

BICYCLE SUBCOMMITTEE
Berkeley Transportation Commission

September 27, 2010

Present:

Andrea Broaddus (newly commissioner)
Eric Anderson
Rebecca Stievater
Jason Meggs
Dave Campbell
Robin Anderson
Marcy Greenhut
Kate Rowland
Eric McCaughrin
Julia Griswold

Note taker: Jason Meggs

Action statements and commitments emphasized with **BOLD** and UNDERLINE.

A. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

Announcements:

DPC: New bike/ped bridge in Pleasant Hill at BART station. Beautiful.

JM: Police Stings are occurring again, are harmful and need alternative practice/approach. I know a safe and experienced cyclist who was cited for rolling through a stop sign during the sting at an intersection where nobody else was present. The officer admitted it's not a safety issue. That's not educating the public, that's just hurting bicyclists. We tried over a period of years to work with BPD to improve their treatment of bicyclists and pedestrians and they made a mockery of the process, even when council directed them to work with us. So it's a big concern whenever these "stings" arise.

EM: Speed table installation upcoming. Albany at border. Good opportunity to see how it would work. Few inches off ground with minimal disruption to drivers unless speeding. Other nice features. Bulb-outs. Santa Fe Avenue at Solano (?), at the border.

Items not on agenda:

MG: [Regarding the police action directed at bicyclists.] When police decide to do enforcement, is it at all possible to set up some kind of relationship where their traffic division would come here and speak with us? (AB: They were at the last pedestrian meeting. Were super nice.) (EA: New Chief is into data driven programs. Doing this at hotspots for cyclist collisions. They explained their methodology. Have been doing a lot of enforcement of motorists violating bike/ped ROW. My first message was: write a press

release right away.) (JM: Very heartened to hear new report of police being helpful but at very least hope they can be convinced to leave minor technical violations alone.)

EA: I will follow up with the BPD and ask them to participate in our next meeting, and to let us know whenever they are planning things which affect bicycling and walking.

B. STAFF UPDATES:

1. Citywide Bicycle Parking Project:

EA: post and ring racks on all parking meter racks we wanted kept on upper Solano. Also circular version of inverted U. New parking on Shattuck: racks to replace parking meters. Six racks next to Shattuck Cinemas and various other locations. Moving away from insisting on corner and walk down block, and more parking at destinations. Yes to plan for College between Ashby and Russell: two dozen racks going in. First batch should be done in few weeks. Yes still long waitlist. Burned through first batch of racks quickly. Have about 80 new rack locations plus 60 requests, haven't even gotten to yet. (AB: Telegraph bad.) Yes, working on that too. **Once ahead of curve I will proactively look at commercial areas more thoroughly after clearing backlog of requests.**

DPC: Going back three bike/ped planners, highest priority was on-street parking along sidestreets on commercial corridors.

AB: On-street spots? Like SF and Portland? (DPC: side streets, more possible.) (EA: Yes, we should be there too but it's a question of staff time. May need to hire an intern to help us develop that program. Budget possible.)

EM: Pork chop at Peet's: derelict area. EA: right on boundary of where people will park.

RS: Area across from Intermezzo that's fenced off? (Long history to that.)

EA: Must be request based. Need outreach. (DPC: that can be our job.) Funding. And convincing the City to give up that parking revenue at a time when looking for every penny they can get. Even with merchants on board, taking out a meter is a big deal.

AB: Supposed to be doing this parking pricing thing, so may offset revenue loss. Any reduction may be extremely marginal.

EA: Intern would be great for assessing this. May only be a little mole hill. (AB: volunteer intern possible. PR. People want experience. Undergrads especially.) We already have a conflict between uses; sidewalk really a pedestrian realm.

AB: Six shoppers in that spot! (EA: up to 12.) Revenue from tax base; that's the argument.

JM: Heaven forbid anyone ever take our climate action goals seriously.

2. New Bike Station location

Signage:

EA: Sign currently looks like bicyclists should be taking escalator. **Will be fixing this week.** Otherwise, signs very nice. Carry logo and effectively say walk your bike on sidewalk so everyone will do so and life will be beautiful and lovely.

