

Hawai'i County Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Monday, April 10, 2006
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
James Friday
Ronald Reilly
Herbert Soloway

Members – Kona Mayor's Office Conference Room

Robert Ward
Doug Wilkerson

Ex-Officio

Pamela Mizuno, Deputy Director, P&R

Also Present

Ben Ishii, Department of Public Works
Stan Tamura, State Highways

Absent

Mary Osborne

CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Laura Dierenfield at 3:14 pm.

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 13, 2008

James Friday suggested that Chair Dierenfield introduce those present at the Hilo location, and the Kona members would do the same.

The minutes of the February 13 meeting were approved as circulated.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS - UPDATE ON PROJECTS

Bayfront Hawai'i Island Bicycle Advocacy Plan:

James Friday asked for an update on the Bayfront Hawai'i Island Bicycle Advocacy Plan. He was informed by Pam Mizuno, Deputy Parks Director, that Roy Takemoto would likely be the person to give the update, since he had worked with Research and Development to get the grant for the project.

Chair Dierenfield suggested inviting Roy to the next meeting or asking him to e-mail information to the Committee.

Old Volcano Road:

Ron Reilly commented that with regard to widening the shoulders and a section of Old Volcano Road, he would put the out slope in near the scope and widen the shoulders. It is his understanding that it will be resurfaced, then the shoulders widened. He is asking for an update on the project at the next meeting. Stan Tamura of State Highways said he would check on the status of the project.

OLD BUSINESS

PUD Applications.

Chair Dierenfield stated she had not followed up with Brad Kurokawa regarding the PUD applications, but she will do so before the next meeting. She will ask him to attend that meeting.

Sidewalks

Doug Wilkerson briefed Committee members on the draft letter he had e-mailed to them. In the letter, he describes a location in Kealahou with regard to maintenance of an existing pedestrian facility, in particular, crosswalks. He describes and highlights the range of conditions that exist there. The crux of the issue is that there is a need to look at the facilities, making sure that they're in good working order, i.e., the crosswalk markings are visible; freshly painted, etc. There should also be standardized signage indicating the presence or the lack of crosswalks. He states the public needs to be educated so that both drivers and pedestrians have consistent expectations. In his letter, he offers suggestions for consideration, primarily the evaluation of existing facilities, and bringing them up to a standard that would provide a certain level of safety.

According to Stan Tamura, State Highways uses the NUTCD, Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, as its current standard for safety at crosswalks. After looking over the 2003 edition, Doug Wilkerson found that, from a pedestrian crosswalk perspective, there wasn't a lot of guidance in the manual.

It was determined that the state and county have slightly different crosswalk designs. A suggestion was made that State Highways and the County Public Works Traffic Division meet and attempt to come up with one or two standard signs, one for signalized crosswalks, and the other for non-signalized crosswalks. Further discussion came up with the following findings:

- There are no signs at crosswalks indicating that pedestrians have the right-of-way, even though that is the law. Currently, drivers seem to think they have the right-of-way.

- Drivers are less likely to stop at crosswalks where there aren't any stop lights or stop signs, such as in the middle of a busy road.
- If a crosswalk is already in place, pedestrians are going to use it. Therefore, the crosswalk needs to be made as visible as possible.

Doug Wilkerson pointed out that there is a heavily used crosswalk in Kainaliu crossing Highway 11, which is not at an intersection, but where drivers tend to stop for pedestrians. He contends that the reason for this is because the crosswalk is well marked with good signage. It has an approach to it. There is a sign right up to the crosswalk with the arrow indicating the crosswalk is present. It is the type of marking that uses the large hatching that runs parallel to the flow of traffic. There are 16" bands of white paint all the way across. That particular crosswalk is on a County-owned road.

James Friday suggested placing a sign at crosswalks which state, "Yield to Pedestrian in Crosswalk." Stan Tamura responded that in the NUTCD, a pedestrian symbol is what is called for. Mr. Friday countered that the pedestrian walking symbol is ignored by Hawai'i drivers. A sign with more language is needed.

