

**MINUTES OF  
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
COMMUNITY ROOM  
MAY 21, 2015  
6:00 P.M.**

**ROLL CALL** Answering roll call were members Boettge, Campbell, Iyer, Janovy, LaForce, Loeffelholz, Nelson, Olson, and Spanhake.

**ABSENT** Bass and Rummel

**APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

The agenda was revised to combine Bike Edina and Walk Edina Working Groups for discussion. Motion was made by member Nelson and seconded by member Boettge to approve the revised meeting agenda. All voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 16, 2015**

Motion was made by member Olson and seconded by member Spanhake to approve the minutes of Apr. 16, 2015. All voted aye. Motion carried.

**COMMUNITY COMMENT** – None.

**REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**University of Minnesota Capstone Presentation: Neighborhood Traffic Study**

Traffic safety coordinator Joe Totten presented the capstone project. Mr. Totten said he was part of a team of five students that conducted the traffic study in the Strachauer Park neighborhood in the area bounded by W. 54<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, TH-62 to the south, France Avenue to the west and Xerxes Avenue to the east. He said the study was done because of residents' concerns which included cut thru traffic, speeding, lack of crosswalks and sidewalks, uncontrolled intersections and parking issues.

Mr. Totten said they evaluated the effects of the traffic calming circles on W. 54<sup>th</sup> Street and data showed that speeds were lowered by 3.7 mph. He said the bike lanes, bump-outs and narrowed lanes also helped to reduce speeds. Regarding cut thru traffic, he said they looked at W. 58<sup>th</sup> Street and W. 60<sup>th</sup> Street and found that at least 85% of the traffic was people leaving or entering the neighborhood. He said eastbound W. 60<sup>th</sup> Street may have a high amount of cut thru traffic and speeding was observed on W. 58<sup>th</sup> Street. Regarding parking, Mr. Totten said there were little observable parking issues – one area was because of two remodeling projects and the parking issues were only on week days when the contractors were working; the other area was the business node at Pizzeria Lola where parking increased on Saturdays. He suggested looking at parking again in the summer (to account for patrons using the neighborhood park) because their observation was in the winter. For a bike route, they suggested Beard Avenue which would connect to the Promenade and Minneapolis trails. This would include two bridges, one at France Avenue and TH-62 and the other between Beard Avenue and Colony Way.

In summary, their findings are high utilization of parking near 56<sup>th</sup> Street and Xerxes Avenue; the remaining area of study showed no demand for double-sided parking except during residential remodeling projects; the Living Streets Plan recommends one-sided parking and this was not seen as likely to cause parking capacity issues. And they recommended traffic circles at the intersections of Beard Avenue and W. 58<sup>th</sup> Street and Beard Avenue and W. 60<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Discussion**

- Any link with requests for stop signs observed? No, but data shows speeds are higher near stop signs.
- How was the data collected? Manually for parking and tubes for counting. Member Iyer suggested that Edina play a leadership role in automating traffic data collection.

- Cut thru traffic entering neighborhood could have exited on a different street; cut thru traffic is seen as negative but this is not necessarily so; was speeding at stop signs on the downstream? On W. 60<sup>th</sup> Street it was on both sides.
- Liked the idea of separate bike routes over the freeway because Cornelia Elementary is the school for students in this neighborhood.
- Residents often request stop signs to slow traffic and blame cut thru traffic – this data is validation that neighborhood residents make up for the majority of the traffic; traffic calming circles are a good idea instead of not having a solution.
- Multi-use bridge was suggested.

### **Traffic Sign Installation and Maintenance Policy**

Planner Nolan said all cities are required to have a reflective and maintenance sign policy for liability purposes and he is looking for feedback from the ETC before sending the policy to City Council for approval. He said member Janovy provided feedback via email.

