

9/6/2023 BPC Mtg Notes

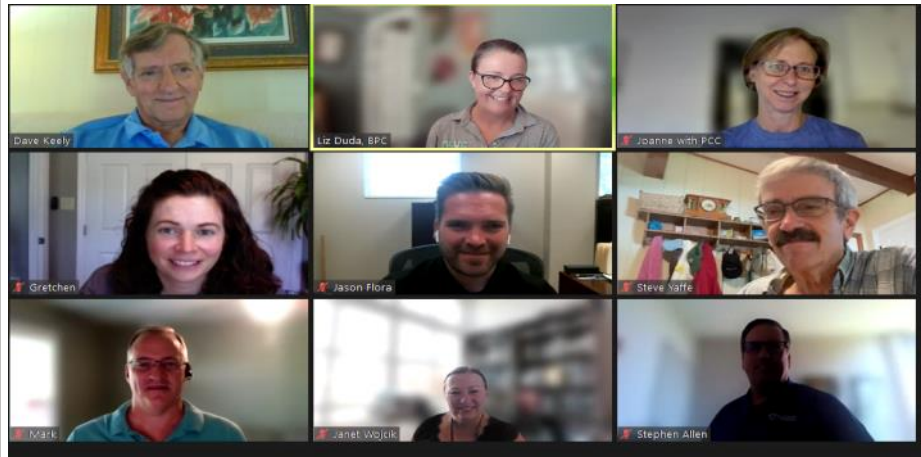
Wednesday, September 6, 2023 9:00 AM

Bike/Ped Coalition (BPC) of York County Meeting - Wed., Sept. 6, 2023, 9am, Zoom

Next BPC meeting – Wed., Oct. 4, 2023

Participants:

- **Liz Duda** (BPC Co-Chair), TC resident, [Wholespire YC](#), [Tega Cay Healthy Kids](#)
- **Stephen Allen**, Catawba COG
- **Gretchen Benner**, small nonprofit owner, parent and biker advocate in FM
- **Joanne Burkett**, [Palmetto Cycling Coalition](#)
- **Jason Flora**, [York County Economic Development](#), planner
- **Dr. David Keely**, [RFATS](#) Citizen Advisory Committee, [Wholespire YC](#), [Tobacco-Free YC](#), family medicine, public health
- **Mark Sexton**, RH bicyclist and safety advocate
- **Janet Wojcik**, [Winthrop](#), [Wholespire YC](#), ACSM
- **Steve Yaffe**, transit consultant



Discussion Highlights

Overview: Gretchen Benner led the update on the Fort Mill Trail Master Plan and the Safe Routes to School (FMHS) that she and community members are advocating for. Jason Flora led the York County rails to trails-effort update. BPC members discussed opportunities to advocate - for making roads safer for pedestrians, cyclists and rollers - with York County Pennies for Progress and the RFATS Policy Committee. Funding also is available via TAP. Janet Wojcik shared Charlotte's results in the ACSM Fitness Rankings. Other events were announced including upcoming conferences and National Week without Driving. Several other items of interest were discussed, all discussed in the notes below.

Fort Mill Trail Master Plan Update; Safe Routes to Fort Mill High School; RFATS Meetings:

- At the [August 14, 2023, Fort Mill Town Council meeting](#), Gretchen Benner was one of about six public comments in support of sidewalks and safe ped/bike/rolling access. Other BPC advocates in the audience included Luther Dasher, Dr. Dave Keely, and Liz Duda. The town consultants later presented the [draft trails master plan](#). In this [meeting video](#), public comments are at minute 2:30, Benner's comments at minute 6:00, and the master plan at minute 59:00. There was good discussion by council about the plan and the need for safe ped/bike/rolling access in support of a healthy community.
- A top Trail Master Plan project was the route at which Benner and neighbors are advocating for a Safe Route to School to FMHS (Sam Smith and Sutton).
- The mayor and council seemed receptive to comments and encouraged Benner and other members of the public to attend and speak at [RFATS meetings](#). Benner and others will plan to attend the 9/22/2023 meeting. Duda pointed out that public comments are at the very beginning and you need to get the early to look for the comment signup sheet which sometimes isn't out; Steve Allen suggests checking in with David Hooper when you get there.
- Duda reminds us that RFATS needs to start to livestream the meetings, given our region's most important transportation decisions are made here, the information is of interest to the public (as evidenced by Fort Mill Mayor Savage encouraging people to attend these meetings), and not everyone can attend these in-person only meetings on a traditional workday. Burkett noted that even SCDOT livestreams its meeting so there is precedent, interest and need.
- Keely also suggests trying to get the school district to contribute money towards FMHS sidewalks, noting the sidewalk will require funding. They may have contributed funding to CRHS.

Rails to Trails

- Jason Flora shared background that we slowly and steadily are progressing in researching two unused rail lines:
 - Rock Hill to York on a not-in-service Norfolk Southern (NS) line and
 - Duke Energy easement leading to Lake Wylie area
- Rails to trails would benefit our community from a bike/ped and economic development standpoint. We have seen positive impacts from rails to trails regionally and nationwide.
- Yesterday Stephen Allen, Bret Baronak (Carolina Thread Trail), Liz Duda and Flora met to discuss

- status and next steps. Allen has communicated with NS and Flora with Duke Energy.
- Allen shared that NS is unsure what it wants to do from the hospital to the north so discussion is not dead. NS referred CBRE to us with a product option to lay a trail and preserve the line. Baronak, Flora, and Allen will meet with CBRE to understand product, cost.
 - Project must be led by community and jurisdictions, not by us. Our current role is fact finder and convener - drawing the right people together, and learning from and sharing information with them.
 - Next steps:
 - Baronak will convene a meeting with county and municipal representatives to get their input and determine their interest in leading the effort (and invite Allen, Flora, and Duda).
 - Allen is convening the CBRE meeting.
 - Then we will report back to interested constituents.

