

**MINUTES OF
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
JULY 19, 2012
6:00 P.M.**

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

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

The agenda was amended by Chair Nelson to move the Streetcar presentation up after Approval of Minutes.

Motion was made by member Franzen and seconded by member Bass approving the amended agenda. All voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 21, 2012

Motion was made by member Janovy and seconded by member LaForce to approve the June 21 minutes. All voted aye. Motion carried.

SPECIAL MEETING OF JULY 9, 2012

Edits were made as follow: Page 1, 3rd paragraph, 1st sentence "...said *something closer* to option 3 was assumed in the cost of the *funding application...*" Page 1, last paragraph, delete "a group" and replace with "*FHWA International Program.*" Page 3, 7th paragraph, 4th sentence add "*...and she believes there should be formal collaboration between the ETC and the Planning Commission.*" **Motion was made by member Janovy and seconded by member Bass to approve the July 9 minutes as edited. All voted aye. Motion carried.**

STREET CAR PRESENTATION

Andy Brown, 5512 Park Place, and a member of the ETC Transportation Options Working Group, presented an idea for a streetcar system for the eastern and southeastern side of Edina. He said the idea is to differentiate Southdale from other retail areas by creating a system to support the transportation infrastructure in an area that is becoming more urban. He said it is based on the streetcar system in Portland, Oregon. His presentation included potential routes, benefits to the community, links to Greater Rail & Transportation Infrastructure, infrastructure investments and goals, Portland's costs and benefits, and links to learn more about federal funds.

During discussion, Mr. Brown explained that the street car would travel on the street and follows the same traffic laws as motor vehicles; it travels mid-traffic at street level with no need to step up or down; right-of-way not needed like for light rail; and capacity is same size as buses. Mr. Brown was asked if the population would justify the investment and he said it could, based on the level of development in the Southdale area. He was asked about operating hours and he said it would run all hours, except overnight. Mr. Brown said he shared the idea with Mr. Robb Gruman, administrator for Fairview Southdale Hospital and chair of the Edina Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Gruman, who was in attendance, said he is organizing a group to look at the merit for the long term.

Member Braden said linking to the Greater Rail would require this to be part of the regional plan. Mr. Brown said he has focused more on fact finding so far and that there will be a need for economic and non-economic support from local businesses before seeking regional support. The consensus was that the Transportations Option Working Group would continue this discussion.

COMMUNITY COMMENT – None.

REPORT/RECOMMENDATIONS

Traffic Safety Committee (TSC) Report of July 11, 2012

Director Houle withdrew the speed table from the agenda until the next meeting because it was not included in the ETC's packet.

Section A.2 Member Janovy said she was the one that contacted the planner; therefore, for clarification it should probably be reworded to say a member of the ETC. She said she is assuming parking will only be allowed where allowed and restricted to hours allowed. Director Houle Wayne said it is based on the parking rule of no overnight parking from Nov 1st to April 15 and 6 hour limit. Member Janovy asked if this could be included since the Construction Management Plan (CMP) is a standalone document and contractors may not look up the parking code. Additionally, she said she is concerned with the width (12 feet) and wondered if was sufficient in all cases. Director Houle said he would have to take her concerns back to the group that developed the CMP; however, he said the wider the street, the further back cars are pushed into the neighborhood.

Motion was made by Member Janovy and seconded by member Iyer with the acknowledgement that the speed table will be brought back and that the Construction Management Plan will come back at a later meeting for review. All voted aye. Motion carried.

France Avenue Pedestrian and Bike Crossings Feasibility Study

Director Houle said a revised option 3 would be presented and that the City Council would like to discuss the original re-scoping prior to the August 6 public hearing. He said the ETC would be informed when the meeting date is set.

Mr. Chuck Rickart, project manager, presented. Mr. Rickart explained that the 2007 federal grant was for a pedestrian overpass bridge and the re-scope change is where they are now which is for intersection enhancements at 76th, 70th and 66th. He said the scope changed approved by the Met Council included median refuge islands with landscaping at intersections; intersection improvements (narrowing of existing lanes at intersections; removing free right turn islands; enhanced corner treatments; ADA compliant; and pedestrian level lighting); signal improvements (APS signals, countdown timers and vehicle and bike detection); east/west bike accommodations; provide better accessibility to Transit; and minimal right-of-way (ROW) acquisition only at intersections. Mr. Rickart said the presentation to the Met Council was a preliminary concept plan and he estimated the cost to be \$2,045,000 based on aerial mapping only; a "typical" intersection design; minimal landscaping in center median and adjacent to intersections; minimal pedestrian level lighting; and no ROW acquisition was assumed.

Mr. Rickart said after the special meeting with the ETC on July 9, the preliminary concept plan (scope change) was designed to include staying in the ROW as best they could (except for the intersections); sidewalk all the way; widened intersection for landscaping; and medians staying the same. He said the estimated cost for this design was \$2,302,400, including some ROW costs.

Continuing, Mr. Rickart said on May 1, the City Council expressed a desire for an urban design for the corridor - more than just landscaping, and LBH was hired. He said they looked at the entire corridor to ensure that whatever is done at the three intersections could be done at the others. Additionally, two stakeholders meeting were held to gather feedback, plus a special meeting with the ETC. He said at the first meeting the feedback was that the space between the road and sidewalk was important. He said they designed three options (1. Separated bike/pedestrian with boulevard; 2. Separated bike/pedestrian with no boulevards; and 3. On-road bike lane with sidewalks), plus leaving the original scope change as an option also. The options were presented at the second stakeholders' meeting and the consensus was to move forward with option 1; however, at that time costs and ROW impacts were not known.

At the special meeting with the ETC on July 9, Mr. Rickart said the consensus was that the estimated cost of \$9,145,500 was too high and the recommendation was to go with a revised option 3 (no bike lanes on France Ave; east/west bike lanes consistent with Bike Plan; and provide sidewalk connections on France Ave with boulevards). Mr. Rickart turned over the presentation to Mr. Craig Churchward of LBH to explain the urban design feature.

Mr. Churchward said the idea was premised on other planning documents relating to the community as a whole, and unique features of France Ave with the potential of becoming a main street for the community and as such create a sense of identity for the whole community. Mr. Churchward said if a full build out cannot be done, they could look at ways to create an incremental development as the road changes character – less cars, more pedestrians. He said this could be accomplished using visible vertical elements - large trees outside and inside medians; monuments to create sense of place; flowers that would be vibrant/noticeable; and pedestrian lighting. He said creating something unique or a level of detail says you care. He also said to create a motif that can be used over and over as properties are redeveloped along France Ave.

In conclusion, Mr. Rickart said the estimated cost for revised option 3 is \$5,799,100 and that it is the urban design and ROW that has significantly increased the cost over the scope change estimated cost of \$2,045,000. He said to meet the mandatory sunset date of March 31, 2013, the following schedule must be adhere to: project development – Apr to Dec 2012; project memorandum – Oct 2012; ROW acquisitions – Sept 2012 to Mar 2013; detail design – Aug 2012 to Mar 2013; final approval (City/County/MnDOT) – Mar 31, 2013; and begin construction Summer 2013.

Discussion

Member Franzen said there is an extra 2 feet of excess ROW and asked if it could be narrowed up. Mr. Rickart said if they use a 'pathway' classification it would be needed and they have not gotten MnDOT's approval yet. Chair Nelson asked about narrowing of existing lane at intersections and if the entire corridor would be this way. Director Houle said the north bound lanes would be reduced while the south bound side would be reduced only at the intersections. Member Janovy asked if they would be ripping out sidewalks to put in new ones and if the new sidewalks would link up to existing sidewalks. Mr. Rickart said they will not be ripping out any sidewalk and that they would be matching up to existing sidewalks with the exception of 66th.

Member Janovy said it looks like bike lanes are being added where there is a right turn lane, and it was not clear that they continue on the other side of the street in all cases. Mr. Rickart said it depends on the intersection; 70th for example will end at the intersection and bikers can get across on the sidewalk to the existing bike lane; other intersections will end. Member Janovy said this design does not match what ordinance allows (no biking on sidewalk). She also said that statements are made on page 29 of the report without details and these will need to be clarified for City Council.

Member LaForce asked if sidewalk on the eastside is multi-use and Mr. Rickart said yes. He also asked if the plan is to remove the trees at Macy's in order to place the sidewalk and Mr. Rickart said they have not worked out the fine details yet but as it looks now, the trees would be removed.

Member Braden asked about transit shelter locations and Mr. Rickart said Metro Transit is not proposing any changes at this time. He said they talked about moving one stop around to Hazelton and off France.

Member Whited asked about monument cost and Mr. Churchward said \$75,000 is included for six each monuments. She also asked about irrigation cost and Mr. Churchward said it is included.

Chair Nelson said he likes the idea of the sidewalk at Byerly's and Macy's but wondered about the additional ROW cost since the ROW has increased cost so much. Mr. Rickart said he did not have this specific ROW cost available but could forward it at a later time. Director Houle said he has shown the plans to Byerly's and they like the design so there is a possibility that the City may be able to get the ROW without cost or minimal cost; however, the City has to be cognizant of their parking requirements. He said there is also the option of putting the sidewalk below and then moving it up

when the site is redeveloped in the future. Member Janovy asked about the grade of the sidewalk and Mr. Rickart said it would be ADA compliant.

Member Janovy asked about the following elements and Mr. Rickart responded accordingly: crosswalks width is 8 feet; all free rights are being removed; they will be working with the County on a bike detection system; for crossings, the County prefers a design that allows pedestrians to cross all the way majority of the time without the need for a push button in the middle of the intersection but the City will seek approval for a push button; a speed study should not add extra cost; Director Houle said the state looks at the 85% percentile speed that vehicles are currently traveling to set the speed limit.

Member Janovy suggested option 3 without the boulevard and a sidewalk along the curb. Mr. Rickart said the cost would be \$2.3M. She asked what kind of sidewalk can they have without additional ROW and Mr. Plowman said it would be 6-7 feet against the curb. Mr. Churchward added that it would not be 6-7 feet of usable space – there would be shy distance and it's not developing the idea that was talked about with the public and the ETC of generating a living street for the community. Member Janovy agreed but said that \$6M is more than what she believes would be approved so there is a need to strike a balance to get closer to the budget and make it safe for pedestrians. Mr. Churchward said the three intersections need to be a statement for the rest of the corridor. He recommended a design that will be functionally correct and to reduce cost, eliminate the trees and monuments because they can be added later. Member Braden asked if they've explored other funding options because she would hate to lose the boulevard. Director Houle said they've talked about special assessment and the City Council will be discussing this project at a workshop before the Aug 6 public hearing.

Chair Nelson said he likes the idea of option 3 because it sets up the intersections for future expansion, and is considering moving it forward with potential cost savings. He said the workshop session is the place to allow the City Council to express their interest and cut and paste. He said the \$5.8M is significantly more than the \$2M that they started with but it is the right size for the corridor. Member LaForce agreed and suggested for the workshop that they come prepared with cost estimate without the monuments, not doing extra radius adjustments, but he is not so sure about removing the trees. Mr. Rickart said they will have detail costs for the meeting and member Iyer requested receiving the estimated costs before the meeting.

Member Janovy said she wants the boulevard and for the project to be as beautiful as it can be but they should also consider 69th and not strand pedestrians. She said the monuments seem like an easy thing to cut but is under the impression based on a couple conversations, that even with special assessments, that this project is too costly. She said they need to be able to show that it can be done for less. She asked if the City Council will be asked to approve the feasibility study on August 6 and Director Houle said yes; however, they can continue until the next meeting if they so choose. Member Iyer said he would like to focus on where to reduce cost and see what they can get for \$3M or \$4M.

