

LEE COUNTY
BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN MEETING MINUTES
October 20, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT

Al Giacalone, Chair, Affordable Housing, At Large
Don Mayne, Vice-Chair, District 4
Damon Shelor, District 5
Eric Spivey, Bike Industry Representative, At Large
Susan Oehl, Walkable Community, At Large

Dave Wheaton, At Large
Jane Bowser, Secretary, At Large
Nora Demers, At Large
T. Patrick Connor, District 2
Jessica Marcolini, District 3

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jeremie Chastain, District 1

STAFF

Tom Marquardt, Lee DOT
Debbie Carpenter, LC DCD
Allan Makau, LCU
Jorge Puente, LeeTran

GUESTS

Drew Werner, Future Aviation
Nick Varnitski
Ron Gogoi, Lee County MPO

Agenda Item #1, *Call to Order, Introductions and Review of Agenda: Mr. Al Giacalone called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in the Admin East building at 2201 Second Street, Fort Myers, Room 118. He welcomed Jessica Marcolini to the committee. He then asked for introductions. A review of the agenda followed. **A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Don Mayne and seconded by Mr. Eric Spivey. The motion was called; the agenda was approved as written.**

Agenda Item #2: *Approval of the August 18, 2021 meeting minutes. Mr. Mayne made a motion to approve the August minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. Spivey. Mr. Giacalone called the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #3, Public Comments:

Mr. Drew Werner, Future Aviation spoke on behalf of the Jetport Loop project currently on the BPAC list at #97.

Ms. Debbie Carpenter, recording secretary, read an e-mail from Nancy Malson (advocate for Winkler Road sidewalk widening) along with a WINK news article attached entitled "Bicyclist dies after south Fort Myers crash".

Agenda Item #4(a): Cypress View Drive Presentation

Mr. Giacalone recognized Mr. Nick Varnitski who reviewed a Powerpoint presentation which outlined the need for 950 feet (.18 mi) of sidewalk along Cypress View Drive to provide safe access to Three Oaks Elementary School in Estero. He states he was told by the Village of Estero that this road is not maintained by the Village, therefore was referred to this committee. There are five major communities, over 2600 units, within that 3 mile area. There are sidewalks along Estero Parkway, but once on Cypress View there are two missing segments of sidewalk. His presentation included a video showing how closely bikers, walkers and cars interact. His suggestion would be to construct 950 feet of sidewalk along the one side of Cypress View Drive that already has sidewalks and complete the connection. Not only would this provide safe passage but would cut down on

the number of cars traveling if parents were convinced that their kids could get to school safely on bikes or by walking.

Mr. Connor asked if any of the five communities in that 3 mile radius were over 55 communities. Mr. Varnitski said he wasn't sure but admitted that one could be since he knew of no kids coming out of there. Mr. Spivey mentioned the fact that the video showed the bike traveling illegally against traffic and Mr. Varnitski said this was because there were sidewalks along part of that side of the road whereas the other side has no sidewalks and the danger is greater for a longer distance.

Dr. Demers asked why the Village of Estero was not the responsible party for constructing the sidewalk. Mr. Varnitski said he first contacted the Village but was told that Cypress View was outside the Village jurisdiction.

Mr. Giacalone thanked Mr. Varnitski for the presentation and said the request would be added as an action item for the next meeting.

Agenda Item #5(a): BPAC List Prioritization

Mr. Wagley was absent, therefore Mr. Tom Marquardt reviewed the Staff Recommendations that Mr. Wagley had put together. (*Notes added – Committee recommendations*)

- Row # 1 Gladiolus Dr Shared Use Path from Maida Ln to US 41_Hold_Take off BPAC List_Cost Prohibitive and would be major road project. ***Committee Recommendation: Leave on the list; place it on hold.***
- Row # 2 McGregor Blvd Road Diet from Summerlin Rd to San Carlos Blvd_ Take off BPAC List _Would be part of restriping for road resurfacing. ***Committee Recommendation: Leave on the list on hold***
- Row # 7 Leonard Blvd sidewalk on north side_from 4th St W to Gunnery Rd S_Move to top of Central Road Impact Fee District_East side of Westgate Blvd is already in CIP and this would provide connectivity. ***Committee Recommendation: Discuss during future prioritization discussion***
- Row # 10 Pine Island Rd Shared Use Path from Stringfellow Rd to Veterans Pkwy_ Take off BPAC List _FDOT already has PD & E study underway. ***Committee Recommendation: Leave on the list on hold. Once it is complete, remove.***
- Row # 11 College Pkwy Bike Lanes from Winkler Rd to Summerlin Rd_ Take off BPAC List _would be major road project. ***Committee Recommendation: Leave on the list on hold.***
- Row # 18 Daniels Pkwy shared use path from Corporate Lakes Dr to SR 82_ Take off BPAC List_suggested by BPAC chair, developers will fund. ***Committee Recommendation: Leave on the list; place it on hold; once complete, remove.***

Mr. Marquardt explained that the reason for the suggestion to remove Row #18 was that there are a number of developers with approved development orders, or working through the development order process that will be installing sidewalks as part of their approvals. The majority of that road segment will be done by developers and what gaps remain would be completed by the County.

