



Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Regular meeting of the Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

June 15, 2016, 4:45 PM

444 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903

401-680-8400

Overseeing Body: City of Providence Department of Planning and Development

Voting members present: Eric Weis, Laura Bozzi (arrived late), Jef Nickerson, Michelle-Cortes Harkins (arrived late)

Alternate voting members present: Alex Krogh-Grabbe, Michelle Walker

Non-voting Ex-Officio members present: Bill Bombard, Martina Haggerty

Eric Weis called the meeting to order at 4:45 PM.

A motion was made by Mr. Weis asked to approve the May 2016 BPAC meeting minutes provided that a small typographic error in the minutes (transposing 10' and 11' in the third bullet on page 2) be fixed. This motion was put on hold until additional BPAC members arrived.

Mr. Weis asked that the fifth agenda item, Potential Bicycle Improvements through Downtown to improve access to Classical High School, be moved to the beginning of the agenda. All agreed. Mr. Weis discussed the letter sent to Mayor Elorza from Ella Boyan, a middle school student in Providence, requesting improvements to make bicycling safer and easier between Downtown and Classical High School. Ms. Boyan and Mr. Weis discussed Ms. Boyan's specific recommendations to improve this connection, which included bike lanes on the Washington Street bridge of I-95, improvements to make the intersection of Washington and Empire streets more bike friendly, and protected bike lanes along all of Washington Street.

After further discussion of this agenda item, the BPAC made the following recommendations to the Department of Public Works:

- The Washington Street bridge over I-95 should be restriped to include bike lanes by either a) creating three 10' wide vehicular travel lanes and two 5' bike lanes, or b) reducing the number of travel lanes on the bridge from three down to two 11' lanes and creating two 6' wide bike lanes, each with a 3' buffer between the bike lanes and the vehicular travel lanes.
- The "no parking" zone/underutilized right turn lane across from the Public Safety Complex and Fire Station on Washington Street between the I-95 bridge and Dean Street should be enforced and two 6' bike lanes should be painted.
- One lane of on street parking should be removed on Washington Street between Empire and the I-95 bridge in order to accommodate bike lanes in either direction.
- Empire Street should be restriped between Weybosset Street and Sabin Street. One of the three vehicular travel lanes should be eliminated and the remaining two travel lanes should be reduced to 11' in width in order to accommodate two 5' wide bike lanes and two 3.5' buffer zones/door zones between the parking lanes and the bike lanes.
- Sabin Street should be restriped in order to accommodate a one-way parking protected bike lane, similarly to the soon to be implemented Fountain Street parking protected bike lane.

A motion to approve the above recommendations was made by Jef Nickerson. Alex Krogh-Grabbe seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Weis asked that the Commission move ahead with approval of the May 2016 BPAC meeting minutes as his previous motion to approve the minutes was still on the floor. The motion was seconded by Mr. Krogh-Grabbe provided that a small typographic error in the minutes (transposing 10' and 11' in the third bullet on page 2) be fixed as requested by Mr. Nickerson. All voted in favor.

Mr. Krogh-Grabbe asked for clarification regarding when it was appropriate for the alternate Commission members to vote. Ms. Haggerty clarified that the alternate commission members only vote if one of the regular voting members is absent at the time of the vote.

Mr. Weis introduced the next agenda item, Francis Street modifications. Ms. Haggerty introduced Joe Wanat from VHB (the Mall's consultant for the improvement project). Mr. Wanat described the scope and details of the project to the Commission, noting that VHB had been hired by the owners of the Mall to create plans for improvements to the streetscape, sidewalks, and landscape along the Francis Street edge of the Mall. The Commission discussed the details of the project with Mr. Wanat and also discussed the need for clarification regarding the interface between other commissions such as the Capital Center Commission and BPAC on projects that require review by both Commissions. Mr. Wanat suggested that the City either have someone from the CCC sit on the BPAC for review of projects within the CCC or vice versa. There was general agreement that this was a good idea for future projects that might overlap the two bodies. After further discussion of the project, the BPAC made the

following recommendations that they requested to be written into a letter to DPW to request that the Mall owners modify their design:

- The crosswalk across Francis Street near Finance Way should be widened several feet to the north and the size of the curb ramp at that location should be expanded several feet to the north as well. The length of the planned wall at this location should be reduced in order to better accommodate bicyclists crossing the crosswalk who are headed onto the walkway underneath the Mall.
- Signage that has been developed by the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council should be incorporated into the project.
- Opportunities to enhance the lighting further underneath the Mall along the River should be investigated and implemented as part of this project.
- The special pathway tiles intended to be included in the sidewalk should be extended from underneath the Mall closer to the crosswalk location in order to encourage cyclists and pedestrians to continue on to the pathway to the Woonasquatucket River Greenway.
- Signage should be developed and incorporated in order to direct pedestrians to ADA compliant Mall entrances.
- A crosswalk and ADA curb ramps should be installed near the entrance to the Mall between PF Chang's and Panera Bread, across from Station Park, to improve pedestrian safety for those who often cross Francis Street at this location.

A motion to approve the above recommendations was made by Jef Nickerson. Michelle Cortes-Harkins seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Weis introduced the next agenda item, Harris Avenue modifications, which was brought to the Commission for review of the initial scoping phase. Ms. Haggerty read a summary of the staff report out loud to the Commission, highlighting the wide curb to curb width of the street which currently does not have striping for travel lanes or parking lanes. After discussion of the project and potential improvements, the BPAC made the following recommendations:

- Harris Avenue should be striped between the 6-10 on ramp and Atwells Avenue to include one 11' vehicular travel lane in each direction (total two vehicular lanes), one 5' bike lane in each direction each with a 2' buffer area (total two bike lanes), and one 8' parking lane.
- South of the 6-10 on ramp and north of Atwells Avenue, Harris Avenue should be striped to accommodate the same configuration, but without the 2' buffers for the bike lanes.

- Better signage should be posted near the 6-10 ramps where Harris Avenue splits.
- Dashed bike lane crossings should be painted to and from the Harris Avenue bike lanes and the Broadway bike lanes and to and from the Broadway bike lanes to the Harris Avenue bike lanes to increase the visibility of the bike lanes through this busy intersection.

A motion to approve the above recommendations was made by Eric Weis. Jef Nickerson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Due to the late time, Commission agreed to postpone discussion of the potential bicycle and pedestrian improvements to streets surrounding the new LINK District waterfront parks and Providence River Pedestrian Bridge.

Mr. Weis asked for any announcements or staff updates as part of the final agenda item. Ms. Haggerty announced the Vulnerable Road Users Safety Action Plan walk through that is planned to occur tomorrow on the I-95 Service roads adjacent to Downtown as well as along Broad Street and invited Commission members to attend.

The meeting adjourned at 6:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Martina Haggerty.