



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

City of Billings & Yellowstone County
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 23, 2024, MEETING TIME: 11:30 am
1st Floor Conference Room of 2825 3rd Ave. N

DRAFT

- Call to order:** Nikki Zimmer, BPAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:30 am.
- Members present:** Kristi Drake, City; Dave Coppock, Planning Board; Anna O'Donnell, City; Jason Wood, County; Joan Schey, County; Stephanie Donovan, City
- Others present:** Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator Emma Hardy, Transportation Planning Intern; members of the public as listed on the sign in sheet.

Public Comment Period:

- a. **Comments on items not on the agenda and request to add items to future agendas –**
Richard Llewelyn a retired orthopedic surgeon, raised an issue regarding conflicts between pedestrians, bikers, and e-bikers on Big Ditch Trail. In the first incident, a girl on a pedal bike struck his wife's elbow. In the second incident, a large man on an e-bike charged his wife at high speed, stopped abruptly in front of her, smirked, and then rode away. Richard noted that he encounters this e-biker daily and he consistently smirks, rides at 25 miles per hour, weaves through pedestrian traffic, and fails to give warnings that he's coming. Richard suggests that e-bikes should not be permitted on the Big Ditch Trail or, if they are allowed, he suggested that riders should be required to announce their presence to pedestrians.
- b. **Online comments and comments received by the Active Transportation Planner –**
None

Motion. Approval of the meeting minutes of March 26 2024: Dave Coppock, BPAC member, moved to accept the minutes. Joan Schey, BPAC member, seconded. All voted in favor.

New Business:

- a. **Presentation. Subdivision Regulation Updates. Dave Green, Planner II, presenting.**
Dave Green, Planner II, briefed the committee on proposed legislative changes to subdivision regulations, emphasizing their aim to enhance public health, safety, and welfare for future homeowners. The changes include mandates for streetlights, increased park accessibility, and restrictions on cul-de-sacs. Dave provided an overview of the pros and cons associated with each proposed regulation. Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator, said she will email the facts sheets to the committee.

Nikki Zimmer, BPAC Chair, inquired whether these policies would apply retroactively. Dave clarified that they would not. Nikki then asked about the timeline for park development. Dave Green indicated that there were no specific policies in place for that. Kristi Drake, BPAC member, asked whether the new regulations would necessitate the construction of connections from subdivisions to amenities like the Big Ditch Trail. Lora explained that under the new regulations, developers would be required to install all trails designated by the Pedestrian Bicycle Master Plan as part of required infrastructure.

Kristi asked for BAPC to draft a letter of support for the new regulations and requested a timeline for when it would be presented to council. Dave said that they will present it to the planning board May 28th, have another public hearing, and then present it to council the second week in June.

Kristi made a motion to send a letter of support to the Planning Board and the City Council to support the recommendations brought forth by the planning department for limiting cul-de-sacs, increasing lighting, and ensuring that any trails specified Pedestrian Bicycle Master Plan are installed. Kristi also made a motion to send a letter of support to the County Commissioners to support ensuring that any trails specified Pedestrian Bicycle Master Plan are installed. Jason Wood, BPAC member, seconded. All voted in favor.

Stephanie Donovan, BPAC member, volunteered to write the letter of support.

Old Business:

b. Discussion Update. Safety on Big Ditch Trail. BPAC members discussing

Anna O'Donnell, BPAC member, asked for an update on the etiquette marketing campaigns and signage. Lora stated that she is unsure about the current status of the marketing campaign; however, she confirmed that the signs are completed and currently being installed along the Big Ditch trail.

Kristi proposed taking immediate action while waiting for the marketing campaign's implementation, suggesting PSA announcements, trail striping, and involving trail patrol in addressing the issue of the problematic e-biker. Lora said that Emma Hardy, Transportation Planning Intern, will create some PSAs and put them out on social media by next Friday. Kristi said she will send information pertaining to the PSAs to Emma.

Jesus Ochoa, Billings Police Department Volunteer Coordinator, provided Richard with his contact information to gather more details about the problematic e-biker.

Nikki proposed implementing speed limits on the trail. Jesus said that it's a complex process requiring enforcement beyond the city's jurisdiction. Kristi suggested adding non-emergency contact number stickers or decals to trail signs so trail users can report misconduct. Lora recommends discussing the feasibility of putting the stickers up with the Parks Department.

Jesus said that he is in the process of developing a volunteer trail patrol program and is currently consulting other trail monitoring systems, such as the ski patrol and the City of Oakland, to establish a framework. He said that while there is interest from community members in joining the program, Jesus is unable to proceed further until he has tangible materials or information to provide them. Kristi asked when the program is expected to launch. Jesus explained that to ensure it's done properly, with thorough review and input from others, it's scheduled to launch next year.

c. Crossings on Rimrock Road. BPAC

Stephanie provided an update to the committee regarding her research on Safe Routes to School, specifically focusing on Rimrock crossings eligible for funding from the Safe Streets for All grant. She identified only one school, St. Francis, whose buffer zone stretches from 17th St to Beth Dr on Rimrock. Stephanie said there were only a few recommendations proposed for this section including buffered bike lanes, merging both bike lanes, or installing a central bike lane. Stephanie said that the first two options are favored over the third. Stephanie clarified that recommendations within the specified Safe Routes to School areas would qualify for funding from the Safe Streets for All grant. Additional recommendations outside those areas would not be eligible for funding from the grant.

Lora updated the committee on a recent meeting between city engineers and the Rimrock task force. She said that due to this meeting, the engineers are now well aware of the crosswalk issue on Rimrock.

For potential crosswalks on Rimrock, Dave recommended one halfway between Virginia and Wisconsin. Stephanie recommended focusing on the crossing at Missouri St and Highwood Dr.

d. Public Comment

Shanell, a member from the public, was almost got hit by a truck that drove up on to Big Ditch Trail on 38th and Fairmeadow Dr on April 12th. She said that there are no barriers preventing vehicles from driving onto the road. Shanell also noted that she has seen small four-wheelers and electric bikes drive very fast on the trail.

e. Review and mapping of PD crashes

The group ran out of time and did not get to review mapped crashes from March and April 2024.

Emma demonstrated how use the digital crash data map.

f. Discuss tree grant and if there are active transportation facilities that could benefit from trees within grant area.

BPAC members reviewed the tree grant map and discussed where trees could be placed. Nikki requests a timeline on when the trees will be planted from Elyse. Stephane suggested developing a map that BPAC members can collaborate on, marking potential sites for tree planting.

Other Business: None

Future agenda items: None

Kristi moved to adjourn; Dave seconded. All voted in favor.