

Whatcom County Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting

July 21, 2021

Members Present: Stephen Zylstra, Sonja Max, Robin Thomas, Pete Sharp, Gary Malick, Sunny Beaver, Sandy Brewer, Brian Johnson, Kelly Kendall

Members Absent: Patrick Alesse, Jae Heidenreich

Staff Present: Jason Ardt (Public Works)

Meeting called to order at 5:45 by Sonja

No public comments

June meeting minutes approved.

Route Map Update, Sonja The route map is pretty far along. Stephen and Sonja will have a meeting with WCOG for feedback and recommendations. Ideally the route map will become adopted into the comp plan; Jason says that we could have it added to the plan potentially without waiting until the next update (next update is in 2025). Sonja will check in with the Planning Dept about how to go about doing that. We need to prioritize actions since these will take a long time. Discussion about prioritizing the Bellingham to Ferndale route as the most important. Other priority routes should serve the Lummi Nation and potentially the ferry. Marine drive is being improved and would be an ideal place to include as the next priority. Other routes might include Birch Bay and Blaine, also being worked on by the Birch Bay Parks and Recreation District (BBPRD). The past prioritization included a scoring system that could be re-used.

Further discussion of various routes near Birch Bay and Blaine. Many of the routes have segments with high traffic and/or high speeds. Some adjustments to the map can be made before we take it to the COG. The Blaine Rd (State Route 548) is very difficult and most routes wind up on it.

The school zone in Kendall is also a priority, and WSDOT may be working on some improvements with the community. There is a route being implemented from Maple Falls to Glacier on adjacent dirt roads by the Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Department. It is listed in the 20 year WCPR capital improvements list.

Sonja and Stephen will work on the prioritization chart and send it out.

Jason – mowing on Birch Bay Lynden road, usually a sweeper follows the mowing, and there is a road maintenance request form that can be filled out to report this as a problem if debris is left.

Robin had made a request to participate in the crash meeting that takes place, but the response was that this is not part of the BPAC mission, and it will be the first time this group will meet. Sonja asked if there will be minutes, and Jason will check but isn't sure how it will be conducted.

There have been 10 serious injury collisions since the beginning of the year, one involving a bicyclist. The driver was cited for not using due care. In the Lynden area there was a negligent driving ticket issued, for a driver that was found to be going 50 in a 35mph and struck a cyclist without any causation. The cyclist

had a minor injury. Another minor injury collision occurred with a cyclist. It was early morning, and the cyclist did not have reflective gear. No speeding was involved and no citations were issued. There was a collision on Slater that has not been reported on yet, Jason will look for it.

Since two collisions involved safety problems with the cyclist, we might consider how to get information out to riders. Much of the problem has to do with allotted road space and speed differentials.

Video of RR crossing with lights and stop lights from a rural European area. Pete had sent this as an idea for the Marine Drive problem, but Jason says the RR will not approve an at grade crossing there. In Europe laws are very different, and in the US the RR has complete control over crossings.

Sandy thanked Public Works for how they did recent chip seal, as he rode in the Tour de Whatcom.

The potential ride for BPAC was checked out with the executive's office, it can only be a private ride and can not be sponsored by the County. This can be discussed off-line.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm