



**CITY OF COLUMBIA**  
**BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)**  
**June 14, 2021**  
**4:30 PM**

**Virtual meeting using conferencing technology**  
**Columbia, SC**

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**PAMELA BYNOE-REED • ZACH CAVANAUGH • DEREK DAVIS • CHRISTINA GALARDI**  
**ANNA GILBERT • DOUGLAS GIOVANETTI • GEORGE KOKOLIS • CARMEN LATIMER • JENNIFER LEAPHART**  
**BETSY NEWMAN • RACHEL THOMASON JOHN • CYNTHIA WATSON • MARY SCOTT-CHANCEY WILLIAMS**

**In attendance:** Zach Cavanaugh, Derek Davis, Christina Galardi, Anna Gilbert, Douglas Giovanetti, George Kokolis, Carmen Latimer, Jennifer Leaphart, Cynthia Watson, Mary Scott-Chancey Williams, John P. Epting (CPAC appointee), and Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

**Absent:** Pamela Bynoe-Reed, Betsy Newman, Rachel Thomason John

**Staff:** Leigh DeForth, Dana Higgins, Shane Shaughnessy, Lucinda Statler, Taylor Wright

**I. CALL TO ORDER- Chair Watson**

Chairwoman Watson called the meeting to order at 4:34pm, and welcomed new members. She introduced and welcomed Mayor Benjamin.

*Carmen Latimer entered the meeting at 4:34pm.*

**II. REGULAR AGENDA**

a. Welcome Mayor Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin thanked BPAC members for their service, and talked about some of the opportunities in front of the City with regard to walking and biking. He indicated he was focusing on the implementation of the spaghetti map of bike/ped priority projects prior to the end of his tenure as Mayor, and asked BPAC for their goals for the year and years to come.

Chairwoman Watson thanked the Mayor for his engagement with BPAC and walking and biking infrastructure. She noted that BPAC looked forward to more outdoor events as the City reopened, and mentioned Mayor's Bike Ride as an event she would like to see occur once more before Mayor Benjamin left office, and hoped to get that on the calendar. Chairwoman Watson asked the Mayor to provide some of his expectations of BPAC, and Mayor Benjamin noted that his goal was to leverage the talent, ideas, and passion of BPAC members so Council could receive specific direction on how

to move biking and walking forward in Columbia, especially in developing a cultural shift towards walking and biking. The Mayor asked for BPAC's thoughts on what their priorities for the City were.

*John P. Epting (CPAC appointee) entered the meeting at 4:42pm. Christina Galardi entered the meeting at 4:43pm. John P. Epting (CPAC appointee) left the meeting at 4:51pm, returning at 4:56pm.*

Chairwoman Watson reviewed BPAC's strategic plan initiatives: noting the walk and bike tours, the Walk Bike Ambassador program, and marketing. Chairwoman Watson provided an overview of the bike/ped tours program. Ms. Galardi reviewed the Walk Bike Ambassador program, noting that a preliminary curriculum of three sessions and the anticipated schedule (potential schedule to start in September, with opening applications for participation in August, and promotion in July and August). Content would focus on general bike and pedestrian practices and safety, planning processes in Columbia and how to be engaged, and opportunities for community advocacy and development of participants' own initiatives in collaboration with other partners. Chairwoman Watson noted that each of the strategic plan initiatives had a strong emphasis on education, and that BPAC would appreciate assistance with cross promoting, and Mayor Benjamin indicated he would be happy to have his staff assist in that effort, and Chairwoman Watson noted that BPAC would keep the Mayor's Office posted as they moved these items forward.

There was brief discussion of the spaghetti map, and Chairwoman Watson noted that infrastructure was not one of the Committee's annual strategic planning initiatives for the coming year as they had little control over infrastructure decisions, and that BPAC was focusing on education.

