Minutes amended at BAC Meeting of 8/26/14, see page 3

CITY OF MERCED
BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMISSION

M I N U T E S

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
678 W 18TH STREET
MERCED, CALIFORNIA

TUESDAY
April 22, 2014

Chairperson GUZZETTA called the meeting of the Bicycle Advisory Commission to order at 3:02 p.m.

(B) ROLL CALL

Present: David Guzzetta (Chairperson)
Robert Tyler (Vice Chairperson)
Tom Hothem
Isai Palma
Lisa Kayser-Grant

Absent: Jules Comeyne (Unexcused)
Patrick Bauer (Ex-Officio member) (Unexcused)
Rito Ramirez (Ex-Officio member) (Excused)
(one vacancy)

Staff Present: Kim Nutt, Planning Technician II
John Sagin, Principal Architect

(C) APPROVE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 25, 2014

ON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER HOTHEM, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER TYLER, DULY CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE (ONE VOTING MEMBER ABSENT, ONE VACANCY), TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 25, 2014, MINUTES, AS SUBMITTED.

(D) ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

(Secretary's note: there were no audience members in the audience when this item was first addressed. However, Chairperson GUZZETTA reopened this agenda item at 3:18 p.m. to allow public comment, after an audience member had arrived.)

Griselda VILLA, Golden Valley Health Centers, inquired if City staff is applying for the Active Transportation Planning Grant. Commissioner PALMA, having been involved with staff on this item outside his Commissioner role, responded that there were four proposals prepared for submittal.

(E) BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMISSION REQUESTS AND INFORMATION ITEMS

Commissioner KAYSER-GRANT distributed a memorandum from John CINATL, the former Caltrans District 6 Bicycle Coordinator (Retired), evaluating the Bear Creek bikeway project. She requested staff forward the memo to the City Engineer. Chairperson GUZZETTA requested the topic be placed on the next meeting agenda.

Commissioner KAYSER-GRANT inquired about the meaning of a sign that is in front of Coffee Bandits at 309 W. Main Street, stating that bikes are being chained to it in lieu of bike racks. Ms. NUTT stated that it could be there to enforce the City's sidewalk-riding laws, but having not seen the sign in question, could not give a definitive answer.

Commissioner PALMA asked if there was a need for both a sharrow marking and a bike route sign at the same location. Ms. NUTT answered that each serve a separate purpose (sharrows mark the direction and placement in the travel lane, and bike route signs denote a connection to other bikeway facilities within the system), thus both are needed. Commissioner PALMA pointed out that the W. Main Street bike route signs end at K Street, where there is no bike lane, and suggested they be extended to G Street.

IMPROVEMENT PROJECT RELATED ITEMS (Engineering Department)

(F) BIKE SHELTER PROJECT - UPDATE

Principal Architect SAGIN presented staff's report, stating that staff has been in discussions with Merced College, who desired a bike shelter on-site for their students along M Street, close to the existing transit bus stops and the school's west entrance. Staff felt that this would be a more appropriate location than G Street, as it would serve more people and be more visible. A tire air pump will also be installed, along with bike racks, seating, and waste receptacles. Though it will be accessible from M Street, the primary roadway access to the shelter will actually be on Community College Drive, within the campus site, where vehicle speeds are slower.

Chairperson GUZZETTA and other Commissioners' comments were positive about the changes to the location.

Regarding other Engineering projects, Mr. SAGIN updated the Commission regarding the downtown bike rack project, stating that staff just submitted for final funding and paperwork. It then requires City Council approval, and the project should be started in approximately sixty days. He stated that a bike corral in front of J & R Taco (437 W. Main Street) is also being sought, which would likely take up one on-street parking space. Commissioner KAYSER-GRANT mentioned that Coffee Bandits (309 W. Main Street) is also asking for a bike corral.

POLICY PROJECT RELATED ITEMS (Planning Department)

(G) "RIDE ON SIDEWALK" SIGNAGE

Principal Architect John SAGIN responded to a memo forwarded by Commissioner KAYSER-GRANT, stating that the City Engineer has not had the opportunity to review it, but will be responding. *(Secretary's note: a memo entitled "Regarding the use of 'Bike Route Use Sidewalk' signs" was forwarded by email prior to the meeting to staff by Commissioner KAYSER-GRANT for use at today's meeting. A copy of the memo was made for each Commissioner, and a copy of the memo will be entered into the meeting record.)*

(New language underlined, deleted language ~~strike through~~.)

