



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Draft

City Plan Commission

Wednesday, October 23, 2019

4:30 PM

City Hall, Room 205

Call To Order

PRESENT: 1 - Samuel Peete

EXCUSED: 6 - Cory Mason, Jason Meekma, Trevor Jung, Christina Hefel, Mario Martinez, and Marvin Austin

Start of Public Hearings

Matt Sadowski, Planning Manager, opened the meeting at 4:34 p.m. He explained that there was not a quorum of the Commission, however, staff will be conducting a public hearing and having a brief presentation of the plan. He explained how the meeting will proceed and asked that public comments be limited to five minutes or less.

[1107-19](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Consideration of an amendment to the document titled "A Comprehensive Plan for the City of Racine: 2035", to incorporate the document titled "City of Racine Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan 2019" (PC-19).

Attachments: [ABM - Bike Ped Plan](#)
[Draft Plan Document](#)

Sadowski explained that request would be for the adoption of the City of Racine Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for 2019. He stated back on August 30th, the City Plan Commission was referred the plan. Sadowski explained the timeline for the plan and stated that the plan was not on the agenda for the October 9th City Plan Commission meeting because no comments were received. He stated that now brings us this meeting, October 23rd, where the public hearing will be held. Sadowski stated that on November 13th, the City Plan Commission will recommend adoption of the plan as an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan to the Common Council, and the Common Council will consider adoption of the plan, the ordinance, and the resolution at its meeting on November 19th.

Sadowski stated that we are taking minutes and recording the meeting and will make that available to the Plan Commission members before their meeting on November 13th.

Sadowski introduced Dottie-Kay Bowersox, Public Health Administrator.

Bowersox stated that there was an excellent representation of the biking community present at the meeting. She introduced John Siegert, representing the advisory council, and the consultants that worked on the plan. Bowersox stated Siegert will be

giving a brief presentation regarding the plan.

Bowersox handed out the agenda briefing memo prepared by staff for the request. She stated the plan itself is about 168 pages and the presentation will provide a synopsis of the plan. She stated there are long term and short term goals provided in the plan and reviewed the executive summary which is to guide the future development of the City-wide non-motorized transportation network – to include bicycling and walking and pedestrians. She stated the vision of the plan is that the City of Racine will enhance transportation and recreation opportunities by developing a continuous network of on-street and off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities that provide connections to destinations throughout the city. She stated that they worked long and hard on the vision to make sure it was inclusive of bicycling and pedestrians, as well as off-road and on-road. Bowersox explained the safety issue and the goal of encouraging healthy transportation choices for residents and visitors.

Bowersox asked if there were anyone in the room who does not know why we bike or why we walk.

No one responded.

Bowersox explained the public involvement for the plan. She explained the meetings of the plan's advisory council which met numerous times to talk about what was wanted and how it would work within the infrastructure of the city, as well as short term and long term goals and objectives. She stated three public meetings were held where comments were solicited and collected. She stated they had the greatest gathering to talk about this plan in the state of Wisconsin. She stated a great job was done of letting the public know about the sessions and getting the public involved; their comments are included in the plan document.

Bowersox reviewed the goals and objectives – direct the way public improvements are made, where resources are allocated, how programs are operated, and how priorities are determined. She stated that departments have been identified in the goals and objectives and explained the three goals of the plan which are: support bicycling and walking as viable transportation modes in the City of Racine; integrate bicycle and pedestrian planning into City of Racine's planning processes; and promote bicycling and walking in the City of Racine by improving awareness of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and opportunities. Bowersox stated the implementation elements include bike lanes, paved shoulder improvements, shared use paths, signage improvements, intersection improvements, and neighborhood greenways. She stated that maps show existing trails and where we are lacking in connectivity in the trails.

Bowersox explained there is more detail within the plan. She stated what we are looking at regarding the plan is the connectivity aspect, collaboration, and financing. She stated those elements would be determined by the City and its specific departments.

