

Hawai'i County Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Monday, October 9, 2006
Summary Minutes
Hilo DPW Conference Room & Kona Mayor's Office (Via Teleconferencing)
3:00 P.M.

Present

Members – DPW Conference Room

Kelly Burke
Richard Chamberlin
Laura Dierenfield
J. B. Friday

Members – Kona Mayor's Office Conference Room

Robert Ward
Doug Wilkerson

Bruce McClure

Absent

Ron Reilly
Mary Osborne
Herbert Soloway

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Laura Dierenfield called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm.

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – AUGUST 14, 2006

Doug Wilkerson moved to accept the minutes as circulated. Following a vote, the minutes were unanimously approved.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS – UPDATE ON PROJECTS

Bruce McClure reported that there were no current projects to be updated.

Bruce stated that the South Kona projects that include road widening in Captain Cook don't deal with bikeways. J.B. Friday asked Bruce for a further explanation as to what's going on with the Captain Cook project.

Bruce explained that left turn pockets were being added to the existing road so that the traffic can move without having to stop. The County isn't buying any additional right-of-way, and in some places the road is very narrow, so the County is stuck as far as being able to provide an exclusive bike lane.

Following a question from Doug Wilkerson regarding the status of the two sidewalks in the construction area, Bruce responded that he didn't know, but he would find out and get back to the Committee with an answer before the meeting ended.

Letter to Mayor Kim

Laura Dierenfield informed the Committee of the guidelines of the Sunshine Law regarding the letter Ron drafted to Mayor Kim. The group needed to discuss the letter, than vote on it a separate meeting.

J.B. Friday suggested adding a sentence to the effect that one of the things the Committee had recently done was work with the County to review the bike plan and to select the most appropriate single project in Hilo and in Kona, and it is now part of the capital improvement project.

Robert Ward felt the Committee should go beyond its role as advisors and offer other suggestions to the Mayor

J. B. disagreed, believing that the Committee had decided at the last meeting to present the Mayor with a blank slate and welcome his input, rather than offering specific suggestions.

On the other hand, Kelly Burke feels it would be nice to find out what Mayor Kim's vision is. To that extent, the letter as written does fine. It points out to the Mayor that some things have already been done. Further, there are some resources out there for the Mayor to go to. Given all of that the Committee has done, what are his thoughts? What would he like to see go forward in the next couple of years?

Doug Wilkerson believes the Committee should compile a list of five or six big picture items, incorporating the bike plan, etc., so that the Mayor can determine what his vision is by utilizing the information provided to him.

Laura Dierenfield had previously met with Mayor Kim as part of a larger group from Waimea Trails and Green Waste. At that time, the Mayor made some encouraging comments regarding his vision of prioritizing walking and bicycling as part of transportation improvement enhancement. This prompted J.B.'s comment about having the Mayor speak to the Committee about his vision.

According to Richard Chamberlin, Mayor Kim spoke to the Bicycle Pedestrian Committee five or six year ago. At that time, the Mayor saw cycling as primarily a recreational pursuit. If that vision still stands, then the Committee should focus its priority and recommendations in that direction. Richard suggests the letter to the Mayor identify some initiatives which could support specific objectives, such as relieving traffic congestion by improving facilities for bicycle commuting.

Chairperson Dierenfield summarized the discussion in the following manner – The Committee is trying to connect with the Mayor on what he wants his legacy to be with regard to cycling and walking, as well as alternate transportation in general. What can the Committee do to influence safe, alternate modes of

transportation? Further, the Committee should be looking at forming subcommittees and/or taskforces, especially in the framework of the six visions or views that it can take on as a committee. Laura's feeling is that the more the Committee can engage with the Mayor in a planned way, the more effective it can be.

At this point, Chair Dierenfield felt it would be best to put the issue aside and to bring it up for discussion again under New Business.

In response to a question posed earlier in the meeting about the status of the two sidewalks in the construction area, Bruce McClure brought project engineer Casey Yanagihara in to respond. He stated that all existing crosswalks will be maintained. In response to several other questions, Casey said that there will be an 11 foot travel lane, a two foot gutter, then a sidewalk. The signage and markings on the pavements will be the standard Traffic Division's two line crosswalk marking, basically, what is currently on the ground.

Bruce McClure informed the Committee that Public Works is following up on the narrowing of the extension of Kuakini where it becomes Makalapua. They would also be following up on Puhia Street, where the total road right-of-ways don't completely match.

Letter to Governor's Safety Council

With regard to a letter to the Governor's Safety Council concerning Queen Kaahumanu Highway, it was decided the wording would be changed to state that the Committee is interested in highway safety, and wants to establish ongoing dialogue with the Safety Council. Specifically, the Committee is concerned about its recommendation, which was later rescinded. The Committee wants to know what the status of Highway Safety Council's position is at this point, given the rescinding.

Following a motion, the Committee voted to approve the revised letter and send it to the Governor's Highway Safety Council.

Crosswalks

The discussion centered on information Ron Thiel provided to the Committee the previous month. Since that presentation, J.B Friday has been looking at crosswalks, and he's found the sheer number of crosswalks and the many different ways that they have been properly done over the years staggering. It leads him to believe that an inventory of crosswalks might not be doable after all. According to Laura, Ron is developing some kind of standard guidelines. Bruce McClure's observation is that it would be a good idea to bring Ron back at the next meeting.

