

Final Approved Minutes
Fairhope Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Nix Center
February 3, 2016

Attendees: Nancy Milford, Molly Peterson, Chris Riley, Jeff Hudson, Katie Bolton, and Mike Groutt.

Guest: Gary Gover

Review of Minutes from November Meeting. Approved with no changes.

Wish List. (Groutt)

- Mike Groutt provided a short briefing on his meeting with Jennifer Fidler to discuss the priority items on the “Wish List.” Jennifer only had a copy of the entire Wish List. (She had not seen the shorter Priorities List.) A copy of the notes from that meeting are attached.
- Several of the items on the list have either been completed (the landing area at the pedestrian signal in front of Rite Aid), or are underway (the added bike/ped lane along the north side of Plantation Parkway into the Homestead Village property).
- There was some discussion about the item requesting a crosswalk on Fairhope Avenue at Ingleside. Jennifer said that the city had looked at it extensively, but that there was no way to do it safely due to limited sight lines. Discussion centered around the benefits of a traffic circle (as recommended in a recent city traffic study) or adding a crosswalk at one of the islands near the intersection. All agreed that a crosswalk was needed somewhere between Greeno Road and the first existing crosswalk at Blue Island.
- Also, there was some discussion of a crosswalk on Section Street at Oak. The traffic study also addresses this intersection. All seemed comfortable with waiting for Dan Burden’s return (he is currently working on the downtown parking/shuttle study) to see if he can go over the suggestions he made for this location when he was here in 2012.
- Jeff Hudson suggested that the Single Tax Colony might be interested in completing the sidewalk along Manley Road, connecting the new soccer complex with the Middle School/High School.

Meeting with Fairhope Planning and Zoning Director. (Riley)

- Chris Riley reported that Jonathan Smith, Fairhope Planning and Zoning Director, and Mayor Kant requested that the Fairhope Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee move forward with a Bicycle/Pedestrian/ADA survey of the central business district in Fairhope.
- Because of the specific requirements of the study being done in conjunction with the Eastern Shore MPO, the city will hire an outside firm to do that work.
- Chris will be the lead for ADA issues related to the survey. Other members of the committee are urged to bring issues related to bicycle and pedestrian needs to the March meeting (items related to bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, multi-use paths, etc.).

Alabama Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. (Groutt)

- ALDOT held a public open house in Mobile in conjunction with its work on an update of the existing Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan that was initially released in 2010.
- Most of the ALDOT representatives at the meeting were not very interactive with the audience; however, the consultants hired by ALDOT to prepare the plan were very good.
- According to John Houghton, senior planner with Gresham, Smith, and Partners, the plan seeks to identify routes around the state to connect people with areas where cyclists would be likely to go. While ALDOT routes are generally limited to roads for which the agency has direct responsibility (state and federal highways), they are open to input from cyclists with ideas for better routes. State representatives would then attempt to work with local and county representatives to develop the best and safest routes for bicycles around the state.
- ALDOT's new Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator, Rebecca Fulks, was at the meeting. Rebecca has some interesting ideas about reaching underserved populations who rely on bicycles as a means of transportation. It might be a good idea for local groups (Fairhope Bike-Ped Committee, Baldwin County Trailblazers, and both Eastern Shore MPO and Mobile MPO Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committees) to invite Rebecca back to the area to discuss issues related to bicycles and pedestrians, and how we can work with ALDOT.
- Katie Bolton mentioned that local groups might want to let the ALDOT planners know that an issue locally is getting bicyclists from one side of I-10 to the other. The only routes available are U.S. 98 and SR 181...and both have heavy, fast traffic.

New Officers. (Riley)

- Chris Riley, Committee Chair, recommended that the committee consider election of new officers at the next (March) meeting.
- Mike Groutt suggested that the committee give some thought to new members as well. With the resignations of Jane Finger and Irene Wegman, and a pre-existing vacancy, the committee now must have all active members present for meetings to have a quorum. Several names were mentioned as possible applicants.

Updates:

- **Eastern Shore MPO.** (Groutt/Hudson) Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee did not meet (no quorum...the BPAC has a number of vacancies this year and needs new members). Citizens Advisory Committee did meet. Items discussed included:
 - FairhopeTAP Grant application: sidewalk along County Road 13 in Fairhope connecting the new soccer complex with Sedgefield Subdivision.
 - Turn lane on SR104 at Dick Higbee to accommodate the new Catholic High School
- **Fairhope Cycling Project.** (Bolton) Joe Strange, Iron and Canvas, will talk to the Rotary Club seeking sponsorships for the bike racks at Fairhope Elementary School and Intermediate School. Katie Bolton will use proceeds from the Pro Bike and Tri Shop ride on Thanksgiving for the project, but additional funds are needed for the custom designed bike racks. The racks, which accommodate up to 12 bicycles, are designed to look like a pirate ship and a fish.

Next Scheduled Meeting: Wednesday, March 2, 2016; 4:00 p.m.; Nix Center.