DPC: Getting very full. Will be knocking hole in wall to expand into our space next door very soon. (Kidding.)

EA: We've done outreach to the Y and expect them to follow through with their members.

AB: Did you know State Assembly passed a resolution congratulating Berkeley on its Bike Station? I was there. Very cool. Loni Hancock. Took photo. Very nice! ☺

3 : Caldecott mitigation

Not a lot of new info. Big handouts. Many mitigation measures. Believe council blessed this (Farid said).

EM: People from Uplands more keen on these kinds of changes, others will see, realize they're a good thing and want them. Side note: Tucson has 80 HAWK signals on their bicycle network.

4. UC Long Range Development Plan mitigations (UC LRDP):

Hearst improvements: Billy Riggs, project manager. Hope he'll come give presentation.

JM: I did my Professional Report on that topic. [It can be downloaded here:

<http://meggsreport.files.wordpress.com/2010/10/jasonmeggs-hearst-worksamples.pdf>]

DPC: Thursday 1:30-3pm UC Campus Bicycle Committee.

5. 9th Street Bicycle Boulevard Extension

Just today got final for that. Looks as if through creative design strategies, consultant was able to stretch the budget and add some design elements back in. No landscaping, just grass, but were able to add back in traffic calming at path intersections e.g., where it crosses Folger and Murray. Just 90% drawings but hoping will carry through to final design.

There is still an accessible pedestrian route but not optimal.

Will keep advance stop box at Ashby. (DPC: nice!)

Right now on right hand lane, through turn and on left, left turn. Changing that so right turn only. But as cyclist you have had lots of pressure from people trying to get to highway. Now with through traffic all to left, totally eliminated that pressure so have a place to wait and cars will queue behind you. Big improvement to that crossing.

Out to bid in October, super crunched timeline but must build before expires in spring.

Also still working on redesign of intersection at Ashby. Hoping for Caltrans approval and hopefully Caldecott money will be left to pay for it.

6. Alameda Co. Bike/Ped Plan Update

Seems to be moving along. Final meeting occurred. Strategy not general public meetings, esp. as mostly those already coming. So **participating in at least one joint meeting with Oak, Eville and probably Albany** – like revisiting the Tri-Cities BPAC. We're the hosts, probably here (North Berkeley Senior Center.)

Oakland also having joint meeting. This axis is probably most active in county so one meeting at beginning, maybe one month (vision and goals, discuss purpose of plans and how they relate to communities and input on identifying the important connections, esp. how to connect to our neighbors). Second meeting after mapping countywide routes (not expected to change too dramatically), get feedback.

DPC: Let us think about those countywide significance routes. I think last one did HORRIBLE job deciding those routes (“what do you want” to each, not collaboration). Hoping lot more flexibility to totally recreate countywide network and actually do countywide planning to do that. In Berkeley you’re probably thinking: what on earth were they thinking? No good way Berk-Oak. Only good one has many jogs. You’d think we were all HIGH when we came up with this thing. Other thing is Bay Trail. Easy to say it’s not a high priority. So failed very basic tests of what is a good bike plan. Esp. important for money: is it in the plan? So to date Berkeley can only compete for Bay Trail.

EM: Berkeley also got short-changed on number of routes. Almost as if black hole. Hardly anything there to go after.

DPC: Encouraged at meeting, talking about goals and scoring criteria.

EA: My impression is they’re not really anticipating a fundamental rethinking of the countywide routes. Partly because we have this funding structure where if your project is on the regional bike network or ‘financially constrained’ network (strange categories), there is a hierarchy of what’s fundable and not, so if important. Put together SOLID position as quickly as you can because they’re on a very fast track. Planning to be completely done in a year. But MTC says there’s nothing to stop such an update. “It’s a living document.”

DPC: Sure one of our highest priority routes is Berkeley to Oakland. **We should decide that for sure.** And consider others. Starting point usually home bike plan.

