

**Pedestrian Bicycle Advisory Committee**  
Minutes from July 12, 2016  
Lincoln Parks and Recreation – 2740 “A” Street

**Members Present:** Gary Bentrup, Rick Dockhorn, Barb Fraser, Marynelle Greene, Elaine Hammer, Delrae Hirschman, Dalyce Ronnau, Bill Spielman, Roy Rivera and Susan Larson-Rodenburg

**Staff Present:** Kellee Van Bruggen, JJ Yost, Shane Dostal, Lynn Johnson, Nicole Fleck-Tooze

**Visitors:** Jim Berg, Scott Wieskamp, Ray Stevens

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 a.m., followed by announcement recognizing regulations of the Open Meetings Act as posted by the door.

**Minutes:**

*Approval of June 14, 2016 minutes, with correction to spelling of Larson-Rodenburg’s last name: Moved by Dockhorn, seconded by Ronnau.*

**Staff Reports:**

Yost gave updates on trails projects.

Billy Wolff – Work close to Capitol Parkway complete except for installation of pipe railing near ramp. Working with NRD to complete..

Pioneers Park Phase II is progressing and scheduled to be completed near end of July.

Jamaica North about to be advertised, should be under construction in about 6 weeks.

Van Bruggen shared that Law and the Complete Streets Committee are looking at an ordinance change to reflect the State legislation for LB 716 and will bring that to a future PBAC meeting. The City is submitting another application for Bike Friendly Community award, aiming to move from a Bronze to a Silver ranking. This application is due first week in August.

Johnson shared that Mayor presented his budget to City Council. Trails maintenance is funded as part of Mayor's proposed budget. We have been working on 10-year facilities plan for LPRD. We had ID'd \$2.9M/ year in needs. Typically \$1M Keno goes into Parks CIP, will be allocating additional \$400K year. \$250 from cell towers also goes into CIP funding. Part of Mayor's proposed budget includes \$400K GF. Have about \$2M of \$2.9 M we need funded with the Mayor's budget. Budget hearings in August, beginning of City's FY is in Sept.

Larson-Rodenburg asked if it was helpful for the PBAC to take action to support the Mayor’s budget? Yes, could submit a letter of support to City Council, particularly in support of the CIP.

Van Bruggen shared that the Mayor’s budget keeps sidewalk funding at \$1M per year and Complete Streets at \$50,000.

Budget hearings start Monday August 8 at 2:30 with continuing at 5:30.

Motion: Fraser made a motion and Hirschman seconded to direct Bentrup to write a letter on behalf of the PBAC supporting, as advisory to the Mayor, the CIP, particularly budget items related to trails, hard surface, complete streets and sidewalks. Passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

ZOO EXPANSION - Jim Berg with BVH Architects, Scott Wieskamp with Lincoln Public Schools, assisting with project management for Zoo expansion project.

Johnson: Crossing of A Street, parking layout. Parking in two pieces, 1) directly south of A Street, and 2) south of the Waterpark condominiums. Discussion about grade separated for Zoo patrons at A Street. Discussion about whether we try to minimize bike traffic. Convergence of Rock Island and Billy Wolff further east? Potential connections of connecting Rock Island and Billy Wolff south of A Street. Also need to determine where the high water route would be if the connection is made further east.

Wieskamp: LPS, LPRD, Zoo that has been working on this. Looking at long-term solution. 25 years from now, the Zoo will likely look at new expansion. Committee from PBAC and GPTN met on site a couple of weeks ago to walk the site.

Option 1: Take the Rock Island trail and modify it to cross Memorial Drive and follow through the Park, cross Veterans Drive through the park and tie into the Billy Wolff. Discussed extending the drainage swale to soften off-ramp from existing trail. Just portion from Memorial drive is around a \$300K project. It's about 1,250' long. That means that Rock Island would no longer be the main commuter trail. Does this become more of pedestrian-friendly zoo access trail?

Option 2: start at South St., reconstruct asphalt trail through park. \$400K estimated cost. There are some wetlands and hydrology study issues that would need to be addressed.

Option 3: Eliminate Rock Island on triangle and create new high water route along A Street and 27th Street. Bikes could have trail head. That's probably about \$300K.