Ms. Williams noted that tied to the creation of a cultural shift, she was interested in increased bike parking infrastructure in the downtown. She discussed the potential for bike parking and bike lockers with new development. Ms. Statler noted that staff could work to pull existing bike parking data for BPAC, and also noted that the new Unified Development Ordinance, which was slated to become effective August 30, 2021, included some additional bike parking standards for new development. Ms. Statler also noted that existing parking garages did include bike parking, but that this could be an opportunity for education and outreach regarding spaces that might not be readily apparent to the average user. The Mayor asked staff to work with BPAC and follow up on what bike parking might be needed, and where it might be needed. He noted that most of the comments he received were tied to providing bike infrastructure that felt safe and providing parking for vehicles. He asked staff to share the PUD document/information about bike parking and infrastructure in Bull Street, and noted he would start that conversation with Hughes Development.

Mr. Giovanetti noted that an expansion of Blue Bike SC would also be helpful, especially outside of the City's downtown core. Chairwoman Watson noted that Blue Bike had provided some usage data in the past. Mr. Giovanetti also suggested road diets and the installation of temporary delineators on wider roads throughout downtown could be helpful in testing low-cost temporary infrastructure improvements prior to the pursuit of funding for full implementation. There was some discussion/ review of both the Calhoun Street project and the use of wave delineators for temporary installations. The Mayor and staff discussed how the temporary installation was under discussion in March of 2020 immediately prior to the City's COVID response, and that as Calhoun had received funding for the installation of permanent improvements, temporary installation may be possible in other areas in the future. The Mayor thanked BPAC for their time and engagement.

*Mayor Benjamin and Mr. Wright left the meeting at 5:07pm.*

b. Approve May 10, 2021 minutes

Mr. Kokolis made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, Ms. Leaphart seconded, the motion to approve the minutes was carried by unanimous vote.

c. Open Streets discussion

The Committee and staff discussed the timing for Open Streets, noting that Spring and Fall were most desirable weather-wise. Ms. Galardi also noted that in addition to BPAC engagement, community engagement would be critical to success. She also noted that if both Open Streets and the Walk Bike Ambassador program were set to occur in the Fall, it would be difficult for her to provide leadership on both. Committee members leaned towards planning for an event for the Spring of 2022. Ms. Galardi noted that one of the first steps was to identify the location(s) for a 2022 event, and it would be helpful if interested BPAC members met to discuss that outreach. There was some discussion of past Open Streets events and other street closures in the City, and how Open Streets might proceed, inclusive of partnerships with other groups and governmental agencies. Chairwoman Watson suggested that a subcommittee might be formed to focus on Open Streets, and Ms. Williams suggested that it may be helpful to focus on Open Streets at every other meeting. Ms. Galardi noted that a good action item would be to brainstorm potential partnerships for the Spring Open Streets event, and that the energy dedicated to the Ambassador program could alternate with Open Streets. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that it would be helpful to identify a location first, and then proceed with planning for partnerships from there. Ms. Williams indicated that ECCO (Earlewood Community Citizens Organization) was very interested in hosting a future Open Streets event, potentially as a connection between Earlewood Park and Marshall Park. Ms. Galardi noted that a park-to-park route might also be a good option, and that she was happy to join a call with ECCO regarding the possibility. Action items prior to the next meeting were to follow up with ECCO and plan to discuss Open Streets further at the next BPAC meeting.

d. Committee reports

- Ambassador program- Christina Galardi

Ms. Galardi noted that she had not submitted an Ambassador program report, noting that the next step was pending the Marketing subcommittee's engagement on communications development and prep work.

- Bike/ped tours/partnerships- Betsy Newman

Ms. Gilbert noted that she, Mr. Giovanetti, and Ms. Newman were able to meet and identify and list a number of existing walks that could also involve partnerships with a number of groups in Columbia. Next steps for the subcommittee is to take suggestions on what to prioritize or advertise via social media. She noted that the subcommittee's goal was to showcase one walk a month on BPAC's Facebook page, and that a list had been provided in the linked document. She indicated there were also some next steps for the Marketing subcommittee, including feedback on items such as including a logo. Chairwoman Watson indicated that Bart Walwrath, past BPAC member, reached out last week to indicate that he was working with a Finlay Park redevelopment initiative and that there would be some walk/bike activities to collaborate on in Finlay Park.