Bowersox introduced Siegert to further discuss the plan.

Siegert acknowledged the support and the presence of the Kenosha Racine Bike Club. He stated its members took the lead and raised private funds for the development of the plan. He stated it is a core of recommendations both to the physical environment and ways to encourage walking and biking as viable transportation within the city. He stated the goal is to have it adopted as part of the city's Comprehensive Plan. He stated it should be a living document that should be reviewed and updated over time. Siegert acknowledged Dave Birch who was a consultant who worked on the plan. He

stated Birch is available to answer any questions regarding the plan.

Siegert yielded to public comment.

Sadowski offered the podium to those who would like speak regarding the request.

Jon Antonneau, 1711 College Avenue, spoke regarding the plan. He stated he was part of the small group that initiated the plan many years ago. He stated what they have shared is the floriation of what was taken to task about three years ago. He stated hurdles were worked through to develop the plan and that the vision was more an equality of life aspect of the city and community and an alternative transportation method that would serve the community. He stated, to his knowledge, this is one of the only privately funded master plans in the country. He explained the grants that were written to obtain funds for the plan and spoke about the turnout at community forums.

Marvin Letvin, 4341 Greenbriar Lane, Mount Pleasant, represented the Root River Council. He stated the Root River and its pathway is a hidden gem in Racine. He stated signage and how to get to that pathways need to be talked about. He stated the maps show 90 parks, however, the pathways are not shown. He stated along with Parkside, they are doing GIS mapping to show transportation areas, whether or not there is a bathroom along the pathway, etc. He stated Clayton Park is always flooded and a boardwalk about a foot off of the ground is being proposed in the area. He stated getting people to enjoy the pathway, the walkway, and biking is another piece – having people doing things along the pathway. He stated the harbor area is slipping in regards to the pathway. He stated also along the Root River pathway mile markers to show where you are along the pathway are being proposed. He stated currently there is signage that shows the names of bridges, however, they would like to show how many miles a person has gone. He stated signage is very important because part of the pathway is hidden, behind streets, and crosses many streets. He stated it is important for both pedestrians and cars to show that it is a biking and walking pathway. Letvin explained that the Root River Council and the City working together can make the Root River pathway a real gem for the city.

Kenneth Stanke, 3111 15th Street 1B, Kenosha, WI spoke regarding the request and the signage. He stated signage is very important. He stated as part of the bike club they go to different communities that not a lot of their members go to everyday. He stated that signage is a big help and mentioned the Interurban trail that runs through Cedarburg, Janesville, to Port Washington. He stated when communities embrace bicycling to enhance the community there will be signage to show restaurants, restrooms, information, etc. for those who are just visiting. He stated there are a lot of trails within the city and he would like to have signage to show that if you would like to get to downtown to take this right. He stated signage would be a very advantageous thing to have along the bike trails and suggested businesses may want to partner to show where a restaurant is. He spoke regarding the festivals that advertise within the city.

Art Hicks, 3300 Wood Road, Mount Pleasant, longtime member of the bike club. He stated when they first started looking at doing the plan the main goal was safety. He stated the second goal would be having the safer facilities and then getting more people out on bikes; it is a health feature. Hicks stated the third thing was that there may be a program that provides state funding for safe routes to schools which provides opportunity for children to get to school safely on bikes and pedestrian pathways without having to worry about traffic. He stated it is a program that could be set up, however, in order to do so a master plan would have to be in place. He expressed is

support of the master plan.

Cara Pratt, 1802 Park Avenue, spoke regarding the plan. She stated she wanted to highlight the importance of the plan for the climate change efforts for the city. She stated the Common Council signed on to the Paris Climate Accords in 2018 and a bike plan really supports the efforts to reduce our carbon footprint.

Tom Coe, 4422 15th Street, spoke regarding the passageway across Green Bay Road and intersections. He stated Kinzie to Westmore is the safest way to cross Green Bay Road. He stated intersections should be part of the plan.