### **Feedback**

- Is there a benchmark for cities to have a certain amount and types of signs (because signs are ignored if too many are in place)? Planner Nolan did not know.
- How do cities determine the types of signs needed? By doing a sign study.
- Bike lanes have too many signs which lead to confusion.
- How do you know when there are too many signs and do you have a policy to address this? Planner Nolan said staff would address this by doing sign study.
- Policy addressing multiple things: reflective and budget; need different policy for removing signs; make policy clear that City Council has authority to place regulatory signs and not this is not being delegated; policy states Traffic Safety Committee (TSC) has authority.
- TSC's authority is the current practice.
- What additional authority is being delegated that the TSC does not currently have? If City Council isn't delegating any authority the language should be removed. Planner Nolan will review the language with staff.
- Concerned that too much authority is given to City Council who are not trained engineers.
- Agreed staff has the expertise and suggested changing the wording to show that City Council has final approval.
- Obstruction of signs by overgrown vegetation is not included. Is this addressed in another policy? Yes, said Planner Nolan.

### **Southwest Light Rail Transit (SW LRT) Station Access**

Planner Nolan said although the SW LRT will not run through Edina, this is on the ETC's work plan and chair Bass included it to begin discussing station access. The closest station for Edina will be Blake Road in Hopkins.

### **Discussion**

- Blake Road Corridor Study completed by City of Hopkins in participation with Edina and will include a sidewalk from Spruce Road to Maloney Avenue in Edina, and all the way to the LRT station in Hopkins;
- It is not known at this time if parking will be available for transit users;
- Mayor Hovland and CM Brindle are on a SW LRT committee and may be able to provide information;
- What is the ETC's authority at it relates to being able to make certain requests?
- Should someone from the ETC sit on a SW LRT committee? Member Nelson once served on a committee.
- Request for staff to overlay Edina's sidewalk and bike plan with SW LRT stations on to one map with primary focus on the stations that are accessible to Edina;
- Make a map similar to one that Three Rivers District have and have it available during discussion;
- Previous discussions about transportation for youths and seniors and this is an opportunity to see if Edina really wants a circulator that would connect the business nodes and SW LRT stations;

- Metro Transit looked at feeder systems for the Blue and Green Lines in Minneapolis; what can Edina do to make sure there is a bus line? Planner Nolan said he was not sure what influence the City has with Met Council and Metro Transit;
- Invite Metro Transit to a meeting to learn about their plan and how Edina could be included.

### Traffic Safety Report of May 6, 2015

A.2. Member Janovy said she like the idea of doing a trial and suggested a communications plan that would include more than the study area. She asked why they could not add a crosswalk and planner Nolan explained that the resident did not want a landing pad near his property in the right-of-way.

B.4. Member Spanhake said as a frequent driver in the area, she agreed with the requestor. She said drivers going south on Tracy Avenue do not know what to do and it would be clearer if the northbound stop sign was removed. She said it is also very difficult to stop in the winter when the road is icy. Planner Nolan was asked if warrants were met for a 4-way stop and he said no. In reference to further study, he did not believe anything new would be learned.

**Motion was made by member Spanhake and seconded by member Boettge to forward the May 6, 2015, TSC report to the City Council.**

**All voted aye.**

**Motion carried.**

### Updates

#### Student Members

Member Campbell said with the recent approval of the school's referendum which includes expansion of the school's parking lot, his environmental teacher is concerned about the impact the parking lot expansion will have on the prairie. Member Campbell said it is interesting that they have the money but that it will have negative repercussion on the environment but they also need to meet the demands of their customers. Member Nelson asked for his suggestion to reduce parking demands and member Campbell said he did not know what the solution was but felt the school's solution to increase parking fees would negatively impact low income families with students who live outside of Edina and drives to school.

#### Bike Edina and Walk Edina Working Groups

Member Boettge reported that she was stepping down as chair of the Walk Edina Working Group and handed out feedback from the group (may not reflect all individuals associated) that included why they joined the group, positive feedback and issues. She said some issues that she ran into was inconsistent or lack of policy for working groups, difficulty finding information on the City's website and her inexperience chairing a working group.

