

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force**  
**Minutes**  
**January 16, 2020**

**Introduction & Administrative Details**

- Sign in and brief introduction of all attendees: Anna Barton, Bruce Emory, Ken Putnam, Scott Dickens, Grace Curry, Barb Mee, Randy Warren, Colin Kinton, Mike Sule, Eila Sule, Till Dohse
- Facilitator for the night: Till Dohse
- Minutes: Barb Mee
- Review of [Minutes from November](#): OK'ed
- [2019 Annual Report](#) distributed: No comments offered
- Agenda: OK'ed

**Guest**

Ken Putnam, City of Asheville Transportation Department Director gave a presentation on plans for possible cross sections of Riverside Drive between Hillside and Broadway (Section D of the I-26 connector project.) The choices were:

- **Cross Section A** is showing on public hearing maps, 3 lane cross-section w/Multi Use Path (MUP) parallel to RR tracks. Shoulder on east side could be grass or paved. Retaining wall separates I-26 and Riverside Drive.
- **Cross Section B** tries to match RADTIP, two 11' lanes, two 5' bike lanes, sidewalk on east side. Current speed limit 45mph, so bike lane may not be attractive.  
Q: Can speed limit be lower? A: Potentially 35, depending on design speed.  
Q: Sidewalk between retaining-wall to guardrail? A: No sidewalk.
- **Cross Section C** modifies B, adds buffers for on-street bike lanes. Sidewalk only on west side. No center turn lane.  
Q: Is there enough room? A: yes.  
Q: Would Pearson Bridged turn lane stay? A: Probably.
- **Cross Section D** Includes two bike lanes with buffers, MUP, Side walk on both sides. This cross section is too wide to fit along the entire route. Limitation is that design must fit between RR tracks and interstate.  
Q: Will this affect the greenway plan? A: No. Greenway study is ongoing separately.

The group brought up the following issues and ideas to address and/or explore:

- If the speed limit was lowered to 35, would it change anything?
  - Even 35 is inappropriate for children.
  - Road must support target speed.
  - We should not keep building for highly competent riders.
- A multi-use path (MUP) without bike lanes is a problem since experienced riders are not appropriate on MUP.
- Dirt and rocks encroach bike lane now. Businesses need to stop tracking stuff into the road.
  - Randy: would be better if maintenance was better.
- If there is room, D is the best option. We should seek to build infrastructure that encourages diversifying mode share.
- Near Broadway, businesses are on both sides, pedestrians need access to that side.

- If the trajectory is toward protected bicycle lanes, there needs to be accommodation for turning bicycles, and to access businesses.

#### Additional Questions / Comments:

- Could B or C be modified so that MUP on one side? Might serve more people.
  - Could one take out the utility strip? A: No utility strip needed
  - Could the car lane be shrunk to 10'? A: No
- A typical MUP has a 2-foot shoulder.
- On MUP from Clingman to bridges to Haywood/Florida: City is paying to make width 14'.
- Final Environmental Impact Statement was signed last week as was the Record of Decision.

#### After the discussion the consensus of the group was:

- D is preferable, but if there is not enough space then C is the next option.
- Priority should go to the Bike lanes with a protected buffer and the Multi-use Path.
- Sidewalk on east side least important. Don't sacrifice integrity of west side for it. However, Near Broadway consider a walkway to businesses on the east side.
- D is preferred, but group understands space is an issue. If one goes with option C, move as much as the 5' from retaining wall side to the west side.

Q: Will there be a chance to review again? A: Yes. We're at the starting point to work with NCDOT.

Q: Will there be some cost sharing, for example a county grant? A: County got a grant to study where the greenway should go from Hill St to Broadway.

DOT combined this into the I-26 connector. After the conceptual study, the county asked if the city would administer. To best of Ken's knowledge, it is in our hands now, but is on back burner waiting for design money to be available in May. We are Benefitting from NCDOT's revised Complete Street policy. It already saved us \$300k-\$400k on Y-line sidewalks.

Colin brought up the idea to address the railroad crossing - RADTIP. His company has been in discussion Dr. Ron van Houton at W Michigan University, a behavioral scientist/researcher with regards to an In-road ped crossing signs. He has been researching new proposed signs for bicycles crossing skewed RR tracks. He might be interested in studying, but would need funding to provide for video detection at crossing. Colin estimates \$7500-\$10k range.

We thanked Ken Puttman for his time and the opportunity to give input.

#### **Discussion/Project Work**

- Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) application - final questions, comments Final meeting Jan 27 at 5:30 at Odds Cafe on Haywood Drive.
- Mike Sule mentioned that BFC - League just released Bike Friendly Business (BFB) and Asheville now has 10 BFB, the highest concentration in NC. For reference: Durham has 4, Raleigh has 3. We also have the only Platinum in the State. See [bikeleague.org](http://bikeleague.org) for details. Mike also noted that 5 new BF businesses participated in AoB BFB workshops with 3 existing ones serving as facilitators for new. The 10 businesses were:
  - Platinum: Liberty Bicycles, New Belgium Brewing

- Gold: Flying Bike, Industry 9 (silver last time)
- Silver: Motion Makers, Youngblood
- Bronze: Asheville Yoga Center, McHone Performance Training, Rainbow Community School, CAKE Websites and More

### **Old Business**

Barb asked if the group looked at the Retreat Report and the goals that were established, and to submit comments. The sense of the group is that a retreat would be helpful every other year, but every year is probably too often under normal circumstances. There needs to be time to do the things identified at the retreat.

### **New Business**

Watch-for-Me NC updates. Barb will need assistance putting materials out and thinking up stuff. Till offered to help.

### **Regular Updates (brief updates/announcements and input from Task Force)**

- Asheville Police/Fire/Rescue - No Report
- City project updates
  - Overlook sidewalk completed
  - New pedestrian signals and marked crossover on Patton Avenue,
  - Signals by Airport
- Multi-Modal - Randy gave the report. No major Bike/Pae issues addressed.
- Street Tweak Project - Coxe Ave review is next Wednesday at MMTC. Mike has a list of recommendations from the South Slope Neighborhood Association (SSNA) in the AoB report. Expect a deconstruction of the Coxe Ave Project. City may want some of the traffic features taken out. Mike will act in good faith. On Friday, Mike will have a design review meeting based on city comments.

### **Announcements / Events**

- Next Bike/Pedestrian Task Force meeting Feb 20.