

Kachemak Drive Path Committee
Minutes September 8, 2011

Meeting called to order 5:37 P. M.

Members present: Beth Cummings, Dave Brann, Lynn Burt, Dave Clemens, Bumpo Bremicker

Moved and seconded to approve agenda

Moved and seconded to approve minutes

Public Comments:

Kevin Walker supports developing a path on top of the water / sewer easements. He will help the committee any way he can.

Lindianne Sarno: Expressed concerns about a gravel pathway as it is difficult to ride on. She volunteered to research various path surface types.

Val McLay: He supports a separated pathway but opposes narrowing the travel lanes. He sees narrowing the lanes as creating a bigger safety issue. He thinks bicyclists should ride in the road as allowed (not try to squeeze in to a two foot lane which is not safe for kids) or push for the separated path.

Beth Cumming read a letter from Trina Fellows into the record: "I think turning an industrial road (Kachemak Bay Drive) into three lanes so bikers can have a lane is a very dangerous idea. From February to October oversized boats & gear are being towed from all the boat yards to the Spit road. Large trucks also use this road. This would be an accident waiting to happen. Thank you, Trina B Fellows"

Jeff Middleton, applauded the effort to create a bike trail but is opposed to narrowing the travel lane. He feels that would be very unsafe.

Pending Business:

Bumpo and Dave plan to attend the city council meeting on Monday. The committee didn't establish a schedule of who would attend city council meetings in the future.

Beth mentioned she had contacted city council members about a month ago and may do so again.

No new information on the use of fill at this point although it was noted that dredging is once again going on and that it would be cheaper to haul it once from the source rather than having to store it then haul it again. Beth talked with Bryan Hawkins and the gravel is being advertised to be sold.

McLay did provide some information on how the harbor enterprise fund works and there would still be some expense in getting the dredge materials. He said the city contracts to have the material hauled away. He also provided some history and precedence of using dredge materials off the spit.

Dave has not contacted HEA yet as he is waiting for more information from a couple of sources before making the contact. He stated he is working on it.

No changes, progress or info related to the idea of narrowing the travel lanes. Beth did have emails from businesses along Kachemak Drive that are opposed to narrowing of the travel lanes. She was going to pass them on to the city council.

It was moved and seconded to pass two recommendations on to the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Homer Transportation Committee, the City Manager and the Homer City Council related to signage on Kachemak Drive.

1. It is recommended that two yellow and black "Share the Road" or "Bicyclists / Pedestrians on the Road" signs be added to existing advisory signs along Kachemak Drive. Locations to be: A. Between the Spit Road / Trail and the airport hill, B. After the Boat Yard going towards the spit.

2. It is recommended that two "driver feedback" (digital radar) signs be added to existing advisory signs on Kachemak Drive. Radar signs would flash driver's speed if over the established speed limit.

Homer Non-Motorized Trail Plan (Section 5.0, pg. 56) states:

"Creating safer bicycling conditions on Homer's most traveled bicycle routes is a high priority. The routes include Kachemak Drive."

"To further the continuity of this route, (East Road Bike Path) Kachemak Drive must become safer for non-motorized transportation."

"A rehabilitation project for Kachemak Drive that includes a separated multi-use pathway has been identified as an essential need of the City's Capital Improvement Program."

Section 5.0, page 55-56 Near Term Improvements states:

"Near term improvements for Homer's non-motorized transportation infrastructure should address immediate safety concerns...and the creation of safer bicycle conditions.

"For the purposes of this report, Homer Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, June 28, 2004, a near term improvement is one that will be realized in the next two years."

*Signs could be purchased with a combination of private, city and grant funds. Signs could be installed and maintained by volunteers.

Approx. costs, two yellow advisory signs \$50.00 each
Two radar signs \$3000 each: Total \$6100.00 + or -

The Committee added discussion of the Hart Funds to the agenda.

Lynn gave a brief report on the monies available and noted that Regina would be willing to come to a meeting to explain more about the funds. Currently \$234,719.00 available.

Bumppo suggested that we ask the city to build the trail and use the HART funds to pay it off. There is an annual increase of \$40-\$50,000 based on a percentage of the sales tax collected within the city.

