

**MINUTES OF
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
COMMUNITY ROOM
AUGUST 16, 2012
6:00 P.M.**

ROLLCALL Answering roll call was Members Bass, Franzen, Iyer, Janovy, LaForce, Nelson, Thompson, and Whited.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

The agenda was amended by member Janovy to move the BETF to after Community Comment to accommodate Sgt. Olson who was in attendance for the Sidewalk Ordinance Discussion. **Motion was made by member LaForce and seconded by member Iyer approving the amended agenda. All voted aye. Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 19, 2012

Member Whited amended the minutes to add the following to the Streetcar Presentation to the 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence, *'one stop parking option stands to help emphasize Southdale as a go to place; and this mode of operation is more friendly travel for seniors.'* **Motion was made by member LaForce and seconded by member Janovy to approve the amended July 19 minutes. All voted aye. Motion carried.**

COMMUNITY COMMENT

Gretchen Cooper and Bill, 58th & Chowen, said their concern has gotten progressive over the last 7 years with the number of cars that are speeding between 57th & 58th and the increase in cut thru traffic during the school year. She said one month ago she yelled at a driver going about 40-45 mph and the driver turned around, came back and yelled explicit at her and said she was speeding because she was coming down the hill. Ms. Cooper said something needs to be done. She said she is aware that speed bumps are a problem for snow plows and she knows the police are monitoring the area but the problem increases on the weekends and holidays usually. She said the drivers are both teens and adults.

Director Houle was asked if speed data was available and he said he would need to check. He said if the occurrences are at the same time every day the police can be notified for smart enforcement. A school bus was noted as a culprit that speeds through the same time every day. Mr. Houle said larger vehicles can often appear to be going faster than they really are. Member Whited said the issue is that the area is convenient for cut thru traffic and Mr. Houle said it is scheduled for reconstruction in a couple years and they can look at plans to address the issues. Member Janovy said this area has come up a few times and wondered if a slightly different approach should be taken. She said reviewing speed, volume, history of traffic safety requests and crashes is probably a good starting point but asking residents to wait a couple years might not be. Suggested solutions were putting out the speed monitor to educate drivers of how fast they are driving and adding it to the Traffic Safety Committee (TSC) report in order to track it. Mr. Houle said staff will provide all the data at the next meeting and also add this to the TSC. Member Iyer asked if staff tracks calls or issue areas and Mr. Houle said yes, they are tracked on a map.

REPORT/RECOMMENDATIONS

Sidewalk Ordinance Discussion

Member Janovy said at the TLC Bike Blvd public hearing, someone asked about bikes, strollers and wheelchairs on sidewalks and it was the first time she realized that bikes were not allowed. She brought the issue to the BETF and her report is from their discussion that recommends changing the ordinance to liberalize biking on sidewalk, allow biking on sidewalks in business districts and also allow parking on sidewalks. In conversation with the City of Minneapolis' bike

coordinator, he told her that they allow biking on sidewalks but not in business districts but he knows it happens and they are studying the issue. Peter Kelley, chair of the BETF and member Janovy met recently with Sgt. Olson to discuss the issue.

BETF liaison, Sgt. Tim Olson, was in attendance to explain the Police Department's opinion on biking on sidewalks which he said is based on safety. Sgt. Olson said allowing bikes on sidewalk would increase the safety risks at the expense of a small percentage of bikers. He said the City was aware of what they were doing when the ordinance was put together. He said further that the City is making an effort to provide bike lanes on the roads and that state statute has specific rules for biking on roadways. Sgt. Olson said he met with members Janovy and Kelley and they agreed there is a public safety issue by riding on the sidewalk. He said the department is reluctant to support open use of the sidewalk but recognizes exceptions and inconsistencies, e.g., a child learning to ride on the sidewalk and a parent riding with the child are not safety concerns because they would be riding slow; the upcoming France Avenue sidewalk project is not a concern because of the width of the sidewalk – it will not present a risk; and having parking stations on sidewalks. He said the ordinance could be modified to address these exceptions and inconsistencies. Additionally, the ordinance references a bike registration law that was repealed by the state in 2005, so it is in effect adhering to an outdated law.

Discussion

Member Whited asked about bike collisions with seniors and Sgt. Olson said to date, there have not been any collisions on sidewalks. He said they do not actively enforce the sidewalk ordinance and in fact, most ordinances are enforced based on complaints but at least the ordinance is in place when enforcement is necessary.

Member Iyer asked if the ordinance should be used for high traffic areas like 66th & Valley View versus a residential street. Sgt. Olson said the biking population is so small, it does not warrant changing the ordinance. He said the focus should instead be on what is convenient for pedestrians, not for bikers.

Member Bass said there are adults who do not like being in the streets and she sees both children and adults on sidewalks every day. She said some riders are comfortable in the streets while others are not. She said also that people do moderate their behavior accordingly and there have not been any crashes; however, they should allow for people who are making a safe choice based on comfort level and ability to do so legally. He said the ordinance is effective because there have not been any accidents and allowing for change has the potential for problems. He said the current system works well and there is no need to increase the risks to pedestrians based on a small population of bikers who already have a place to ride.

Member LaForce said the ordinance is a good policy but he also thinks it is a problem when they have ordinances that do not reflect the practices of what is going on. He said most people are probably not aware that it is illegal to ride on sidewalks and he wondered what behavior change they would see if they were to tell people. Sgt. Olson said he believes most people would prefer to not have more bikers on the sidewalk. Member Iyer said it does increase the risks if they add bikers to sidewalks. Sgt. Olson asked what is the need to put bikes on sidewalk when there is an adjacent roadway. He said the City is making strides to accommodate bikers with bike lanes like they have on 70th. He said integration of the different modes of transportation will create problems.

Motion was made by member Janovy and seconded by member Iyer to table the current discussion and allow them to think over what was learned for discussion at a later date. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Traffic Safety Committee (TSC) Report of August 1, 2012

Section A.1. Member Janovy did a revision of the speed table policy for discussion. She did not include a speed threshold because 27 mph, in context, could be considered unsafe so why wait for 30-35 mph to do something. Member Thompson ask to remove item #6 and allow for engineering judgment and member Janovy said she would prefer not to. Members Iyer and Nelson agreed that item #6 should be removed. Member Franzen said the revision is concise and well written and agreed with deleting #6. Member Janovy agreed. **Motion was made by member Iyer and seconded by**

member Franzen to adopt member Janovy's revised speed table policy without item #6 and without the notation section. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Section A.2 Member Janovy said the revision is nicely improved. She asked about item #4 because she came home recently and found a contractor had closed Morningside Road. She said they had pulled a street bond but not a road closed permit. She asked if it should specify pulling both and also notifying residents because a resident coming home for lunch would not have had access. Mr. Houle said a road closed permit would require the contractor to post a detour but in this case he did not pull one. Regarding item #5, member Janovy asked if it would be helpful to reference the parking requirement either here or in item #6. Member Janovy will forward her comments to Mr. Houle for inclusion.

Section A.3 Member Janovy said the statement "The City of Edina policy regarding parking restrictions requires present conditions that impacts traffic safety in order to restrict parking" is not reflected in the current Parking Policy as the only factor. She said there are other reasons to restrict parking and noted the sentence as inaccurate or misleading.

Section B.2 Member Janovy circulated a memo explaining the background of this intersection. She said this is a long standing issue from the 2005 NE Study. She said a raised intersection with marked crosswalk was originally planned but all raised intersections were taken out by the City Council. She said crossing at Grimes is difficult because of visibility and there is frustration after having stopped at six stops signs previously. She said the intersection serves as crossing for the Country Club, 50th & France, and 44th and France.

Member Bass said another stop sign is adding a problem further down the road and suggested a traffic circle, not to stop cars but slow them down. Member Janovy said a traffic circle was recommended in a Resident Area Safety Improvement plan but since that time the curb line was reconstructed. Mr. Houle said the intersection was realigned to fix a surface water issue but that it could be realigned to fit a traffic circle and crosswalks could be included. He said he would prefer to do a study so that he could include to the east where speeding is occurring. Member Thompson agreed and suggested a corridor study instead of spot review. Mr. Houle suggested deferring this to a later date to lay out a plan for a corridor study. This was moved to section C.