JM: Telegraph is key. Delayed repeatedly. People use it heavily and many injuries occur there. Can we gold plate the residential routes and make them truly known, attractive, viable? What other routes need attention? All have missing elements.

EA: Next month not too late. Probably not for a couple months, the quad city meeting.

MG: Relation to TC.

EM: Ideal to be ready by time consultant comes to TC.

EA: Ideally will have map for next meeting. **Will try to get from consultant.** Not sure if can do that.

MG: ACTIA office and Rochelle? ACTC now: can they produce a map like that?

8:11 PM (running late as usual)

C: DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Cool your commute (DPC)

Climate Action Plan (CAP) replace a car trip a week as first best thing you can do. Dwarves all others. So why not do that? One day a week all summer. Spoke with many staff people including Timothy Burroughs, he likes the idea. Talked to DBA, they love the idea. Amanda’s was jazzed. So idea is every Friday is cool your commute and by end of summer goal is to reach City’s interim goal for 2020. Realtime traffic sign every Friday: this Friday, 12% reduction. Etc. Then have big party and everyone gets free ice cream. Key: Want UC involved (not their peak time) and for City to double the parking rates.

AB: Free bus pass on that day would be great.
DPC: But regional agencies with no money right now.
Want some precounts and do a match.
JM: Air District? Spare the air tie-in? Free bus possible, just need money. One concern, summer is a wobbly time with vacations etc. Hard to model and draw conclusions.
AB: One problem: Bike Month leads to exhaustion.
EM: Why not year round and permanent counters?
DPC: About a month after Bike to Work Day, in June. Chose summer and Friday so we can *actually* achieve the goal. Fall Wednesdays harder. Think the press will love that: halfway there and only June 30! Give talking point about something on people's minds anyway: global climate change.
Counters in Copenhagen, in bike lanes. But in Berkeley harder because
JG: Harder to quantify emissions from vehicle counts. Esp. if you want to do it realtime.
DPC: Volunteers at all intake points, handing out invitations when stopped for signal phase. Meant to be like Bike to Work Day.
JG: Regular commuters probably have monthly pass and won't be affected by parking increase.
DPC: Also parking day every Friday. Businesses can convert to café seating etc.
AB: Registration ideal because then can communicate directly, get a commitment, etc.
RA: Why not a facebook page?
AB: If money involved, can give incentives, have special bus pass, etc.

2. Bay Trail Updates

EA: New fence just went up along west side existing fields along Bay Trail. They're in the process of building a parking lot with driveway crossing of Bay Trail. An 82-car lot. New. Just put in gravel.
MG: Signage for motorists?
EA: Yes. Initial design lacking. They even suggested stop signs for bicyclists, we said no.
AB: People fly down that thing! That's one of the advantages.
EA: Trying to give queuing area from frontage road. Need to decide to turn, and decide to cross path, so safer to break it down into two operations.
DPC: Why not make it a vehicle stop?
EA: Did suggest that. Initial feedback from Caltrans is wouldn't approve.
RA: Not many cars, right?
EA: Big sports events, big pulses of activity.
JM: Gravel will be a hazard. Friend was injured due to gravel conditions at west landing of I-80 bike/ped signature bridge. Any way to contain/mitigate gravel so it doesn't get strewn across the trail?
EA: We told them to pave 20' in and put grade elevation difference to keep the gravel from climbing. Some of it will; fines will get stuck in tread and fall out onto path. Eventually will be fully paved so issue goes away. Also, eventually will be routed on water side of that. (Surprise in room!) Yes. West side of Albany Fields.
JM: Hoping they'll agree to maintaining gravel free. Especially concerned if they're introducing a curve; increases likelihood of slipping and falling, decreases predictability and visibility.

EM: Even after that, **this one will remain and needs to be designed properly.**

EA: Not a precedent that we want to set, regardless of volume of cyclists, need properly designed facility. Takeaway: if noticing issues in area with construction or traffic during construction, and even once done, let us know. We can give that feedback to the Parks Department.

DPC: Jog in Bay Trail acceptable enough but if had choice would jog into freeway.

