



Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Wednesday, August 9th 2023 @ 6:00pm

See BPAC website (below) for meeting information:

<http://www.whatcomcounty.us/275/Bicycle-Pedestrian-Advisory-Committee>

BPAC Minutes

Members Present: Sonja Max, Stephen Zylstra, Gary Malick, Pete Sharp, Kelly Kendall, Sandy Brewer, Richard Joss, Patrick Alesse, John Upston, Ryan Corley

Member Excused: Sunny Beaver

Staff Present: Jason Ardt (county public works liaison), Bennett Knox (county parks director)

Public Present: Daniel Tepper

Sonja Max called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm

Public Comment: Mr. Tepper mentioned there is a Bluegrass Festival Labor Day Weekend at the Deming Log Show grounds. The North Cascades Bluegrass Festival is a joint venture by the Whatcom Parks and Recreation Foundation (WPRF) and 5 Starr Jams. Its primary purpose is to help raise funds for the WPRF. The Whatcom Parks and Recreation Foundation (WPRF) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization whose main purpose is to “support and promote parks, trails and recreational opportunities throughout Whatcom County and its communities.” More information about the WPRF can be found at www.wprfoundation.org and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/wprfoundation/>. Proceeds from the North Cascades Bluegrass Festival will go to help strengthen the foundation, its programs and its mission.

Approval of July Minutes: Richard Joss moved to approve the minutes of the July BPAC meeting. Pete Sharp seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Co-Chair Updates:

The upcoming group ride from Ferndale to Bellingham was discussed. The ride will be on 16 September at 10:00 am. Smart Trips has been notified and may publicize in their newsletter.

This is the announcement that was provided to Walk and Roll and Smart Trips for publicizing:

The Whatcom Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is organizing a 2023 group ride. Please join us Saturday, September 16th at 10AM for a group bicycle ride between Ferndale and Bellingham. Even if you are not an experienced rider - no problem - all are welcome!

This ride is designed to create a safe and fun environment for seasoned and less confident cyclists to experience riding a bicycle between Bellingham and Ferndale and perhaps consider cycling as another transportation option in the future. We will have volunteers and tools to assist you with bike adjustments and even some minor repairs such as flat tires, if needed. Please bring a spare tire tube if you have one so we can assist you if you get a flat tire.

To begin the ride, everyone will gather at Star Park in Ferndale, then we will all ride together as a group at a leisurely pace

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about 6.5 miles to Marine Drive Park in Bellingham (This should require about 45 minutes riding time). We will take a break and then ride back to Star Park using a different route so the riders can experience alternatives for commuting between these two cities.

The ride is free and the fun is free. Just bring a bike and a helmet, and if you wish, some water and some snacks. See you then.

It was asked if there needs to be a waiver for those participating. Jason will look into this with the executive's office.

Gary Suggested confirming this before placing an advertisement in the Cascadia Newspaper

SmartTrips Funding

Update from Pete Sharp on his suggestion that the county make a \$12,000 donation annually to the Smart Trips Program. He has communicated this but the staff involved are on vacation. Jason Suggested this start in 2024. More to come from Pete next month.

BPAC Co-chair resignation

Stephen and Sonja announced that they are planning on stepping down from their positions as Co-Chairs of the committee next month. They are looking for volunteers from within the present members. There was lively discussion of the effectiveness of the committee, and the benefits of having co-chairs vs. a single chair. It was also discussed whether the committee should restructure with more of a multimodal trails focus. Patrick thinks the committee is doing good things and should continue. Daniel shared thoughts from his 8 years on the committee and asked the group to reflect on the question what does success look like? He shared that developing a vision, mission and goals statement could help.

There was an overall feeling of not being a priority with the county.

Patrick shared that even though they aren't perfect the county does get things done and we should not compare it to the Bellingham city government. He stressed the appreciation of the Co-Chair model

This conversation ended with no volunteers stepping up at this time.

Pedestrian Route Map

There was discussion about the Ped Plan. The group reviewed the plan from 2011, this plan is linked to on the BPAC website. Here is a link to this Plan: <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/239/Whatcom-Pedestrian-Bike-Plan-PDF?bidId=>

Mr. Knox said he has often referred to this document.

The group read over some of the projects listed on page 28.

Daniel was part of the committee when this was created and commented on the process.

Additional Updates from Jason

There was a petition and letter sent to the executive's office with 259 signatures by members of the Sudden Valley community that are concerned about the dangerous conditions along Lakeway drive, Lake Whatcom Blvd and Lake

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Louise Road. Jason noted that if this takes priority, projects already on the 6 year TIP would get pushed off. The group agreed that even though the area on Lakeway is a concern the current projects should remain as the priority.

Jason showed some slides of the current updates to the 6 year TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) One point of concern was the delay in the next phase of the Marine Drive project known as Marine Drive II. The delay concerns more planning needed by the county to deal with automotive tire dust in the drainage part of the plans. Pete expressed dismay with the delay. Note this project is TIP # R16

Gary made a motion that we reach out to the county staff with a letter of concern on this delay of a long awaited project. This motion was seconded and Pete agreed to craft a letter for this purpose.

More from Jason on the TIP:

Two new items were added under the heading of Multimodal Capital Construction:

M1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Demonstration Project

M2 Multi-Modal Regional Trail Corridors

Sonja and Stephen mention how thankful they were to Elizabeth Kosa our new Public Works director and her staff for getting this on the TIP

Here is a link to county site where the TIP can be found: <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/351/Capital-Programs>

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm

5. Bike to Work and School Day station – May 19

6. Discuss returning to in-person meetings

7. Inspiration

8. Announcements

9. Adjourn