Member Bass said she likes the idea of looking at something less costly. She said they did not see a feasibility study for the overpass and suspect that they would be in this same spot. She said the value and utility of the project as it is now conceived will be of much greater use to residents and the cost per user will be a lot lower than the original project. Member Braden said she has not heard about the value that this will be to commercial properties and how they might be able to contribute in say ROW dedication. Chair Nelson agreed that the bridge would be around the same cost. He believes there is a way to do the project but the workshop is the place to work things out.

Motion was made by member Franzen to approve option 3 based on the discussion and to look at ways to reduce ROW cost; have landowners share in contribution of ROW; construction cost reduction such as free rights, etc. and forward to Council. Member Iyer asked for an amendment to not mention option 3 because the concepts along the corridor are what they want. Motion not seconded.

Member Thompson suggested approving the scope change revise and then see show what they can get for \$3M and \$4M in meeting the Living Streets and urban design principles. Member Janovy said she can support this and add on up

to a point that the City Council is comfortable with. Member LaForce said he does not know what the City Council is comfortable with. He said the City Council saw the original project and they added the urban design. He said further that maybe they are interested in everything and suggested pushing it forward to them to see what their cost threshold is.

Motion made by member Franzen and seconded by member LaForce to move forward with option 3, provided that all of the additions to the revised scope change be clearly delineated so that they can have a discussion at the City Council workshop regarding what should be added or not added, including finance options.

Aye: Franzen, Braden, LaForce, Whited, Nelson, Bass, Thompson, Iyer

Nay: Janovy

Motion carried.

Updates

Student Member - No update.

Bike Edina Task Force – Minutes of June 14, 2012

Member Janovy said she emailed a revised bike ordinance memo to everyone. She said the BETF approved a recommendation to change the biking on sidewalk ordinance. She suggested bringing it to the ETC for discussion. The consensus was to discuss at the next meeting. She also sent an email with a link to Bike Walk Twin Cities on lessons learned.

Living Streets Working Group

Draft Policy Presentation

Member Thompson, chair of the Living Streets Working Group, said BARR and HR Green would present an update.

Mr. Fred Rozumalski, Barr Engineering, explained what Living Streets is. He said it is gray and green infrastructure with gray being what is traditional seen as roads (cars oriented) and green are storm water capture and reuse, trees, pedestrian safety, bikes, etc. He said green is not often addressed in street projects and Living Streets tries to balance the two. He noted the components that would be included in Living Streets but also noted that each street would be designed independently. Mr. Rozumalski also discussed Common Living Streets Principles; Development Framework; Peer Review & Lessons Learned; Existing Plans and Policies; Vision and Goals.

Mr. Dan Edgerton, Barr Engineering, presented the Next Steps which included Developing a Living Streets Plan; Public Engagement; Comprehensive Inventory and Prioritization; Implementation Process Framework; and Design Template Examples.

Member Thompson said the ETC could provide feedback to him via email on the vision and draft policy.

Transportation Options Working Group

Member Whited said they created a checklist for reviewing transportation items and reviewed her program, Prism Express. Next meeting they will review the BE Line and Veaps Volunteer Drivers Program.

CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS – None

CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

2013 Work Plan

Director Houle said the City Council reviewed their work plan last Tuesday which included lots of projects that the ETC is involved with. He said now is the time to give input and suggested that at the August meeting the ETC identify priorities for submission to the City Council. Members can email their priorities to chair Nelson or Director Houle.

Member Bass said Hennepin County is developing a pedestrian plan and they reached out to her and the Do.Town organizers to help them reach out to the communities.

Member Whited asked if the residents who are concerned about the intersection at Chowen would be able to address the ETC at the August meeting and Chair Nelson said they can during the Community Comment period.

STAFF COMMENTS

Director Houle said July 24 is bid opening for the Bike Boulevard and the bump outs for Wooddale – the estimate is high for the bump outs. On Aug 7, the public works department will begin the bike striping project a that was approved by the ETC (70th, Antrim, Cahill).

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

ATTACHMENT

Attendance Spreadsheet