EA: Even in city small as Berkeley, there's still stuff that gets by. **Will definitely be involved in final design.**

EM: Speed bump on exit?

EA: We are proposing that.

AB: Cattle guard bumps gravel down.

RA: But problem if bikes going into lot.

EA: Yes, they go to play soccer. Yes, "Keep Clear," signs, raised crosswalk. Tried to throw book at it.

AB: People will be very unhappy about it.

EA: Yes, but at least one step closer to adding the waterside trail.

3. Bike Plan Update discussion

EM: What do we do now that lost the grant.

JM: As per July discussion, putting to bid, allow advocates to apply to do public meetings, surveys, etc., precedent is good, often most qualified and cheapest, supports stronger bicycle community beneficial to Berkeley (if get; needs to be competitive RFP).

DPC: Any money for update?

EA: Good question. Lost grant opportunity. Do have some on-call consulting-planning each year. Was planning to use our portion to develop the Complete Streets policy. Might be able to increase access to that.

DPC: I would prefer you do that policy but we need to update to save funds.

MG: When can we reapply for funds?

DPC: Many cities use their Measure B money to do their plans.

EA: That's partly where our on-call funds come from.

Deadline is June 30, 2011.

AB: Bike/Ped class in Spring.

EA: Maybe more than a studio could handle. Esp. the outreach.

AB: Not outreach. Census, fieldwork, etc.

DPC: Why not?

EA: Ashby BART exceptionally good but probably best ever seen of studio project. Quality does vary.

JG: They'll do nice graphics!

AB: Creative ideas! May be some problems. Bob Schneider teaches the class. He would have to agree. Better to have client project than just reading plans from around the country and discussing them.

EA: For BB crossings we actually need engineering help to model the impacts. That could be a good studio project. Prioritize corridors, run traffic simulations based on different types of improvements.

DPC: More I think about it, this is a great idea. Two or three different types of models, we can run for each intersection. (Liability, student-designed projects?) Can't imagine

Professor Deakin being treated any differently than any other consultant, just because it's a student class. And if we take it to another expert and get it blessed (saving the City a lot of money) it's even stronger.

[General discussion

New CEQA guidelines that go beyond single intersection, look at whole system, benefits, impacts collectively etc. be more holistic. Great idea. Interesting problem because nobody knows. So go to smartest university and ask for their best. (Eric's smiling/smirking.)]

JM: These engineering studies have been a hold-up, is this basically plugging in different intersection configurations and known ADT/traffic counts and modeling likely LOS impacts with something like Highway Capacity Software (HCS)? (EA: Yes.) Oh, because in my experience that's easy. **We will be happy to do that** (if allowed / requested / contracted).

4. Using online tools for Bike Plan update

EM: Online tools like google earth. Satellite view. Overlay almost any data that you want. Interactive. Discussing with Phil Morton.

DPC: Looked at Google bike map app?

EM: Looked at some. Yes, Richmond – not too impressed, esp. as ads blasting in corner.

AB: Heard of App by SFMTA that creates GPS record and automatically maps it?

EM: Yes, and can upload to Google Earth or online mapping. Straight into database.

AB: Like that more than relying on technical skills.

EM: Yes, great idea for survey data.

DPC: Great for hazard reporting. Take a photo and upload. (Instantaneous, convenient.)

JM: Yes!

DPC: And if we got crash data...

EM: Data overload...

DPC: Big project, but big potential for sure. Oakland did it to map their bike racks.

EM: Can put it in and play with it and see if it's useful.

JG: Think if you can use it in a browser, a lot more people would use it.

EM: Yes, more technical; really cool stuff only in Google Earth.

JM: Eric Blossom contributed one of Berkeley's early innovator things, java app in 1998 or so which allowed a magnified traversal of the city's map. Perhaps he'd be inspired to help work on something today. **I will ask Eric what he thinks.**

DPC: Online hazard reporting high priority. And crash data.

AB: Twitter is being used a lot. Not with GPS but easy way to communicate instantly with public agency.

ADJOURNEMENT

EM: Motion to adjourn.

DPC: Yeah.