Commissioner KAYSER-GRANT encouraged the Commission to use their option to make a recommendation, and stated her reasons to recommend that they be removed: not supposed to have unofficial signs (CVC 21401(a)); unauthorized traffic devices (CVC 21465), CVC 21467, which requires the removal of prohibited signs, in addition to the harm in causing drivers to believe that bicycles do not belong on in the street; and placing bicycles on sidewalks that oftentimes have obstacles and insufficient widths.

Commissioner PALMA stated his agreement, but was hesitant to take the signs down on Olive Avenue, citing higher traffic speeds and the number of high school students and pedestrians. Commissioner HOTHEM's concern is with drivers, who may use the signs against cyclists' rights, and the precedence it sets for similar negative interpretations. Commissioner KAYSER-GRANT suggested alternatively that a sign stating "Bikes May Use Sidewalk" may be appropriate, or to remove obstructions, remove or trim high shrubbery, and reduce the danger at driveway conflict points by moving back or placing stop signs. Commissioner TYLER stated that if there is no legal ability to direct cyclists to use the sidewalk, then the signs should be removed. He said he would like the use of "may" on a sign, if a sign is kept there.

ON MOTION OF COMMISSIONER HOTHEM, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KAYSER-GRANT, AND CARRIED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE, TO

RECOMMEND TO THE TRAFFIC COMMITTEE THE COMPLETE REMOVAL OF THE "USE SIDEWALK" SIGNS, LEAVING THE BIKE ROUTE SIGNS IN PLACE, AT BOTH SUBJECT LOCATIONS GENERALLY ALONG OLIVE AVENUE AND ALONG M STREET, FOR THE REASONS STATED IN THIS DISCUSSION.

BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: COMMISSIONERS KAYSER-GRANT, TYLER, AND HOTHEM
NOES: COMMISSIONERS PALMA AND CHAIRPERSON GUZZETTA
ABSENT: COMMISSIONER COMEYNE (ONE VACANCY)
ABSTAIN: NONE

OTHER

(H) ANNUAL ATTENDANCE REPORT

The Commissioners discussed the report and attendance policies briefly with staff.

ON MOTION OF CHAIRPERSON TYLER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HOTHEM, DULY CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE (ONE VOTING MEMBER ABSENT, ONE VACANCY), TO ACCEPT THE ANNUAL ATTENDANCE REPORT AS SUBMITTED.

(I) BIKE TO WORK AND SCHOOL PROCLAMATION

Commissioner PALMA informed the Commission that at the City Council meeting on April 21, 2014, the City Council presented the finished Proclamation. Since he was there for business, he accepted the Proclamation for the Commission.

(J) EVENTS

Commissioner HOTHEM informed the Commission about the work the Merced Bicycle Coalition (MBC) is doing for the City for several developing grant applications.

Commissioner KAYSER-GRANT informed the Commission about what activities are being planned for Bike to School and Work Month. Bike to School Day will be May 7, 2014, and activities are being conducted by the MBC for the first time, with the help of the Merced County Health Department and Golden Valley Health Center. Griselda VILLA, Golden Valley Health Centers, added that they will have a bike challenge at Alicia Reyes School on Bike to Work Day.

Commissioner HOTHEM advised the Commission about the All-Merced Road Ride on Saturday, May 3, 2014, which starts at Kevin's Bikes, 60 W. Olive Avenue, Merced, at 9:00 a.m.

Commissioner HOTHEM informed the Commission that he saw a sign inside a restaurant regarding a planned Critical Mass event at the end of April. Commissioner KAYSER-GRANT stated that the MBC has no knowledge about this event and is not involved.

(K) ADJOURN TO THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2014, AT 3:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

ON MOTION FROM COMMISSIONER TYLER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PALMA, DULY CARRIED, CHAIRPERSON GUZZETTA ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 4:26 P.M. TO THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING ON TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2014, AT 3:00 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 678 W. 18TH STREET, MERCED, CALIFORNIA.

BY:

for BILL KING
COMMISSION SECRETARY

APPROVED:

DAVID GUZZETTA, CHAIRPERSON
BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMISSION