

## Whatcom County Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee

February 8, 2023

### Minutes

**Members present:** Sonja Max, Stephen Zylstra, Gary Malick, Sunny Beaver, Sandy Phillips, Walter Hudsick, Patrick Alesse

**Members excused:** Kelly Kendall, Pete Sharp

**Staff present:** Jason Ardt (Public Works), Hugh Conroy (WCOG)

**Public present:** none as of start, and No public comments were submitted

Sonja Max called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

1. There were no public comments.

2. Walter moved to approve the January minutes. Gary seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

#### 3. Co Chair Updates

- The Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Commission has been discussing multimodal trails and are supportive.
- A BNSF railroad connecting Lynden to Sumas and Everson may be nearing abandonment. A meeting with the City of Lynden, WCPR, City of Bellingham and Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Foundation was called to discuss interest in railbanking this section.

#### 4. Safe Streets for All Grant Update (Hugh Conroy)

Hugh Conroy gave a detailed presentation on the Safe Streets for All Grant. The goal of the grant is to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes on public roads. WCOG has received \$200,000 for the planning phase (18 months). After developing a plan, additional funds may be applied for by various local entities to implement the plan. The planning phase may include looking at crash data creatively to come up with unique solutions to preventing fatal and serious injuries. There will be a significant equity component with public input; historically underserved communities will be considered.

The biggest challenge is how to change behavior. Humans in vehicles cause 70% of fatalities. We can keep making changes in roadways and vehicles but the biggest factor is human behavior often related to speeding. Sandy mentioned that kids walking and biking to school safely was very important. Gary pointed out the safe routes to the school program, He told us how COG works for transportation to complete route maps integrated into the project.

#### 5. Marine Drive Phase II Discussion

Sonja brought up the question of how the committee recommends circumventing the Marine Drive bridge across the railroad tracks. Jason said the railroad is not supportive of an at-grade crossing at Marine Way/Old Marine Drive due to visibility issues around the curve for train drivers. A route connecting Marine Way to Cliffside Drive was brought up. Jason noted private property concerns at

the south end of Marine Way. More information may be necessary to rule that route out completely. A route through the City of Bellingham's Lockwood property would be more straightforward and likely much faster to complete as it is fully on publicly owned land.

7. **Inspirational Video** Sonja shared a video about the death and rebirth of bicycle highways. The video can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OMA4h0ylwQ>

**Meeting adjourned at 7:12 pm**