to paint over the stop signs on the road at bike/ped crossings. The City of Sanibel completed painting over them and it didn't seem that anyone noticed.

Agenda Item #9 - LeeTran Report

There was no report.

Agenda Item #10 - FDOT Report

D'Juan Harris called out several changes to the presentation given by FDOT last year on the US 41 project from Winkler Avenue to SR 82 [FPN – 431313-1]. FDOT will continue coordination with the City of Fort Myers to do a PD&E Study on this corridor in order to continue to assess the applicability of a road diet on the corridor. The list of notable changes from the FDOT presentations made to the MPO advisory committees from last year are listed below:

- Removing the signal at Oakley Avenue and installing a new one at Jefferson. This is based on the left turning traffic at Winkler. This will allow more storage for southbound vehicles turning left onto eastbound Winkler, and will also provide a way for fire trucks to turn out of Jefferson.

- No longer reconstructing the driveways as part of this project – this will be done in a subsequent project that comes out of the PD&E. This later project will also replace all the lighting on US 41.
- In current project the existing lights will be retrofitted with LEDs and supplemental lighting added at crosswalks.
- Utility Work by Highway Contractors Agreement (UWHCA) with the City of Fort Myers will no longer be done as a part of this project
- Pavement design will be done to extend pavement life for 8 years

Agenda Item #11 - Public and Member Comments on Items not on the Agenda

There were no public comments.

Agenda Item #12 - Announcements

There were no announcements.

Agenda Item #13 - Information and Distribution Items

Dr. Banyan handed out a packet on the walking audits.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.