Member Janovy said she thought Bike Edina would become more focused after becoming a working group of the ETC but this has not been the case. She said in the beginning Bike Edina was not multi-modal and was more of an advocacy group but now that planner Nolan is on staff, the group has become completely multi-modal. She said the ETC does a good job of reviewing and making recommendations and she sees some duplication with Bike Edina. For Bike Edina, it is more difficult because members look to her to provide all the guidance whereas the ETC has staff support. She said some members also become frustrated when they run into limitations based on the rules and communication is difficult because they are going through the formal City structure. She said one role that needs to be promoted is the City's transportation system through forums and educational outreach.

Vice chair LaForce summarized the issues as Walk Edina does not have a chair and Bike Edina is asking to change what they are currently doing. He asked if the ETC would be okay if both groups were disbanded. Member Olson, a member of Bike Edina, said after the Bike Plan was completed they lost their focus.

### Feedback

- Likes the idea of advocacy of both groups and the historical walks that Walk Edina was going to do, bike rodeo, etc.

- Anyone interested in chairing Walk Edina? No.
- Would Bike Edina want to absorb Walk Edina? Not if the structure is an issue.
- Member Janovy said there is a need for more education and outreach and the Energy and Environment Commission (EEC) has a working group with a budget and they've been successful putting together events. She said she needs people with the energy. She said they should maintain the Bike/Walk Edina brand and use it to do outreach.
- Bike Edina had a clear focus eight years ago and is struggling now to identify its role.
- Need to focus their mission so that they are not duplicating what the ETC does.
- Member Iyer said when he was on the EEC, the members were motivated; they got \$10,000 from the City Council and wrote the solar panel proposal. He said they should disband the groups and they should become advocacy groups that would seek support from the ETC.
- Vice chair LaForce asked if this was feasible and member Iyer said yes, they could report quarterly and the ETC could ask for their help as needed.
- Member Olson said Bike Edina became a working group of ETC because of liability purposes.

**Motion made by member Iyer to disband the Bike/Walk Edina Work Groups and give them the option of becoming advocacy groups as long as they are vetted by the City to participate in transportation related issues.**

**Motion failed for lack of second.**

- The two groups should be discussed separately. Can the ETC use the working groups as needed to work on specific issues?
- Member Janovy reminded them that the reason for the discussion is because of the working group structure that requires information, resources, staff support, etc. so whatever they decide to do going forward should address these concerns.
- Member Janovy said if Walk Edina does not have a chair it is automatically dissolved and the ETC should be mindful of the message that will be sent based on its action.

**Motion made by member Iyer to dissolve Walk Edina and restart it at a future date. Motion was seconded by vice chair LaForce and amended to dissolve Walk Edina because it does not have a chair and restart it at a future date. Amendment seconded by member Nelson.**

**Motion withdrawn by member Iyer.**

- Member Janovy said Bike Edina should continue with a narrowed focus and increase membership by having a purpose and she recommended education/outreach.
- Get feedback from current members to see how they feel.

**Motion made by member Janovy and seconded by member Loeffelholz to continue Bike Edina but with a narrower focus on education and outreach with goals defined by the ETC.**

**All voted aye. Motion passed.**

#### Living Streets Working Group

Planner Nolan said the Living Streets Plan was approved by City Council two weeks ago.

#### Communications Committee – None.

Member LaForce said the article titled 'Stop Behind the Crosswalks in South Area' that he wrote was published in the May 21<sup>st</sup> issue of Sun Current.

**CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS – None.**

**CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS**

Member Boettge asked why the Cornelia Drive sidewalk Safe Routes to School grant application was not approved and planner Nolan said the committee felt there wasn't enough demonstrated risks and lack of support from the school district. He said four grants were awarded from \$85,000 to \$300,000 and they were for sidewalks across arterial and/or collector streets.