Chair Dierenfield concluded that driver education is a big component of the process.

Kelly Burke's take on the situation is that everyone knows that a crosswalk means that the driver yield to people in the crosswalk, just as a red light means stop. He says signs aren't going to change people's behavior; enforcement will. Therefore, enforcement is needed.

Chair Dierenfield questioned whether the group was in agreement as to a course of action. It was moved and seconded to accept Doug Wilkerson's letter and forward it to Mr. Ron Field at Public Works Traffic Division. Also, the Committee will consider a position paper on the more general subject of crosswalks and all the nuances, including engineering, enforcement, encouragement and education.

Robert Ward wants it made clear that the Committee is in support of current crosswalk plans. He would like a clarification made that the scope of the letter includes the entire island. Chair Dierenfield suggested an additional sentence requesting that the Committee be updated on crosswalk projects. Appropriate individuals could be invited to the next meeting for this purpose.

Robert Ward wants the South Kona Traffic Safety Committee reassured of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee's support of their current plans for the Kealakekua, Honalo, and Captain Cook areas.

Chair Dierenfield asked Ron Reilly to restate his motion. According to Ron, the new motion is to approve the letter with a few minor changes as discussed, and to include a position statement for the Committee's use on crosswalks. The Chair called for a vote. Richard Chamberlin dissented on the grounds that he wants two motions, one to accept the letter, and the other to do a position statement.

Another vote was called for. First, the Committee voted to accept the letter with corrections. With regard to the position statement, it was decided that various aspects, including legislation, education, and engineering, could be delegated to Committee members. A discussion of findings would take place at the next meeting.

According to Doug Wilkerson, the Hawai'i Revised Statutes references the current law passed by the last legislative session with regard to crosswalks.

Chair Dierenfield called for a vote on the motion to create a position statement. Richard Chamberlin voted against the motion, and one other member abstained, with the remaining members voting in favor of the motion.

Following up on a discussion from the last meeting regarding sidewalks, James Friday said that he had mapped out certain areas in Hilo. He concluded that sidewalks are needed at the following locations:

- On Kinoole Street and Kilauea Avenue, out towards Waiakea Uka side.
- West Kawili and Manono Streets, because of their links to the universities.
- Mohouli Street (his understanding is that Mohouli is already slated for major improvements.)
- There are substandard sidewalks in Keaukaha from the school to Kalaniana'ole Avenue, but there is a nice sidewalk along Kalaniana'ole to the beach parks.
- As far as Kona and Waimea, he doesn't bike in those areas so he is not familiar with the needs there.

Chair Dierenfield commented that sidewalks are critically needed on Kawaihae Road from the Catholic Church to Kamuela View Estates.

The preceding information will be put in a letter and reviewed at the next meeting, then forwarded to Public Works.

ANNUAL REVIEW FOR MAYOR

Comments regarding the Annual Review for the Mayor are as follows:

- Item 2A, Accident Review. Richard Chamberlin asked what the causes of the fatal accidents in West Hawai'i were. According to Chair Dierenfield, a table put together by Bruce indicated that most of the accidents were caused by driver error, but no conclusion was made.
- Item 1B. Ron Reilly commented that the Old Volcano Road delineators were shortened, and the County initiated shoulder widening. The project included three to four miles of shoulder widening on Highway 11 from the National Park entrance to Volcano Highway.
- Item 1A. Bruce Chamberlin asked that a sentence be added that the Committee made no recommendation on accident reviews – fatal accidents in North and West Hawai'i.
- Item 2I. On the subject of Hamakua Highway Gulches, a letter was sent out in February 2006, so that item can be removed from the Annual Review for the Mayor.
- Item 2I. Bruce Chamberlin suggested spelling out what the acronym "stips" stands for.
- Queen Kaahumanu Widening project should be added to the report to the Mayor.

NEXT MEETING

Chair Dierenfield is working on getting future meetings scheduled at the Prosecutor's Office in Hilo, where teleconferencing is available, so that there can be better interaction between Hilo and Kona Committee members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.