Mr. Giacalone's opinion was to use caution when removing anything from the list. His concern was that a project would be removed from the list, but then several years later a citizen or a group would return to the

committee asking about the request. He would prefer to leave or put the projects on hold and leave on the list.

Dr. Demers suggested that Mr. Wagley make a distinction between the projects on hold that will probably never get done because of cost or lack of right of way, and those on hold because it is in process or is slated to be done by others.

She also asked if the project that was presented at today's meeting, Cypress View Drive, would be added to the priority list in time that it would be considered for this upcoming round of prioritizations. Mr. Giacalone confirmed it would be considered at the next meeting.

Mr. Giacalone called for a motion. Dr. Demers suggested that rather than agreeing with the staff recommendation to remove projects from the list, instead keep them on hold or place them on hold.

Mr. Spivey made a motion to place Row #1 and Row # 18 on hold. Seconded by Mr. Dave Wheaton.

Dr. Demers asked what development was planned for the Corporate Lakes Drive area (Row #18). If there are gaps that the County will need to fill in, she asked if those would need to be on the BPAC List. Mr. Marquardt agreed to speak to Mr. Wagley about making a list of developments where sidewalks would be built by developers and what gaps may be left for the County to fill in in order to add them to the list.

Mr. Spivey mentioned that along Daniels, west from SR82 toward Gateway, sidewalks are being installed rather than a shared use path as shown on the list. Mr. Giacalone explained that typically BPAC makes the recommendation, but the final decision rests with DOT and engineering, or in this case, the developers are only required to install sidewalks built to certain specifications.

Mr. Giacalone called the motion which was to put Rows #1 and #18 in the hold category. It carried unanimously.

Further prioritization discussion followed.

Mr. Giacalone said the most current BPAC list was included in the meeting material and Mr. Wagley had provided additional information by email. He pointed out that Mr. Wagley had added a column to the list showing the year the project was originally added. He suggested that everyone start thinking about any projects they would like to see moved up on the list and be ready to discuss at the next meeting. The committee has the ability to move projects higher on the list and typically DOT will choose those highest on the list in each impact fee district, however, he did say that BPAC can only make recommendations and various factors will determine the final result.

Dr. Demers said she had done some analysis and her suggestion would be to move some smaller projects with high citizen support higher up on the list in each district and she reviewed the list she had put together. She was interested in hearing Mr. Wagley's opinion as to the feasibility of her suggestions.

Mr. Wheaton commented that we have a formula which encompasses not only citizen support but all the other scoring criteria. His concern was that moving things based on anything other than the scoring criteria affects objectivity. In the past DOT has come to the committee asking for advice when there's been an opportunity to fund a smaller project or one lower on the list and he would recommend continuing to work with DOT and when possible they will move things up.

Agenda Item #5(b): MPO Update

Mr. Ron Gogoi had no MPO update, but stated that the FDOT work program for 2022-2027 was going to be released on October 25; he intended to send the link to Mr. Wagley to forward to the committee in order to

participate virtually. Mr. Gogoi will provide an update at the next meeting.

Agenda Item #6: Member Comments

Mr. Shelor commented that it would be good to know when the Hearing Examiner was going to hear cases when sidewalks are in question so that members of the committee can attend the hearing if possible. Mr. Marquardt said that DOT reviews each project where there should be a sidewalk or shared use path and makes recommendations, and there are very few instances when fee-in-lieu are accepted now. Developers are now required to connect to existing sidewalks within a quarter mile of their development. Mr. Shelor also commented that there should be coordination between the School District and the County with respect to planning new facilities. Too often BPAC ends up looking at adding sidewalks after the fact or as a SRTS project.

Mr. Don Mayne announced that after 12 years, he would not seek re-appointment to the committee and that this would be his last meeting. Mr. Giacalone and committee members thanked him for his years of service.

Agenda Item #7: Staff Comments

None.

Agenda Item #8: Other Government Entity Comments

Mr. Jorge Puente with LeeTran said the Fort Myers Beach seasonal tram service will begin Sunday, November 21st. The Fort Myers River District Trolleys will also start seasonal service on November 21. The maintenance schedules are out and the information is available on the leetran.com website. He reported that the Commissioners approved a Mobility on Demand Transit service in the Bonita Springs area. Passengers can use a mobile application (Uber) or telephone to schedule a ride. In relation to the member comment concerning sidewalks, LeeTran also reviews development plans for sidewalks and bike racks when in the proximity of bus stops.

Agenda Item #9: Upcoming meeting items

BPAC List Prioritization

Agenda Item #10: Adjournment

Mr. Giacalone adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at the Admin. East Building, 2201 Second St., Fort Myers, FL 33901, Conference Room 118.


BPAC Chairman

17 Nov 2021
Date


BPAC Secretary or Vice-Chair

11-17-21
Date