York County Pennies for Progress:

- This is an opportunity for us and community members to advocate for the importance of incorporating bike and ped facilities into projects including "**anything within the right of way of the roads.**" Although naysayers may complain about having to pay for facilities that they don't use (if they drive cars not bikes), these are **transportation** projects and transportation is not just for automobiles.
- Give your input at:
 - The next [Pennies for Progress](#) public [meeting schedule](#): Sep. 20, 6pm - Rock Hill – Rock Hill Operations Center, Conference Room 132, 757 S Anders (Rock Hill [announcement](#)) (see [proposed project list here](#) to be approved in the [9/11/2023 Rock Hill city council meeting](#))
 - Or online via <https://www.penniesforprogress.net/FormCenter/QuestionsComments-5/Submit-Question-or-Comment-44>
- Bike lanes can be an effective tool to slow traffic by narrowing the lane. SCDOT has guidelines.
- Patrick Hamilton is YC liaison (assistant county engineer) for Pennies commission which selects the projects.

Event Announcements:

- [Sustain Charlotte](#) will support [National Week without Driving](#) (Oct. 2-8, 2023), sponsored by [America Walks](#) in partnership with the [Disability Mobility Initiative](#): "We created the Week Without Driving challenge so that policy makers, elected leaders and transportation professionals can begin to understand the barriers nondrivers experience in accessing our communities." Though this may be hard for us in York County, we still can be aware. (shared by Yaffe)
- [Carolina Thread Trail Trail Forum](#) - December 5 (annual conference held the first Thursday of December). Amy Camp is a fantastic speaker, with a new book, [Deciding on Trails: 7 Practices of Healthy Trail Towns](#) discussing the impact of trails on towns and the economy.
- ACSM's 71st [Annual Meeting](#), Boston, MA, May 28-31, 2024; Wojcik connected with Mark Fenton (PCC's SC Bike Walk Trails Summit keynote speaker) and submitted a walkability session around the Boston convention center. In the past active conference sessions included walks and bike rides, but this session, led by Fenton, was extremely successful at the SC Bike Walk Trails Summit.
- Burkett suggested that maybe Wojcik would lead the next walkability assessment at next year's summit!?! Consider limiting to 50 people instead of the whole conference.
- [RFATS](#) Policy Committee Meeting [2023 schedule](#)
- 2023 [NC BikeWalk Transportation Summit](#), Sep. 14-16, Catawba College, Salisbury, NC
- [BikeWalk NC Friendly Driver Program](#) (Virtual), Sep. 12, 6:30pm

ACSM American Fitness Index

- Wojcik shared that the [American Fitness Index](#) rankings came out in July ranking 100 U.S. cities on personal and community health; data can be used to drive better fitness, health, and quality of life. Charlotte fell a bit to 45 and isn't doing well in community environment ranking. Arlington, VA, is in top spot.

Items of Interest:

- Thinking about [National Week without Driving](#), Burkett read about immigrant communities' difficulty to get drivers licenses in, [To navigate car dominated kansas city, these congolese refugees teach each other how to drive](#). Duda heard anecdotes of similar challenges in York County for some recent female Indian immigrants. Burkett noted we could check with SC DHEC for York County statistics that they get through their [SC Community Data Walks](#).
- Burkett shared this [Kansas City Beacon article](#) explaining how hard it is to navigate by bus. Having some sort of bus service does not necessarily solve the transportation problem. For example, the [Strong Towns Action Lab](#) noted that the guy killed running to the bus stop would have had to wait

an hour for the next bus, so he was willing to assume more risk in crossing a busy/dangerous intersection: take the risk or get to work late.

- Burkett shared that the Strong Towns [Action Lab](#) goes deeper into road safety issues.
- Burkett shared that PCC successfully advocated for state to revise a [policy, that often led to sidewalks dropped from the project](#); SCDOT is now making funding less restrictive. (Thank you, PCC and SCDOT!)
- Keely is suggesting Wholespire Anderson County to use [PCC resources](#). Yaffe shares that Anderson is using transit.
- Sexton, an avid biker who moved to RH in 2019 from NY, wants to help make our community safer for riders.
- [The Car that Wanted to Be a Bike](#), kids book

SCDOT TAP Funding:

- [Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program](#) (TAP funding) is for local governments, school districts, and other eligible entities to apply for grants for non-motorized transportation projects. Two cycles per year (April, though projects not announced).
 - If in RFATS (transportation management area, or TMA), contact David Hooper.
 - If in non-TMA, on rural side, contact Stephen Allen of Catawba COG.
- SC DOT hopes to fund projects in rural areas in need of pedestrian facilities. Projects could be to support low-moderate income areas (LMI); school; park; park to commercial area. Small communities basically have a blank check.
- In Clover, did a multi-use path connecting new middle school to downtown, so can walk from high school to middle school to downtown. Also applied for community park to Bethel Street and improvements on the other side crossing Clinton Ave.

Bike/Ped Coalition of York County:

- **Website:** <https://bpcyc.org/> (currently not working)
- **Facebook page** (@BPCYC): <https://www.facebook.com/BPCYC/>
- **LinkedIn group:** <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9020582/GooILFIS>
- **2023 BPC meeting series** for 9am on first Wednesday of the month (Oct 4; Nov 1; Dec 6) - download and import this [iCalendar \(.ics\) file](#).