Member Iyer said he was in a Boston suburb recently and he saw crosswalks similar to the ones on France Avenue which probably means it is a best practice. Planner Nolan said it shortens the crossing distance for pedestrians. Member Iyer said it was good to see that Edina was not unique with this design.

Member LaForce said he lives three houses away from the Countryside H roadway reconstruction project and within the past two weeks, at least 300 dump trucks have traveled on his street from the project area. He said essentially he is in a construction zone even though his street is not under construction. He said if he was not on the ETC he would not have known what was going on and suggested communicating with residents outside of the direct area because the project has a broader effect. He received a notice that his water would be shut off and suggested including what residents can do to prepare for the shut off.

#### **STAFF COMMENTS**

- Project area maps for the 2016 neighborhood reconstruction projects were handed out and planner Nolan said staff would seek input at a later date.
- Reminder of the joint work session with City Council and the ETC/Bike Edina on June 17.  
Motion was made by member Iyer and seconded by member Olson to cancel the June 18 regular ETC meeting and reschedule for June 17 immediately following the work session. Motion was withdrawn after discussion.  
**Motion was made by member Iyer and seconded by member Loeffelholz to cancel the ETC's regular schedule June 18 meeting. All voted aye. Motion carried.**
- 2015 project updates – projects are progressing as planned; Birchcrest is ahead of schedule by a few weeks; Valley View project has started and based on feedback from residents and Council members, staff will be adding striping to define the travel and parking lanes.
- Three pedestrian bridges will be removed as part of the Nine Mile Creek Trail and staff is proposing to reuse one of them to connect the new sidewalk going in on Valley View Road to the trail in Courtney Fields. The abutments would be built in 2016 with PACS funds and the bridge installed when it becomes available.
- The new lights on France Avenue were turned on last night; staff has received more negative feedback than positive.
- Promenade Phase 4, behind Bylery's, is under construction; Phase 5 planning has begun (going north from 70<sup>th</sup> Street) and design issues will be getting through or around the Galleria and possibly connecting to a trail that is on the Park & Recreation's strategic Grand Loop plan. Member Janovy asked why Park & Recreation did not come to the ETC with their planning of the Grand Loop and planner Nolan said he did not know why. Member Iyer said the ETC should see transportation related items that are being proposed within a certain timeframe, i.e., the Grand Loop.
- Hennepin County is hosting a meeting on May 27 for residents on Xerxes Avenue to discuss landscaping the bumpouts.
- The Nine Mile Creek Trail west of Tracy Avenue received funding for 2018; it is not known yet when construction would begin.
- The school district agreed to participate in the Valley View Road traffic study with the City and the costs will be split 50/50.
- MN Greensteps City is hosting a workshop on June 11 and in addition to environmental engineer Bintner presentation, the ETC is scheduled to present on Living Streets but chair Bass will not be available so another presenter is needed.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned.

**ATTENDANCE**

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ATTENDANCE																		
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	SM	SM	WS	# of Mtgs	Attendance %
Meetings/Work Sessions		1	1	1	1	1											5	
NAME	TERM													(Enter Date)	(Enter Date)	(Enter Date)		
Bass, Katherine	2/1/2017	1	1	1	1												4	80%
Boettge, Emily	2/1/2017	1	1	1	1	1											5	100%
Iyer, Surya	3/1/2018	1	1	1	1	1											5	100%
LaForce, Tom	3/1/2018	1		1	1	1											4	80%
Loeffelholz, Ralf				1	1	1											3	100%
Janovy, Jennifer	2/1/2017	1	1	1	1	1											5	100%
Nelson, Paul	2/1/2016	1	1	1	1	1											5	100%
Olson, Larry	2/1/2016		1	1	1	1											4	80%
Whited, Courtney	2/1/2015	1															1	100%
Spanhake, Dawn	2/1/2016	1	1	1	1	1											5	100%
Rummel, Anna	9/1/2015	1		1													2	40%
Campbell, Jack	9/1/2015			1		1											2	40%