- Marketing- Cynthia Watson

Chairwoman Watson indicated that the Marketing subcommittee had been able to meet, and understood that the bike/walk tour priorities were more tied to graphics, logo development, and the sharing of information regarding the bike and walk tours out to the community. Ms. Gilbert noted that if there was anything the subcommittee needed from the bike/walk tours subcommittee regarding logo needs. Ms. Galardi noted that if anyone had not contacted her regarding the Walk Bike Ambassador program, but was interested, to please reach out, and asked about the creation of a gmail account and the marketing for the Ambassador program. Chairwoman Watson noted that the subcommittee hadn't had the opportunity to talk about the Walk Bike Ambassador program to date. Ms. Galardi indicated she would be happy to follow up with Chairwoman Watson regarding the Ambassador program's marketing needs. Chairwoman Watson noted that they would plan to address the request from the Ambassador program subcommittee in their next subcommittee meeting. Chairwoman Watson also noted that the Marketing subcommittee still had access to a couple of planning interns. There was some discussion of social media, and how the subcommittee could proceed with posting to social media, and Ms. Statler noted that the Marketing subcommittee could post to the BPAC Facebook page, and that the City's Public Relations, Media and Marketing Department had just asked that staff be added as an administrator to the BPAC page, and turning off the comment option on posts. Ms. Statler noted that as long as post content was tied to BPAC and BPAC-related events it was fine for the Marketing subcommittee to generate content and make posts to the BPAC Facebook page.

*Mr. Shaughnessy left the meeting at 5:49pm.*

- e. City Planning Update – staff

Ms. Statler noted that there was some promising news regarding a potential earmark for bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and reviewed the "spaghetti map" for BPAC members. She noted that this map was developed several years ago, with the goal of connecting existing facilities and leveraging Penny routes to improve connectivity. Ms. Statler noted that as the proposed facilities were not yet fully designed, and given the current construction market, staff anticipated that the majority of the proposed routes shown on the map might be funded, given estimated cost figures. Ms. DeForth noted that the routes in orange might be the one exception, as these were routes that were not part of the City-County IGA and their status was currently unknown. She noted that the second half of Millwood should also be included in the map, as it was identified for future SCDOT funding. She mentioned that a list of priority sidewalks was also provided.

Ms. Gilbert asked if bike parking was part of the plan, and Ms. DeForth noted that in addition to the data and updated UDO Ms. Statler mentioned earlier, the City did have a bike rack partnership program that subsidized the installation of City-branded bike racks within the right-of-way, and that bike parking was located in each of the City's garages. Ms. Williams asked if there was a way to cross-reference the equity overlay with bike parking to provide a greater understanding of access. Mr. Giovanetti and Mr. Davis noted that there was a product available to retrofit existing parking meters with bike rack hoops. There was some further discussion of the City's bike rack partnership program, and how BPAC could help get the word out about existing bike parking, as well as advocate for increased bike parking. Ms. Williams noted that she would be happy to take photos of bike parking facilities around downtown and advertise those on the BPAC Facebook page, as well as asking people where they would like to see bike parking, as well as linking straight to the bike rack partnership program forms. Mr. Davis noted that Cola Town Bike Collective published bike rack data, and that this could be a great resource for an educational campaign.

Ms. Statler noted that the Calhoun Street road diet public meeting was scheduled for June 22nd (both at 5:30 and 6:30pm), and reviewed the history and purpose of the meeting. She noted it was a virtual meeting, and she'd be happy to answer any additional questions about that project and/or meeting.

### **III. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **a. Election of Vice-Chair**

Ms. Statler noted that no nominations had been received, so that this item would be shifted to the next meeting, and she encouraged folks to nominate themselves or others. Ms. DeForth spoke briefly about PARK(ing) Day, and noted that if BPAC wished to design and sponsor a parklet, applications were due August 20<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Statler noted that bike/ped counts would be scheduled for September over the course of two weeks, so that the City would be back on schedule for those in the Fall, with Public Space Public Life Counts in the Spring.

### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **V. ADJOURN**

Mr. Cavanaugh made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Kokolis seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:11pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,  
City of Columbia Planning & Development Services Department**