

## **Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force Minutes, February 17, 2022**

**Vision:** *For Asheville to be a community of connected pathways that is healthy, safe and accessible for people of all ages.*

**Mission:** *To educate the public about bicycle and pedestrian transportation; to advocate for the development and maintenance of safe, convenient and inter-connected facilities; to promote the benefits of walking and biking for individuals and community health.*

### **Introductions & Administrative Details**

- Each attendee introduced themselves: Anna Sexton from City, Till Dohse, Facilitator, Claudia Nix, Dave Love (new member from Merrimon Ave neighborhood, Terri March, Colin Kinton, Pat Katz (from Multi-Modal), Scott Dickens, Mike Sule, Dawn Barr (new president of BRBC), Grace Curry, Randy Warren (from Multi-Modal).
- Claudia Nix took minutes
- We did not vote on January Minutes

### **Old Business**

- Till brought up the possibility of honoring Barb Mee & Janet Barlow who passed last year. The city has a policy of honoring with a Bench for \$1000.00 or planting a tree for \$500.00 through the Parks & Rec. Dept. All agreed we would like to have a bench for each. Perhaps Janet's on the Hominy Creek Greenway and Barb's on the Wilma Dykeman Greenway. We will have to raise the funds.
- Initiating the Walk Friendly application process. Comments about Asheville on the Walk Friendly Web Site. We want to get a group together to work on this project. Terri will look for the past application. It was felt that the Close the Gap Plan will benefit us in this application.

Link: (<https://www.walkfriendly.org/communities/asheville-nc/>)

### **New Business**

- We have been invited to attend the up-coming Multi-Modal Virtual Meeting. Anna will send the link before the meeting on Wed, Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Close the Gap Plan will be presented and they would like to hear our opinions on this plan.
- We discussed the DOT public meeting on Monday, Feb 28 at the North Asheville Community Center. They will be re-paving Merrimon Ave from I-240 to Midland Drive in Beaver Lake with the possibility of a conversion from 4 lanes to 3 lanes and would include bike lanes and a center turning lane. Randy requested that our committee should make a formal motion in support of this conversion. The DOT is concerned about public outcry and may propose reducing the conversion to a shorter amount (such as Weaver to Midland Dr. The request came from the city because of the number of crashes on this road and deaths & injuries to pedestrians, bicyclists & motorists.

After much discussion we came up with the following motion which passed by all who could vote. " Bike & Pedestrian facilities are essential for Merrimon Ave and the conversion from 4 lanes to 3 lanes should be extended to the length of Merrimon Ave to provide safe and predictable facilities for all people moving by a variety of modes." This will be sent to Jessica Morris, Assistant Transportation

Dir. It was also suggested that folks should send positive comments to Steve Cannon, Project Coordinator for NC DOT.

Anna sent this link for folks to learn more: <https://www.ashevillenc.gov/projects/>

•Report from NY Times, “Pedestrian Deaths Spike in U.S. as Reckless Driving Surges”. Is Asheville traffic part of this phenomenon?

- **Regular Updates** (brief updates/announcements and input from Task Force)
  - City of Asheville -Anna reported ...
    - The new 1 mile of greenway which will connect the RAD-TIP to Woodfin has gone thru feasibility and will begin evaluation of actual location planning. City is hoping for area from Wilma Dykeman to Pearson Bridge will be along the river.
    - City will be purchasing counters to help with ped & bikes county for the next 3 years
    - The College & Patton Bike Lane project will be a protected bike lane on the left side of the road and will help make our bike network connected which will help our Bike Friendly Application.
  - Multimodal Commission – no report as Randy was driving. Minutes from this Commission is a video recording with brief written minutes only covering decisions made.
  - French Broad River MPO – no report
  - Buncombe County – no report
  - NCDOT update -no report
  - Asheville on Bikes/BRBC/AARP/Street Tweaks/other groups
    - AOB has a 34 page report referencing other cities on their study of Merrimon Ave. To see this go to:  
<https://ashevilleonbikes.com/asheville-on-bikes-publishes-study-of-Merrimon-4-3-conversion-plans>  
For more information on the College to Patton bike lane go to:  
<https://ashevilleonbikes.com/patton-ave-college-st-bike-lanes-planned-in-downtown-asheville>

### **Announcements/Events**

- Next Bike/Ped Task Force meeting is in March 17th

Meeting adjourned at 7:00