

Draft

Minutes of the Jacksonville Bicycle Advisory Committee
June 29, 2010 - 7 pm
Jacksonville Council Chambers

Present: Mayor Smith, Henry Campo, Scott Edmiston, Jack Plunk, Mike Poe

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order and mentioned that Mr. Robertson had indicated he would also serve and attend. The Mayor mentioned he may appoint two other members to add some diversity to the committee. He explained the purpose of the committee being formed was one of the recommendations from the larger Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) program the City has been involved with for several years. The goal of the committee is to advise the City in order to make Jacksonville more bicycle friendly.

Mayor Smith suggested it would be proper to elect officers. Jack nominated Henry for Chairman and volunteered to be sec/treasurer and keep minutes. Scott and Mike then decided that Mike would be the vice chair unless Mr. Robertson wished to be vice chair. The Committee agreed on these officers.

Mayor Smith mentioned that Councilman Mark Jones would be our liaison between the Council and the Committee but could not attend tonight because of a conflict.

Next for discussion was the proposed bike route connection between the Chief and the new mountain bike trails at Henry Farm Park. Mayor Smith provided aerial view maps for the discussion. Jack mentioned that an inexpensive, effective and quick way to do this would be to use stencils and white spray paint to paint directions in the lane on sections of G. Douthit Drive and Henry Rd. He had talked with some of the county engineers who saw no problem with it and suggested that the approved traffic white paint was available at local sources. They mentioned that the paint lasts about 3-4 years and is easy to apply. After some discussion the group thought that this was workable and suggested that some signage may be necessary to direct bicyclists across the site of the old airstrip. Mike suggested we add the distance to the stenciled directions and signage placed at the two starting/beginning points. The committee and Mayor agreed this was a good first project and Jack agreed to brief Mr. Carr, Jacksonville Street Superintendent before proceeding.

Mike had some questions regarding the re-hab of the old depot next to the Chief and Mayor Smith briefed the committee on that volunteer effort. The Mayor mentioned that a grand opening is planned for September 26th as part of the Alabama Home Town events. Mayor Smith also mentioned plans for the parking lot and the committee expressed their wish and concern about shade trees around it and the depot. The

Mayor also mentioned the possibility of having a caboose at the site which would house a concessions vendor.

Mr. Shannon Robertson arrived and was quickly brought up to date.

Next for discussion was the proposed bike/ped greenway connection from the Chief to the Square. Mayor Smith briefed the committee on this effort and mentioned the City's attempt to acquire a train car to use as a bridge. After some discussion about the section from Spring St. to the Square and the elevation that poses a problem, Scott suggested a better connection would be to take Spring St. to Coffee (A) St. then two blocks to Gayle and then back to SW Ladiga and the Square. This two block route would avoid the dramatic change in elevation and connect using low traffic volume streets. This seemed to be the rational and logical connection for the project and could be implemented with the spray on stencils to clarify the connection. The committee then briefly discussed that this would make the project a stronger candidate for an ALDoT Transportation Enhancement (TE) grant if the City wished to submit a request in January 2010.

Jack then asked Mayor Smith if the Council might consider adopting a Complete Streets ordinance, which would basically mention that the Council saw bicycle and pedestrian trips as important and that the City would make sure that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are considered and designed for every street project. Jack mentioned that this policy reflected the policy statements already issued by the US DoT, the ALDoT and the Calhoun Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in its FY 10 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The Mayor requested a draft Complete Streets ordinance to consider.

Jack then mentioned that he and Mike had previously met with Mr. Glass and Ms. DiBiase from the larger ACE committee about bicycle and pedestrian issues and offered some recommendations and a map for bicycle parking racks, future bicycle lanes and 'Share the Road' signs. Mike explained and provided a draft design for a bicycle shaped parking rack for the Square and mentioned that he has already talked to JSU about a logo for it. JSU was positive and wished to participate if the City was also willing to place a couple of the bicycle shaped racks. Mike also mentioned that the NEABC may be willing to help purchase these custom racks. He emphasized that the point of placing these on the Square is to provide secure and safe bicycle parking, to use this highly visible location to say bicycle trips are encouraged and J'ville is bicycle friendly. In addition, the bicycle shape itself is colorful, whimsical and artsy. Jack cautioned that we have to do this right and not create an obstacle for pedestrian circulation or violate the ADA in regards to handicapped access and the shape and orientation of the bicycle rack on the sidewalk is critical. Mayor Smith thought this would be acceptable to the City.

After some discussion regarding desirable bike rack designs and shapes it was agreed that other bicycle rack shapes would be placed in the pocket park and other locations to provide additional bicycle parking in the downtown area and other destinations.

Jack passed out bicycle related excerpts from the 1993 Jacksonville Comprehensive Plan, from the 2003 MPO Bicycle Pedestrian Plan, an article about Complete Streets from Planning magazine and copies of maps of the projects proposed for the Square and the rest of Jacksonville.

Jack mentioned that his research into guidelines for Bicycle Friendly Communities from the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) and others indicated that the LAB suggested the 5 “E” strategy of Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Evaluation. These 5 ‘E’ efforts are focused on two important goals; to develop a ‘network’ of bicycle facilities and make bicycle ‘connections’ between separated land uses in order to permit more non-motorized bicycle and pedestrian trips. He offered a map which indicated several streets suitable for bicycle lane striping of which Mountain Street would be the East/West spine of the network. He also mentioned that we have a perfect opportunity right now to have bicycle lane striping on two upcoming MPO resurfacing projects on Gardner Drive and Mountain Street west. Bicycle lane striping on these streets as well as other has an added benefit in discouraging on-street parking where it is undesirable.

Jack continued with the proposal to place the ‘Share the Road’ sign sets along several streets in Jacksonville. These sign sets cost ±\$70 each and are utilized to inform motorists that bicyclists may be sharing the lane. The Mayor mentioned that the City could place them using a recently purchased vehicle.

There was a discussion regarding the undesirable pavement edge profile created on Church Street during re-surfacing a few years ago. There was agreement that this situation was creating a danger for both pedestrians and bicyclists and would not be acceptable in the future.

Jack mentioned that Ms. DiBiase had been in touch with Commissioner Rudy Abbott who had indicated that he would consider funding some of these projects. It was agreed that Mike would draft a proposal and estimate for 3 bicycle racks, about 10 inverted ‘U’ racks or some other shape, and 10 ‘Share the Road’ sign sets and see if Mr. Abbott could fund this effort for the City.

The committee discussed the date of the next meeting and decided to meet again on July 20th at 7pm. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned about 8:30pm.