

LEE COUNTY
BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN MEETING MINUTES
November 17, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT

Al Giacalone, Chair, Affordable Housing, At Large
Jane Bowser, Secretary, At Large
Damon Shelor, District 5

Dave Wheaton, At Large
T. Patrick Connor, District 2
Nora Demers, At Large

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jeremie Chastain, District 1
Susan Oehl, Walkable Community, at Large
Eric Spivey, Bike Industry Representative, at Large

Don Mayne, Vice-Chair, Dist4
Jessica Marcolini, District 3

STAFF

David Wagley, LC DCD
Tom Marquardt, Lee DOT
Debbie Carpenter, LC DCD

Allan Makau, LCU
Jorge Puente, LeeTran

GUESTS

Ron Gogoi, Lee County MPO
See Attached Sign-In Sheet

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. A review of the agenda followed. **A motion to approve the agenda was made by Ms. Jane Bowser, seconded by Mr. Damon Shelor. The motion was called; the agenda was approved as written.**

Agenda Item #2: *Approval of the October 20, 2021 meeting minutes. Mr. Shelor made a motion to approve the October minutes as written. Seconded by Mr. Dave Wheaton. Mr. Giacalone called the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #3, Public Comments:

Nancy Malson, the original presenter of the request spoke of the conditions along Winkler Road. She thanked the committee for approving the request, and thanked Mr. Wagley for his help and assistance. She talked about the fact that a bicyclist had been hit and killed in October while riding on the roadway, Since her original presentation she has received additional support letters from residents and HOA's along Winkler. She reported that construction is now underway to add another 68 single family homes with the accompanying traffic. She said the sidewalk is heavily used by walkers, bikers, and runners but it is narrow and badly damaged in many places. She has submitted RFA's and there has been some patchwork repairs. Widening the sidewalk to a shared use path would likely encourage bicyclists to stay off the roadway and provide a safer environment for all users. Thirteen residents showed their support for this proposal as well.

David Konklin spoke in support of the sidewalk request for Donald Road, in the area of Bayshore and Slater Road. The request is currently on the list at Row #80. He said a new subdivision is almost two-thirds built out adding more cars to the already busy road. He would like to see a shared use path, if not for the whole length, at least from Coon Road to Jones Road. He is concerned not only for the safety of the people that are walking, especially the school kids walking at 5:30 a.m., but also the drivers who are afraid they might hit someone. He was anxious for the project to move up on the list.

Sue McMillan said she bikes down Winkler Road and agrees that it is a dangerous area. She spoke in support of the bike path on Pine Ridge Road from Summerlin to McGregor. The project is already on the list but what she suggested to save money was to just fill in the sidewalk gaps, only 753 feet, on the east side from Heritage Point to Kelly Rd. There is a lot of traffic and because of ongoing construction, large construction vehicles using the roadway. Connie Speck showed her support for Pine Ridge Rd as well.

Mr. Giacalone thanked all for being so passionate and speaking today about their projects. In light of the tragedy he called for a moment of silence after which he invited all to return at any time to voice any other concerns.

Agenda Item #4(a): Cypress View Drive Sidewalk Request

Mr. Giacalone reminded all that a presentation for this request had been made at the last meeting. Mr. Pat Connor made a motion to add the Cypress View Drive Sidewalk request to the BPAC list. Seconded by Ms. Bowser.

Mr. Shelor asked for a confirmation that this was not under the jurisdiction of the Village of Estero. Mr. Marquardt confirmed that this is a county-maintained road.

Hearing no further discussion or debate, Mr. Giacalone called the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item #5(a): BPAC List Prioritization

Mr. Wagley said the BPAC prioritization system has a 4 part criteria, is scientifically based and data drive.

He said as he was reviewing the Winkler Road project he noticed that he had mistakenly given the project the full 12 points for transit instead of 10, so he corrected that but there was some offset because they have the maximum number of points for public participation.

Ms. Bowser made a motion to approve the list as provided. Seconded by Mr. Dave Wheaton.

Ms. Bowser stated she had reviewed the criteria and believes in the scoring system. All the projects have value and worth and the point system takes the emotions out of the equation.

Mr. Giacalone called the motion to approve the BPAC Prioritization List as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item #5(b): MPO Update

Mr. Ron Gogoi provided an MPO update stating that FDOT recently released their draft work program for 2023 through 2027. The current work program is from 2022 to 2026. He talked about the relationship between MPO and the FDOT work program, stating that every year the MPO comes up with priority lists (there are different categories of funding so different priority lists), and these guide the FDOT with development of their work program. MPO's 2021 Priority lists were used as a basis for funding projects in the 2023 – 2027 work program and he reviewed the projects that have been funded. He also reviewed the Bike Ped candidate projects for MPO's 2022 priority lists for consideration in the 2023-2028 work program.

Agenda Item #6: Member Comments

Dr. Nora Demers wondered if all of the gated communities on Winkler Road were to get together could they create an MSTU for the improvements they have asked for and have they been told about MSTU's? She also asked if they would need 51% of all the owners within those communities to go forward with it (a pretty high threshold). Mr. Wagley confirmed that was correct. If the BPAC webpage does not already have it, she suggested adding information about the MSTU program. She also thought that publishing the BPAC list and the scoring criteria would help people have a better understanding of how projects are prioritized. She

commented that the FDOT Work Program seemed to include more Incorporated Lee projects than Unincorporated, and she would like to see Unincorporated Lee have the same leverage. Lastly, she would like to see LeeTran do better, thinking that if a bus was more convenient and accessible, there would be less traffic on the roads.

Mr. Connor asked how groups get connected to BPAC and there was a brief discussion. He thought that getting their Commissioners involved would enhance their chances.

Mr. Shelor spoke about better planning, smart growth and sustainability. According to Mr. Shelor, the Winkler Road request is an example of a lack of planning, the effects of future development and what will happen when the area is built out. There needs to be better planning taking into consideration traffic issues, ecological issues, water availability etc., otherwise, the same issues will continue to come up time and again.

Ms. Bowser had a question about a pedestrian light in her neighborhood, asking what department she should contact since it seemed to be malfunctioning. It was suggested she submit an RFA to LDOT.

Mr. Giacalone wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. The next meeting is scheduled for December 15th. An election of officers will be held at the January meeting.

Agenda Item #7: Staff Comments

David Wagley responded to one of Dr. Demers comments about LeeTran saying that BPAC's scope only includes assisting bike/pedestrians to arrive safely at a bus stop.

Agenda Item #8: Other Government Entity Comments

Mr. Jorge Puente with LeeTran also responded saying that lack of planning is an issue. The reality is that for Winkler Road, the road cannot accommodate a 40 foot bus and there is no place for it to turn around.

Agenda Item #9: Upcoming meeting items

Agenda Item #10: Adjournment

Mr. Giacalone adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m.


The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at the Admin. East Building, 2201 Second St., Fort Myers, FL 33901, Conference Room 118.



BPAC Chairman

16 Feb 2022

Date



BPAC Secretary or Vice-Chair

2-16-22

Date