Knows that crossing of Billy Wolff with driveway for parking is big concern.

Johnson: Proposed crossing of access drive of Rock Island. Intent is 90 degree crossing with trail users having priority (vehicles would have stop sign), using traffic table (with trail elevation unchanged), texture and/or color change, and warning signage on trail.

1. Do we want to look at possibility of changing the location of where the RI and BW converge, change it to east of current location?
2. If so, then what is the high water route? Should RI in current location continue to serve as high water route?

Bentrup: if secondary parking lot is not used daily, then it may not make sense to cross over trail.

Weiskamp: Need to look at 15 years down the road to tackle solution now. Bringing traffic out and around on A Street . Handles 15,000 vehicles per day.

Johnson: Zoo parking has increased dramatically over the years. Any nice day in the spring, lots are full. As many as 600 people an hour on Saturday morning entering the Zoo. Should assume that 1-2 days per week, both parking areas will be pretty full.

Larson-Rodenburg: who would be responsible for cost of trail connections if RI discontinued through Zoo.

Wieskamp: Zoo is taking on bridge project for safety/separation from trail. \$1M cost. Right now the trail relocation is not in anyone's scope. If the solutions are minimal, then the cost is up for negotiation. Bridge will come down on west side of trail, so there will have to be at least a pedestrian connection.

Bentrup: Concerned about option that adds two uncontrolled crossings across Veterans and Memorial Drive.

Larson-Rodenburg: Any discussion about using this building (PRAO) as part of zoo master plan for parking?

Wieskamp: long-term this is expected, but likely \$2M to replace this building with parking. Also thought about putting zoo school in this building.

Larson-Rodenburg: Would make sense to include this now as part of master plan. Put parking in triangle and alleviate the need for parking lot that crosses trail and would eliminate need for bridge.

Wieskamp: can go back and examine that option.

Bentrup: If bypass is done, Zoo would like Rock Island through triangle to go away.

Wieskamp: Zoo would like it to go away, but that's not their call off that this point.

Ronnau: How appealing is the alternate route to the commuter? There are other users besides commuters.

Hammer: Would be expensive to replace this route for high water days.

(Visitor): Ice also affects use of alternate route. Doesn't think 5 days/ year is reasonable estimate for alternate route.

Ronnau: if route through Zoo is closed, there would have to be an alternate route to just going through the underpasses.

Bentrup: Could include trail portion to elevated bridge, with separate lanes for pedestrians and bicycles, but retain original trail through Zoo.

Johnson: Difference between 2 routes is about 500 feet.

Dockhorn: Commuter will take path of least resistance. In winter, there is ice that gets across the lower portion of the trail. Do we have a choice? Doesn't want to waste his time talking about things that they

don't have an opportunity to influence. Understand wanting to have the area in the triangle exclusively and probably should have it as some point.

Wieskamp: Right now none of this would have to change and the trail could stay intact. What about split bridge over triangle to accommodate bikes as well?

Larson Rodenburg: Concerned about taking portion of RI out, this is backbone of trail system and a lot of people in the room worked hard to get this trail in place. Would rather keep that and add alternative route if needed, but doesn't feel like the trail users should raise funds for it because this wasn't because of something the trail community wanted.

Wieskamp: there will be ramps from both directions that would get Zoo traffic up onto the bridge and away from the trail.

Stevens: Not in favor of car crossing the trail, can be riding at 15-20 miles per hour through here. Look at expanding on triangle or buying out the houses on the south side of A for parking. Should be looking at what is best for the community, this is what is best for the zoo. Not in favor of any crossing of the trail.

Wieskamp: Zoo has looked at these concepts and considered them and will continue to. Those might happen in a later phase of expansion.

(Visitor): What about making the zoo more bike friendly, or looking at a shuttle?

Wieskamp: The zoo is intending to go year-round.

(Visitor): Worried about kids running ahead across trail. How do you control how pedestrians cross trail?

(Visitor): There is a lot of traffic that will be coming from east to west, couldn't the traffic be diverted first to south lot? Maybe you could eliminate the vehicle traffic across the trail. Or make the lot directly across A Street exit-only, so that the traffic is one-way from east to west.

Rivera: Is the south parking lot and trail crossing on the table for discussion?

