

## Minutes for RBAC Meeting: August 2, 2023

7:00 – 9:00 pm, virtual Webex meeting

*In attendance online:* Wendy Aaronson, Andrew Fowler, Bryan Barnett-Woods, Michael Bevel, Nancy Breen, Sophie Chan-Wood, Kyle Gallagher, Lynda Honberg, Carl Peterson, Marsha Silberstein and Dave Stinchcomb.

At 7:07 pm Dave volunteered to start the meeting since Nancy was having technical difficulties logging in. Andrew motioned to approve the minutes from last meeting; Sophie seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Dave started with introductions and congratulations to Bryan for his two years as Rockville Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator.

(1) Marsha Silberstein, the Tree House representative, has worked with RBAC and Jonathan Solomon for two years. She opened by saying that the **Tour de Cookie** could not happen without the help of RBAC. This year 277 riders participated and a new rodeo was launched with 83 kids participating. Jonathan also helped with the design of the bike jersey which is available for sale to participants.

Next year the Tour de Cookie will be on Saturday, May 4, 2024. The slogan could be May the Fourth be With You with a Star Wars theme. Permitting process is now in action. Goals for next year are to have more police out in the field versus on-site and more signs. More water stations will be made available along the routes. Pre-event promotions will be aimed at local bike shops and more bike-related sponsors. Marsha will have an event plan timeline to share by September. There is a sub-committee meeting on August 18 to discuss the routes further. Plans for two routes but maybe have a shortcut option for 20 miles or so

(2) As part of the **City Update**, Bryan stated that the City has a **bike rack grant program** that is available for property owners, not necessarily the business owners who cannot authorize installation of bike racks. The property owners would need to sign the agreement and approve the installation of these bike racks. The most recent ones were installed at St Mary's Church/School parking lot.

In Town Center, the bike lanes signs have been installed. The lane mark-ups are currently on **E Middle Lane and Washington Street**. The installation of the concrete pre-cast curbs next to the travel lane will be the next step. Please direct any questions or concerns about the bike lanes to Bryan if you encounter any public feedback.

Bryan shared a **Report a Concern** link to help with notifying the City about sidewalks or streets pertaining to biking or walking:

<https://www.rockvillemd.gov/FormCenter/Report-a-Concern-14/Report-a-Concern-261>

Bryan drafted a letter for the Technical Assistance program with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government for approval by RBAC. This Transit Within Reach program aims to increase walking and biking in especially in more transit-friendly areas. After a feasibility

study, **Beall Avenue** will be part of a traffic calming project and to install separated bike lanes and remove one travel lane. This will include the 800-feet between N Washington to Hungerford. Sophie motioned to approve the attached letter; and Lynda seconded.

The City is moving forward with sidewalk feasibility studies especially at new segments with no sidewalks on either side of the street. The Martins Lane project is at the procurement stage now and consultants have been identified to help design the bike lanes.

The City will be installing five **bicycle counters** for pedestrians and bikes. A couple will be on the Carl Henn Millennium Trail, another on the Twinbrook Connector Trail, a fourth on Baltimore Road near the cemetery and the fifth at the west entrance of the Friendship Bridge on West Montgomery Ave. A counter for bicycles only also will be on N Washington Street in the new bike lanes. Once these are installed, a field trip to see if they work and what they recognize might be fun.

Bryan shared the route map for the **bike ride with the City Planning** department staff as guidance and recommendations for the Town Center Master Plan. Start at City Hall and ride toward Unity Bridge at 10 am on Sunday, August 27. Rain date will be September 3.

(3) We are all set for the August rides. Sophie talked about **upcoming rides in September**. Lynda volunteered to lead the annual Carl Henn Memorial Ride on Saturday, September 23 at 10 am. Sophie will contact Carol Henn and Mark Pierzchala for the opening speeches.

