

Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2022

Call to Order/Establish Quorum. Chair Tom Clark called meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

Roll Call. Members Present: Taylor Sutton, Tom Clark, Ted Sunder, Mike Klemens, Michael Higgins, Peter Blythe Kieffer, Ben Long, Loren Easter.

Public Comment. None

Approval of Agenda. Agenda was approved with 15 min. specified for bicycle counts.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes. The February Minutes were approved.

Bicycle Park (BMX track, cross-country trail, rodeo skills course). The council had additional discussion on intentions for programming between the Springfield Park District and the Boys and Girls Club at the Cox Comer Pump Track (when completed). Tom shared the BikeTek grant application in support of youth and minority bicycle education. If funded, a key concept is investment in a youth education bike fleet - possibly stored at B&GC.

Bicycle Facility Enhancements (bike racks, parking corral, lanes, signage). Loren participated in a Ride Illinois phone call with an energy development (wind/solar) company looking to invest in pedestrian path development south of Springfield. This would possibly connect/extend either Sangamon Valley Trail south of Centennial Park or Interurban Trail south of Chatham. Power lines would run adjacent to the developed path. Tom noted that the company should seek to cooperate with the County, which is already working on the SVT extension. Loren also shared insights on Koke Mill Road improvements between Washington Blvd and Old Jacksonville Rd. The redesign includes a 10' wide pedestrian path parallel and separate from Koke Mill with a connection to the Sangamon Valley Trail.

Bicycle Tourism (apps, routes, signage). IDNR will resume hiking and biking tours of Springfield historic sites this spring.

Youth Bike/walk Safety Education. Taylor advised that the Owen Marsh PTO has agreed to hold an initial bike/walk to school day on May 4th. The PTO stipulated that the event must be inclusive and not just about bicycling.

Adult Education. No report.

Springfield Bicycle Club Involvement in bicycle friendly community activities. Ted said that SBC is planning special rides and programs to commemorate its 50-year anniversary.

Committee Reports

BFC (Bronze) Renewal Committee. Tom noted that the BFC application portal will re-open in late spring with significantly revised questions.

Bike Count Committee. Taylor put together a summary draft with data tables from the two 2021 counts. Time was reserved for feedback and discussion on the draft.

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Mike's initial comments included: Trail ridership is high. Commuting seems low, looking at the 7-9 am slot. His experience was 4-6 pm tended to be recreational riders. Of the non-trail routes, 2nd Ave ran above average perhaps due to bike accommodations. Mike personally saw a lot of riders on sidewalks - did others also report that?

Tom Clark also shared some comments: 2nd Ave data appears to support the usefulness of existing bike accommodation like bike lanes. Were any observation locations for future accommodations, and if so, was the data was supportive? Wayfaring signs on recommended routes may be useful when new accommodations are less feasible. However, getting people to use those routes may require education. People feel safe on trails and use them. What steps might we take to get people comfortable riding in the street?

The Council discussed strategies to educate bike users on direction of travel (with traffic) and recommended cycling routes. Taylor noted that the City could encourage use of these routes by prioritizing the paving schedule and street sweeping. It was noted that the new signage on routes might also lead to more concentrated usage, which may in turn help justify new accommodations, and that on-street accommodations seemed to lead to more cyclists riding on streets. Ben mentioned the need to identify areas where plentiful off-street parking is available and on-street parking might be converted for bike accommodations, especially near hospitals. The Council talked about what new on-street accommodations might be implemented, and whether a bike count might be done before and after project completion.

The Council revisited prior discussion of establishing a City bicycle coordinator position, which would require a City commitment to infrastructure improvement and to getting the Springfield community behind bicycle friendliness. Such a coordinator might help ensure that shared goals supported by practical priorities are agreed upon by advocates and planners, and that work towards achieving these goals is ongoing. Priority ideas that might be reflected in the goals include increased connectivity of bicycle routes/paths, increased bike-ped tourism and commuting, infrastructure development along bike routes, bike equity, and building on the Regional Planning Commission's upcoming bike-ped plan update. Such a coordinator might also lead revalidation over time of growth towards those planned goals.

Old Business

Secure bicycle storage at transportation center. Continue collaboration.

New Business. None.

Announcements. None.

Confirm Next Meeting Date and Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m. The next meeting will be held on April 11, 2022, in-person at 4:30 p.m. at Municipal Center West, in the City Council Conference Room on the Third Floor.