There was discussion of using the water and sewer easements for the trail. There was some question on how best to approach it. Dave B. mentioned that Carey and Walt said that when the city obtained the easements for water and sewer some landowners specifically stated they didn't want a trail on the easement. It was felt that the committee needs to find out what the landowners concerns / objection are in order to explore possible solutions. No action taken or suggested.

NEW BUSINESS:

It was moved and seconded to name the portion of the trail from the Spit Trail to the Airport Beach access road the "MUD BAY TRAIL". Motion passed. A brief discussion on the historic name of Coal Bay as opposed to Mud Bay.

It was moved and seconded to place routed signs along the trail. Beth thought 12-15 signs with directional arrows would be needed. Motion passed.

Discussion on signage related to illegal camping along the Mud Bay Trail and other city properties. Beth felt signs designating the Mud Bay Trail would be enough to discourage campers in the future. She supports a kinder-gentler approach. Dave B. stated he didn't have the patience that Beth did and was frustrated by the abandoned campsites, accumulated camping debris, and waste disposal (or lack of). As an individual (not as a committee member) he will ask the police about impoundment of abandoned tents, etc.

Bumppo brought up the concept of a free camping area to accommodate those in need. Will add it to a later agenda.

Lynn said she did complain to the city police about the illegal camping in the early summer but that no action was taken. She was referred to Angie Otteson but wasn't able to make contact. Someone mentioned that Angie was willing to check out the sites but wanted someone to go with her. It doesn't seem like that happened.

Discussion on Portion of Proposed Pathway from East End Road to the West End of the Kachemak Drive Water / Sewer Phase II Project.

Beth felt that a turnpike type of trail construction would be inexpensive and a good way to cross some of the wetland areas along the sewer / water easements. Dave B. concurred that the turnpike construction, fabric, retaining logs along the edges, sand fill with a cap of gravel or other surface material was a standard trail construction technique in wet areas. It was noted that anyone could recommend this type of construction to the city council but the committee felt it was too early to present construction techniques when permission to utilize the easements hadn't been obtained. Discussion continued on how "how to make this happen". Dave B. said Walt was going to look into the easement language to see what could or couldn't be done, it was suggested that the committee continue to research what the concerns / objections to having a trail on the easement might be. Bumppo felt the city council should decide on how to make the trail happen.

Discussion on the Proposed Implementation for the Segment of Trail from the End of the Spit Bike Trail to Arctic Tern Road. Beth presented ideas on a segment of trail along the edge of the parking areas near the top of the bluff. It would require permission from Airport Leasing. She stated the cars parked there pay nothing for the use of the land and the parking could be adjusted to accommodate a trail. She talked with Paul Seaton's office about the possibility of a waiver from ?? in order to accommodate a trail in that area. Val McLay provided a little history on that section of land noting that it was a dump and trees have grown up on it holding it in place, he was concerned about cutting any trees that might compromise the bluff. Beth felt no trees would need to be cut.

Dave said that with permission of landowners he would be able to use a trail mower to mow the power-line easement from the Airport Managers office to Arctic Tern with only a few wet areas or ditches to be addressed. It wouldn't create a trail but provide a visual representation of the possibility.

Discussion and Recommendation on the Mission Statement of the Committee was postponed until the next meeting.

Comments from the audience: Val supports the turnpike style of construction with the use of D-1 gravel as a surfacing material. He suggested the committee look into flashing signs that could be rider (bicycle) activated as they used the road. The signs are used on various highways and in road tunnels when bicycles are utilizing them. Don't remove any trees from the top of the bluff.

He doesn't support the idea of free camping as a way to accommodate current illegal campers.

Comments from the Committee:

Dave C. wants to discuss the Committee goals, feels we have become a little scattershot in our approach.

Dave B. Some recent improvements to the Mud Bay Trail, check it out.

Lynn will write a letter to the editor about illegal campers.

Beth said no trees would be cut with her proposal and that she did contact many business owners along Kachemak Drive.

Bumppo said we would look at the mission statement of the committee and that "We're not done."

Meeting adjourned at approx. 7:30

Next Meeting is October 6, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall

Minutes submitted by Dave Brann