(4) Dave said the **Rockville Pedestrian Advocacy Committee** (RPAC) had a walking meeting on Blanford Street, a small street just east of Monroe. It was noted that a man-made trail has been created thru possible private property to Fleet Street. The Mayor and Council will be asked to look into this and, RPAC hopes, to make it a more permanent route.

(5) Bryan presented the draft of the **Pedestrian Master Plan**, which can be found online: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/48446/Ped-Master-Plan-2023---DRAFT> There will be a public hearing with the planning commission on September 13. A Vision Zero goal as well as a RPAC goal, is to create a master plan. The master plan aims to make Rockville the most walkable city in Maryland.

Action Items were grouped into 10 categories: (1) the City update its policies that impact pedestrian transportation, like the Complete Street policy; (2) the City should continue to work with the State to maintain and improve their roadways; (3) the City should continue its sidewalk maintenance program to ensure access for all; (4) the City should carry out ongoing pedestrian priority improvements; (5) sidewalks, pathways and pedestrian transportation facilities should be designed with safety standards; (6) new shared use paths should be built to supplement sidewalk networks, similar to those in the Bikeway Master Plan; (7) the City should strive to increase pedestrian network routes; (8) the City should provide marked crosswalks with suggested guidelines; (9) the City should balance the public space between building front and sidewalk curb; and (10) street trees should be included in a comprehensive pedestrian network.

The Mayor and Council public hearing will be on October 16, open for more comments and feedback.

The Bikeway Master Plan will need to be updated in about five years so we can use the pedestrian plan as a guideline for improvement. For example, pedestrian walkways can be made accessible to bikes as well. Rolling does not include bicycles or e-scooters, but includes strollers and mobility devices.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sophie Chan-Wood



August 3, 2023

John Swanson, Program Manager  
Transit Within Reach Technical Assistance Program  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002

RE: Transit Within Reach (TWR), City of Rockville, Beall Avenue Safety Corridor Preliminary Design Application Support

Dear Mr. Swanson,

On behalf of the Rockville Bicycle Advisory Committee (RBAC), I am pleased to support the City's TWR application, "Beall Avenue Safety Corridor Preliminary Design." This project will continue the City's momentum advancing Vision Zero, building Complete Streets, and better accommodating traffic for people to safely walk, roll, bike, and take transit.

RBAC is a city advisory committee established by the Mayor and Council to encourage bicycling in the City and to provide guidance related to bicycling projects and investments in Rockville. This includes advocating for transportation infrastructure that better balances roadway user needs, and supporting bicycle facilities that are better integrated into the transportation network to encourage riders of all abilities. This preliminary design project builds on the recently completed Regional Roadway Safety Program project and advances recommendations from that project into the design stage.

Beall Avenue is an important street in the Rockville Town Center. It provides a connection between Hungerford Drive (MD 355) and the walkable town square destination, is a link for many residents to reach Beall Elementary School, and is crossed by many residents and visitors going to and from the Metrorail, MARC, and Amtrak station. The street segment is within an MWCOG Regional Activity Center, Transit Access Focus Area, and Equity Emphasis area. It is also the site of a fatal crash a few years ago.

This project aligns with the City's approved Comprehensive Plan, Vision Zero Action Plan, and the Bikeway Master Plan, which seek safe multimodal transportation. Preliminary engineering design is the next step necessary to bring this project to fruition, it lay out where roadway changes would take place, and provide a detailed cost estimate that the City can use to allocate funding in a future budget.

RBAC fully supports the City's effort to design and eventually implement a safer Beall Avenue. If this project is approved, RBAC will work to provide comments to design alternatives, and participate in any public meetings as key stakeholders.

Should you have any questions about this project, please do not hesitate to contact Bryan Barnett-Woods, Principal Transportation Planner, at 240-314-8527 or [bbwoods@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:bbwoods@rockvillemd.gov).

Sincerely,

Dr. Nancy Breen, Chair  
Rockville Bicycle Advisory Committee