In the area of subcommittees, Laura suggests putting a group together to look at pedestrian safety, which could work with Ron before the next meeting, to determine guidelines, state initiatives, etc.

J.B. Friday offered the following general recommendations:

1. Lime green crosswalk signs.
2. No crosswalks across four lanes of traffic.
3. No unprotected mid-block crosswalks.

Richard Chamberlin says crosswalks must be maintained. He is asking that existing facilities be brought up to their original standard. Doug Wilkerson suggested that rather than just repainting an existing crosswalk at the time of maintenance, crosswalks should be standardized as they are being maintained.

The Committee agreed to meet with Ron in the interim, then bring him back at the next meeting.

Robert Ward suggested working through a subcommittee structure because there are so many ideas to discuss.

Laura Dierenfield commented on the wealth of information out there, particularly from the Pro Walk Group. There are resources available with information on ways pedestrians, cars, and bikes will be using transportation systems. She feels a systematic approach to pedestrian safety might be more effective, so that improvements will be done within certain guidelines.

With regard to the DOT's Pedestrian Action Plan, Laura reported that she met with the guys who ran the program, and she asked them about the State's ability to address its horrible pedestrian fatality rate? They felt there were some very easy improvements that could be made, but there are tremendous bureaucratic challenges to implementing those solutions. However, they are optimistic about the ability of the neighbor islands to work with their respective County Public Works Departments to take some steps.

Laura's understanding is that no action resulted from the one meeting that took place. However, the facilitators indicated a desire to come back to Hawaii to continue what was started. Bruce McClure was asked if the facilitators could come up with a report the County could use.

He responded that it could be looked into. He added, however, that the County currently has under contract people from St. Louis working on community sensitive solutions (css) or context sensitive design (csd).

A few final comments on the topic of crosswalks were as follows:

1. J.B. Friday stated that he likes automatic signs which indicate to drivers how fast they are driving.
2. Richard Chamberlin mentioned that in many cases it is difficult for a pedestrian to see the eyes of the driver because of heavily tinted windows.
3. J.B. pointed out another difficulty is that it's impossible for a pedestrian to see the driver's eyes when he is in a lifted truck.

NEW BUSINESS

Sunshine Law Reminder

Chairperson Dierenfield thanked Doug for his assistance with regard to the Sunshine Law. She then reviewed some of the do's and don'ts of the Sunshine Law. Under the rules of the Sunshine Law, the Committee can form a crosswalk task force, then charge them with researching everything they can find out about crosswalks, and with developing a plan for pedestrian safety in crosswalks. The task force would then report back to the Committee. The task force could meet without notice. It could be a group of any size. There wouldn't have to be a quorum. They could talk, research, meet, etc.

Subcommittees

Laura reported that subcommittees can be appointed, and they would have a standing place on the agenda every time the Committee meets. The subcommittees could meet outside of regular meeting times. It would need to give notice of the meeting six days prior to the meeting to conform with the Sunshine Law. It would require a quorum as specified in the by-laws for a subcommittee. The subcommittee would need to meet at a place that would be publicly accessible. The subcommittee would report to the general body.

A discussion ensued on the pros and cons of a task force vs. a subcommittee.

Chairperson Dierenfield feels that subcommittees should be formed on issues like subdivision code or pedestrian safety plan, as well as other important issues. Her first suggestion is a Planning subcommittee. Brad Kurokawa is available to meet with the Committee at the December meeting, so that a dialogue with Planning could begin.

Returning to the letter the Committee will be sending to Mayor Kim, Richard Chamberlin made a motion that the letter as presented be sent to the Mayor. The motion was seconded by Robert Ward.

J.B. Friday made a motion to amend the motion by adding the sentence, "By working with the County Public Works, we were able to identify the top priority to enhance bicycling in pedestrian access in Hilo and in Kona, and we'd like to build

on successes such as this." It was seconded by Richard Chamberlin. The motion was voted on and passed.

Chairperson Dierenfield made a motion to change the date to December 11, at 3:00 p.m. It was seconded by J.B. Friday. The motion was voted on and passed.

Doug Wilkerson made a motion to remove the second paragraph from the bottom, which reads, "Available resources include the statewide BikePlan." The motion was seconded. It was voted on and passed.

Following a discussion in which it was suggested the letter not be sent to the Mayor, Chairperson Dierenfield suggested calling him and inviting him to the December meeting instead.

A vote was then taken on Kelly Burke's motion of sending the letter. It did not pass.

Robert Ward moved that the Committee contact the Mayor's Office and try to schedule the Mayor at the next available meeting. It was seconded by Doug Wilkerson. The motion was voted on and passed.

With regard to subcommittees and task forces, it was suggested that Chairperson Dierenfield prepare a proposed list of subcommittees and what they're charges will be, to be discussed at the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on December 11, Public Works Conference Room, Suite 7, and teleconferencing with the Mayor's Office. Hopefully, special guests will be Mayor Kim and Mr. Kurokawa.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.