Johnson: There is 195 in current lot, Zoo needs 400 parking spaces. Long-term, zoo parking is moving south of A Street and zoo is re-orienting the entrance to the south. These are unlikely to change. The zoo has discussed doing long-term deck parking immediately south of A Street.

Stevens: Is City being compensated for use of land, and does City Council have say as to whether this happens?

Johnson: Working on long-term lease agreement and operating agreement. Zoo is interested in purchasing the land immediately south of A street. Three items for Council action are: 1) Long term lease/construction agreement, 2) approval for land sale, 3) operating agreement.

Hammer: Could cost estimates be put together for the major options? One with by-pass and one without by-pass. And who would be paying for construction? Scott: not on zoo's radar to cover these costs. The players with the funding need to discuss, zoo or city.

Larson-Rodenburg: Has zoo looked at underground parking for lot south of A Street?

Johnson: \$2,000/\$2,500 for surface parking \$15,000-20,000/space for elevated or underground. Going either up or down becomes cost prohibitive.

Hammer: take these major points and build 1-2 alternatives with costs.

Rivera: What happens if it is decided there is no funding for by-pass alternatives?

Wieskamp: There is no money at this time. If the bypass gets built, but the Rock Island stays, what have we accomplished?

Bentrup: If RI goes away on triangle, then zoo should compensate and build the trail.

Wieskamp: Zoo would likely help if the trail went away on the triangle. But if it doesn't go away, doesn't think Zoo will contribute. Will cost out these alternatives.

(Visitor): How many students are in the Zoo School?

Wieskamp: Now about 125 students. Long range plan is that number could double over time. This is included in parking count.

(Visitor): Could parking south of A street slope down to tunnel under the trail?

Johnson: this is major north-south connection for water reservoirs, many utilities running through there.

(Visitor): Is it possible to have platform on the east for bridge so that pedestrians would not have to cross the trail?

Wieskamp: Yes, this is possibility.

Larson-Rodenburg: still concerned about vehicle crossing. What about people dropping people off and eliminating the trail crossing?

>

Wieskamp: design meeting this afternoon, team will digest input and try to come up with ideas. Feedback helps to understand complexities. Scott uses this trail every day.

Rivera: Doesn't hear anyone that is sold on by-pass. Is there a way that the trail is highlighted as part of the Zoo? Think about greater use of bikes and shuttles in future.

\_\_\_\_\_ : What happens if PBAC is not in agreement with Zoo?

Wieskamp: PBAC should be put in letter that goes to Mayor and City Council. Design team hears these concerns, and will try to solve.

Dockhorn: Elevated trail through middle of zoo. Would the cost be justifiable for this concept?

Wieskamp: Would probably be very expensive. May be viable in the longer-term (10 years out?). Zoo is going to continue to grow and we may have to do this in the long term.

Johnson: Multiple advisory groups reviewing and making recommendations (Urban Design Committee, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board).

Bentrup: Should another letter coming from PBAC indicating they are engaged in process, but have some concerns and would like to slow the process enough to develop a good solution?

Fraser: Yes, concerned by the conflicts presented so far.

Larson-Rodenburg: Main concern is trail crossing. It doesn't seem like this is good long term solution.

Ronnau: Also concerned about what happens with the trail through the zoo.

Bentrup: will try to organize what they heard today and seek feedback.

Wieskamp: Zoo is in capital campaign, want to break ground next spring, need the parking lots to be completed.

Fleck-Tooze: There will be action items going to the City Council and other boards this fall, beginning as early as September.

Larson-Rodenburg: How much is zoo campaign and how much has been raised?

Wieskamp: \$12M just for construction, getting close to \$10M. Fundraising won't slow the schedule. Zoo has additional financing methods in place to cover gap if there is one.

Johnson: Summary of concerns (see photo of white board). Will get working committee together to discuss before next PBAC meeting.

Motion to have Bentrup draft a letter to the Mayor outlining concerns on the 1. Vehicle crossing of RI, 2. Pedestrian crossing of RI, 3. Preservation of RI through Antelope Park, 4. Cost of Alternatives/connections, funding strategy, 5. Encouraging alternative transportation needs to the Zoo.

Motion by Fraser, seconded by Hirschman, passed unanimously

**Adjourned 8:33**