Motion made by member Bass and seconded by member Thompson to approve the amended August 1 TSC report. All voted aye. Motion carried.

2012 Bikeways Project

Mr. Houle said City Council requested that Alliant Engineering look at the plans and Mike Anderson's memo and mark-ups were distributed. He said the BETF also reviewed the plans and their memo and mark-ups for 70th & Antrim were also distributed and he recommended accepting their suggestion. Member Janovy said she compared the original plans to the mark ups and will give Mr. Houle her findings.

Additionally, Mr. Houle sought support for using a resolution or an ordinance to designate bike lanes. The consensus was to use an ordinance and to revise the draft ordinance to end at '...Section 169.222.' in section 1420.04. Mr. Houle said the plans will go back to City Council on Sept 4 and the Public Works Department will begin shortly thereafter.

Motion made by member Janovy and seconded by member Bass to support the bike and striping plans with clarification of questions raised and ordinance with deletion of everything after 169.222 in section 1420.04. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Updates

Student Member

Mr. Houle said a new student member was appointed and she will begin next month.

Bike Edina Task Force – Minutes of July 12, 2012

Member Janovy said the BETF voted to become a working group of the ETC because it is currently not part of the City structure and this was made very clear by CM Neal when chair Kelley sought reimbursements for expenditures related to the BETF website and he was told the BETF was similar to the Hockey Association and reimbursement was not approved. She said they discussed whether or not they would be able to continue to function as it has, if it becomes a working group. She said they have their own website and gets in kind donation and would they be able to continue this way. She said the BETF was set up for a specific task and the task was completed but they've continued to operate as though they were part of the City structure. Discussion to be continued.

Living Streets Working Group

Member Thompson said he asked for comments on the overview that the consultant gave at the last meeting and those comments were received and forwarded to the consultant. He said the handout is a revision that includes the comments. Member Thompson said the next step is to meet with staff, other commissions, other stakeholders and public outreach.

Member Laforce asked if people have heard about this process and have provided any feedback. Member Bass said people who are interacting with Do.Town have been told about Complete Streets. Member LaForce said he is fairly certain that there is a candidate running for State Legislature that is against it.

Moving forward, phase 1 is done said member Thompson and phase 2 is unfunded. He said No. St. Paul spent approximately \$150,000 developing their plan. Member Janovy asked if franchise fees could be used for policy development. Mr. Houle said he included \$200,000 in his budget for this type of work, plus a transportation engineer and he could reword it. Member Bass suggested putting together a progress report for the original funders and see if they have additional funds for phase II. Member Janovy said she had asked this of Robin and she said did not have any more funds. Mr. Houle recommended having a consultant and transportation staff both working on this so he will redo his budget. Member Bass said Do.Town staff is available until March 2013.

Transportation Options Working Group

Member Whited said they reviewed VEAP's program to see how it can serve Edina's needs. Her agency, PRISM, and VEAP will be agencies that Hennepin County will rely on to serve communities when they break up their downtown service center. Next month, Becky McBride, project manager from the Met Council will be in attendance to talk about the BE Line so the group can see if it can BE for Edina and the timing is perfect as they are looking at revamping this line. The working group minutes will be included in the ETC packet from now on.

CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS – None.

Member Janovy asked if this is when they would talk about 58th & Halifax and member Whited said she wondered the same about her neighborhood and if it should be discussed under Living Streets. Mr. Houle said the correspondence was sent to Council and staff and it is not clear to him what should be brought forward to the ETC. He said it is difficult when staff is being pulled in so many directions when they are already doing so much and residents do not believe that staff is doing anything to help. He said it is difficult when there are no funding, limited state aid funds or requests not meeting state aid requirements. Member Thompson said part of it is education and recognizing that they cannot help everyone. Member Bass said the goal is to generate support now for when street projects come around. Member Janovy said it is also getting people involved with programs like as Operation Lead Foot. They talked about inexpensive ways to deal with speeding such as equipping residents with radar guns, flagging speed limit signs to draw attention and getting residents involved at the neighborhood level.

Chair Nelson asked if these emails are forwarded to the traffic safety coordinator and Mr. Houle said this was the first of its kind so they need to develop a process because they will be receiving more. Member Bass said engineering is the best approach since not everyone will become involved but it looks like the City Council is responding residents and this is helpful.

CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

2013 Work Plan

Chair Nelson said CM Neal wants this by September. Suggested items were Sidewalk Plan; Way Finding for sidewalks/pedestrians and standard for signage; France Ave Crosswalks; Safe Routes to School; Review Transportation & CIP; Pedestrian Plan; same items as last year's plan excluding the TLC Bike Blvd; and communication/education. Chair Nelson will update the 2013 Work Plan and email to everyone.

Chair Nelson said he spoke with Floyd Gabriel, chair of the Planning Commission (PC) about scheduling a meeting between the two commissions to talk about planning and transportation and the meeting is scheduled for September 27, 6-7 p.m. (one hour before the PC's regular schedule meeting). He said it is not a mandatory meeting for the ETC and the agenda is still to be defined.

Chair Nelson said Hennepin County is drafting a Pedestrian Plan and Rose Ryan is willing to attend the next meeting to talk about it. He said they are having community meetings but nothing is planned for Edina - the closest meeting is in the Crystal/New Hope area.

Member Janovy said Councilmember Brindle mentioned contraflow bike lanes on Normandale between 66th & 70th. She said the shoulder has been mistaken for bike lane and asked if it could be striped for bike lane. She asked what the process is when a councilmember brings up something that is related to transportation during a council meeting. Mr. Houle said they generally follow up with the councilmember and staff is currently working on a feasibility study for bike lanes and sidewalk on Normandale between 66th and 70th.

Member Janovy said at TAB they still do not know how much federal money they will be getting. She said the Met Council has a new website, Thrive Msp.com, and wants people to weigh in on what's needed to thrive in 2040 – housing, jobs, transportation, etc.

Member Whited said a new neighbor parks his car with a cover for days at a time and wondered if this was legal. Mr. Houle suggested contacting Sgt. Olson.

Member Iyer said his neighbor asked him about the new special assessment interest rates. Mr. Houle said he will cover this in his staff report.

Member Franzen said he attended the 2013 Neighborhood Roadway Reconstruction Informational Meeting and it was one of the best ran public meetings he's ever attended and in speaking with neighbors they also felt the same way. He said it was very decisive and residents knew what was or was not allowed and there was no room for them to go off on tangents about things such as the special assessment.

Chair Nelson said there appear to be street projects going on that the ETC did not know about, i.e. the frontage road near City Hall. Mr. Houle said Public Works is doing a mill and overlay project. Member Janovy said this type of work provides opportunity for restriping. Mr. Houle said he will speak with Brian Olson, Public Works Director to learn their schedule.

STAFF COMMENTS

France Avenue Update – Mr. Houle said option 3 was approved by City Council for a \$4M budget; staff is working with property owners to acquire ROW at no cost; the monuments were taken out; existing sidewalk at Whole Foods will stay; starting detail plans immediately; finalizing memo to the state within the next week; and will reach out to Hennepin County for funding gap. It is unknown at this time if the newly acquired ROW would become the City's or Hennepin County's.

TLC Bike Boulevard Update – this project will begin next week - Wooddale to be seal coated by Public Works; and a counter/video monitor was mounted today at 60th & Wooddale to take bike and pedestrian counts as part of the project.

Status 2012 Neighborhood Roadway Reconstruction Projects – Richmond Hills, Countryside, and Tracy Ave projects will be going through September/October; others will be completed by Labor Day.

Status 2013 Neighborhood Roadway Reconstruction Projects – informational meeting held for 4 of 5 neighborhoods; Normandale is scheduled for September 5 (being consulted to SEH); staff incorporated recommendations from the communications audit that was done (executive summary will be shared with the ETC); draft feasibility studies will be ready for the next meeting; checking to see if staff can have a special public hearing meeting with City Council to approve all the projects at once.

On August 6, City Council approved first reading of a franchise fee per home to fund sidewalks, trails and street lights so no longer assessed. The special assessment policy was revised to include payback from 10 to 15 years and interest rate from 2 to 1 percent above the bond interest rate. At the next City Council meeting they will reconsider including the 2011 project areas into the policy change.

Member Janovy asked for an update on W. 44th at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.