Cathy Hicks, 3300 Wood Road, Mount Pleasant. Stated she was part of the Kenosha Racine Bike Club that was looking for something like this for the city of Racine. She stated she is glad the plan is moving forward and would like to see it get into place to make it easier for people to ride bikes within the city.

Brian Gleichauf, 1719 College Avenue, stated he is very excited by the idea of a master plan to make bicycling as assessable as it can be for as many people as it can be. He spoke in support regarding safety and ways for kids to get to school by bike and on foot.

Jim Lufca, west of 31 off of 16th Street. He spoke regarding the construction. He stated he has been riding for a long time and stated everything looks positive and hopes he can be around to watch things materialize and come to fruition.

Dottie-Kay Bowersox, 730 Washington Avenue, spoke regarding the plan. She stated helping to facilitate the plan has been a great endeavor and that it is one that many of the surrounding municipalities already have in place. She stated having a master bike and pedestrian plan would strengthen the infrastructure here in the city and making that connection to other trails is significant. She stated for those who are fearless riders or for those who have toddlers in tow, it is really important to have well marked, good intersections and areas which they feel safe – therefore they will utilize their bicycles more often. She stated it is good for the county and it is good for business and explained regarding operating it costs \$5,000 annually to operate a vehicle, \$120 annually for a bicycle after the initial purchase, and walking is nearly free other than the socks and tennis shoes. She stated within the plan, we are looking at both the pedestrian and the bicyclist. She stated we projected that 78 percent of Racinians drive within the city. She stated Cara Pratt spoke regarding global climate change and the city's commitment to that and expressed if we could reduce that number, we can get more people on the sidewalk walking and feeling comfortable of where they are going and how they are getting there. She stated it would reduce the number of drivers, would reduce congestion of traffic, as well as potentially reduce the amount of concrete and asphalt that we put down on an annual basis. She stated it is good for communities – if you look at other areas around the country that have embraced bicycling it has caused an economic boom in terms of more bikes, more shops, more opportunities, more venues that individuals are participating in and with. She stated it gives connections with those around us, and that it is a good stress reliever to get outside, ride your bike, or to walk. She stated the city has a high rate of obesity, cancer, cardiovascular disease, along with a sedentary lifestyle and the plan is a really good first step (in promoting the exercise component). She explained the individuals outside of the City who have written grants, donated, and received money from other venues that are listed within the plan. She stated the plan is a really good first step that is long overdue.

Commissioner Peete stated it is a great venue. He stated a comment was mentioned regarding working with Parkside GIS. He stated Parkside also has an App lab that can help with the signage, directions, and those type of things. He suggested working with the App lab and stated since they already have the information, they can convert to a phone application that can be downloaded on the phone that can help with signage, directions, etc. Commissioner Peete stated it would good since Parkside would already have the data from the GIS.

Commissioner Peete asked about how maintaining the trails would be funded.

Siegert stated he cannot answer the question specifically, but in thinking about the physical infrastructure recommendations, the majority has to do with improving the safety around certain intersections and crossings that are difficult for bike riders to make and so the ongoing maintenance of those improvements would fall within the normal road budget. He stated there are some recommendations with creating access to paths and trails and those are all relatively small lengths of trail from the street. He stated however, he is unable to give specific amounts but the hunch is that they are relatively small and would possibly be rolled into existing budgets.

Sadowski stated the plan provides ranges of cost estimates for different types of improvements such as paved shoulders, etc. He stated it depends on what the city tries to do and chooses to implement throughout the life of the plan. He stated in previous plans, implementations occurred as funds became available.

Sadowski reminded the audience that we are recording the meeting and taking minutes and the record will be available prior to the November 13th meeting of the City Plan Commission.

Adjournment

Hearing no additional comments, Sadowski closed the public hearing at 5:11 p.m.

Sadowski introduced staff and thanked those who commented.