



MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

305-307 First Street • Laurel, Maryland 20707 (301) 725-0088

<http://www.cityoflaurel.org> • email – dpw@laurel.md.us Fax (301) 498-5266

Committee Members:

Stanley Spaulding, Chair
Lisa Wolfisch, Vice Chair
Dr. Marcia B. Levi
R. Ummi Modeste
Adina Reno
Emily Swain

Staff:

Thomas Helms, Acting Director
Department of Public Works
Arman Safakhah, City Engineer
Katherine Wright, Administrative
Assistant II

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CITIZENS ADVISORY (BPCA) COMMITTEE MINUTES Tuesday, August 5, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.

The meeting was held in person at 6:00 p.m. with Thomas Helms, Acting Director of the Department of Public Works, presiding. All committee members were present. Staff included Arman Safakhah, City Engineer, and Katherine Wright, Secretary to the Committee. There were no members of the public in attendance.

Mr. Helms welcomed everyone and began with Agenda Item 1, Roll Call. Following roll call, Ms. Wright presided over Agenda Item 2, Approval of Minutes. She asked each committee member in turn if they had any desired changes to the April 8th minutes and if they approved the minutes as written. All members approved the minutes as written.

At 6:05 p.m., Agenda Item 3, Election of Chair and Vice Chair, began.

Ms. Wright explained that the Chair presides over meetings, calls the meeting to order, and directs the opening and closing of each agenda item. Mr. Spaulding volunteered to be the chairperson and was elected by a unanimous vote. Ms. Wright explained the Vice Chair's role is to serve as a backup if the Chair is unavailable. Ms. Wolfisch volunteered to be the vice chairperson and was elected by a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 4, Staff Reports, was opened at 6:10 p.m.

Mr. Safakhah updated the committee on the status of the Cherry Lane Bike Path Options, outlining the project's timeline and schedule. He asked the committee to vote on their preferred option since the project is expected to move forward in October. Ms. Wright explained that she was unsure if a vote could be held at this meeting because it was not on the agenda, but she would follow up on the procedure for unscheduled votes. The committee's vote will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Safakhah provided a brief reminder of the three options and their pros and cons:

- Option 1: An open road with ground markings. This is the least safe, but also the least expensive option.



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- Option 2: Bollards to create a separated lane in the street. This is safer but presents complications for litter patrol and snow removal, with additional costs for bollard repairs.
- Option 3: An entirely separate hiker-biker trail. This is the most expensive but also the safest and most attractive option.

Following Mr. Safakhah's recap, committee members again expressed a desire for a modified hybrid of Options 2 and 3. They suggested a hiker-biker trail at the intersection with Van Dusen Road that transitions into a street bike lane with bollards further along Cherry Lane, citing safety concerns at the intersection of Cherry Lane and Van Dusen Road. Mr. Safakhah recommended that they choose their most preferred option and that the hybrid suggestion be passed along to the council with their choice. Ms. Wright said she would investigate how to document this request properly.

Committee members asked about their previous request for safety statistics on the different bike lane options. Mr. Safakhah had not yet had the opportunity to gather these statistics but would try to have them ready for the next meeting. Ms. Wright updated the committee on the request for a bike lane survey at the Laurel High School, noting that attempts to reach the school's point of contact had gone unanswered. Ms. Reno suggested reaching out to the PTA to distribute a survey.

Mr. Safakhah informed the committee about an upcoming major renovation project along Van Dusen Road. The committee discussed the shortcomings of the Van Dusen Road and the pedestrian safety improvements they would like to see, such as sidewalks in certain locations and more frequent crosswalks.

At 6:25 p.m., Agenda Item 5, Bikeway Master Plan Updates, was opened.

Mr. Safakhah explained that the city is updating its master plans, including the Bikeway Master Plan, which will guide bike path locations. He asked the committee to suggest locations for new bike paths. Committee members identified areas most in need of paths, which were largely on State Highway and County Roads that connect different parts of the city. Mr. Safakhah explained that the City of Laurel does not have jurisdiction over state highway or county roads. Committee members asked what methods could be used to encourage the State Highway Administration and county governments to take action to accomplish the goal of better-connected bike paths.

Committee members discussed making a recommendation to the council to formally reach out to the outside jurisdictions. Ms. Modeste asked specifically about the process for the committee to inform the council of a specific issue in a specific location. Ms. Wright said she would investigate how the committee could formally make this request.



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Committee members discussed Main Street and the new bump-outs in the parking area. Mr. Safakhah explained that speed humps could not be installed on Main Street, but more bump-outs were planned for future intersections. While on the topic of Main Street, Ms. Modeste asked a question about the number of fire hydrants. Ms. Wright referred her to ECD and Zoning to confirm the requirements for that area.

The General Public Hearing was opened and closed at 6:38 p.m., with no one wishing to speak.

Committee members scheduled the next meeting for September 17 at 6:00 p.m., to be held virtually on Zoom. Mr. Staley informed the committee that this was his last meeting as he was moving out of the city.

Respectfully submitted by Katherine Wright, Administrative Assistant II
DATE

Date:

Katherine Wright, Administrative Assistant II
Department of Public Works