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Recommended Priority Projects: July 2015

1. Add bicycle/pedestrian lane along north side of Plantation Boulevard to correspond to existing lane on the south side of the street. County did the south side of the divided street. North side has a wide enough lane, but will need to work with the county...they have the machine to do the long straight lines that are needed. (If the county machine won't be available, the city may be able to work with the contractor doing the Fairhope Avenue resurfacing project.)
2. Provide a walkway between Homestead Village and Fairhope Ave., for accessibility to Baldwin County Satellite Courthouse, Social Security offices, BRATS terminal, and shopping/banking/and other retail establishments. All of the land between Homestead and Fairhope Avenue is privately owned; however, it may be possible to work something out as part of any development plans for the undeveloped (Corte) property. Check with Jonathan in Planning.
3. Extend sidewalks at Greeno and Morphy to make pedestrian crossing buttons on posts accessible to people in wheelchairs. Jennifer wasn't sure which corner it was (forwarded pictures of the pedestrian controls on the southeast corner in front of Rite-Aid) but felt it should be doable since the actual controls don't need to be moved. Also mentioned the two on the south side of Fairhope Avenue...not as bad, but still off the paved area a short distance.
4. Add pedestrian crossing with signal across Fairhope Ave at Ingleside. Not possible. They've tried, and looked at alternatives, but cannot get adequate sight distances for a safe crossing. Hopefully the other crosswalks that have been added will help, as well as the lower speeds due to the redesign of the street.
5. Add pedestrian crossing at Section St and Oak St. with curb extension/bump out to improve sight lines. This one has been on the city's list for a long time, but not sure exactly how it can be done. They've looked at a number of options (and even moved the alignment of the lanes), but haven't found a solution that works entirely. Dan Burden, in a previous trip to Fairhope, made some suggestions. Will table this one until Burden returns to see if he can take another look at it.
6. Add sidewalk markings in parking lot area in front of Ace Hardware/Emmy's Thrift Shop on Fairhope Ave.; and along Bancroft and Section St. adjacent to Greers-- similar to markings in front of old gas station between post office and library. No problem with the Ace Hardward/Emmy's parking lot...it's on their list. They'll look at the parking lot next to Greer's to see what can be done there.
7. Install more pedestrian crossing reminders downtown ("yield to pedestrian" signs in the middle of the street). Several have been added since we first made up the list, and they currently have some additional signs on order. If we have specific crossings that we think need the extra protection, we can let Jennifer know.
8. Address safety hazard along Eastern Shore Trail South Mobile St from south end of the park (at the American Legion property) to Nelson St where trail is adjacent

to the roadway and at the same level. Jennifer can talk to the Mayor about “a”, but “b” is out of her jurisdiction. It would need to go to the Streets Committee. A suggestion would be to work with the Baldwin County Trailblazers to prepare a letter to the Mayor laying out the concerns with respect to the Eastern Shore Trail and recommending these solutions.

- a. Short term: install bollards to separate trail from traffic southbound traffic lane, particularly through the curve at the American Legion Hall and the bridge just to the south.
 - b. Move 25 MPH speed limit sign south of Eastern Shore Trail crossing at Nelson from its current location. Also, either add a warning further south, or drop the speed to 35 around Sweetwater.
9. Extend sidewalk along Fairhope Ave to the intersection of Hwy 181. (Sidewalk is complete to the Gas Station/Convenience Store on southwest corner of Fairhope Ave. and Hwy 181. Is this a part of the Fairhope Avenue repaving project?) This should be taken care of as part of the ATRIP project (Fairhope Avenue resurfacing). ALDOT will be adding a pedestrian landing area at the corner of Fairhope Avenue and SR181, as long as the funding is there. Once that is in, Fairhope can connect the sidewalk.
10. Complete sidewalk along Manley Road from County Road 13 to Greeno Road to provide safe bike/ped access to soccer fields and Fairhope Middle School. Also, mark crossing at Fairhope Utilities site next door to the school. (Currently, there is a sidewalk on north side from Founders Dr. to Fairhope Middle School, and immediately adjacent to new subdivision on south side.) This is already on the city radar, but it's a more long term project. They are working on a TAP grant application to build a sidewalk/trail to connect the soccer complex, the Middle School, Founders Park, and the Nature Park on Twin Beach.
11. Complete/repair sidewalk along Nichols Avenue from Section Street to Greeno Road. Identified the specific areas where the sidewalk is missing (Section to Mershon; Ingleside to Greeno; and, a small section next to a driveway between Mershon and Young. Jennifer will look into it to see what can be done.

Note: Sidewalk ramps along Fairhope Avenue are currently raised between ½” and 1 inch above the road surface. This is to allow for the resurfacing. Once the new surface is on the roadway, they should be flush with the level of the ramp.

Note: Colony project to add a sidewalk along Morphy is ongoing. Currently they're working on a sidewalk between Greeno and Hawthorne Glen subdivision. Plan is to continue on along Morphy to Bishop. Possible issue is placement: right now, there is not enough right-of-way to put the sidewalk on the far side of the drainage ditch from the road. There is discussion of putting the sidewalk immediately adjacent to the road. This might be something the Committee needs to offer input on.