

**MINUTES OF
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
JANUARY 16, 2014
6:00 P.M.**

ROLL CALL Answering roll call was member Bass, Boettge, Iyer, Janovy, LaForce, and Nelson.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Motion was made by member LaForce and seconded by member Janovy to approve the meeting agenda. All voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 19, 2013 – Approved as corrected.

Motion was made by member Janovy and seconded by member Bass to approve the amended minutes of December 19, 2013. All voted aye. Motion carried.

COMMUNITY COMMENT – None.

REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

MnDOT/Southwest LRT Freight Rail Presentation

Southwest LRT

Mr. Dave Christiansen presented an update on the Southwest LRT and 2014 Regional Rail. Mr. Christiansen said the Met Council was ready to vote on the co-location or relocation of the LRT when Governor Dayton requested a 90-day moratorium to re-examine freight rail alternatives/options in response to controversies that were still present. Several alternatives/options are under review and the consultants' reports are due Jan. 31 and open houses will be scheduled. He said if it appears they are moving rapidly with this project this is because the design phase actually began in 1996 and the Met Council, who took over in 2012 from Hennepin County, would like to finalize design because other projects around the country are in similar state of readiness and they are competing for the same funds. The LRT is number one on the list for funding and the Met Council does not want lose their standing. He said most of the issues have been resolved except for the current ones with freight being the biggest.

Mr. Christiansen said it is difficult to relocate freight trains because most lines have been abandoned while freight traffic has increased. He said TC&W is experiencing moderate growth while Canadian Pacific (CP) will see minor changes such as week day switches, occasional TC&W transfers and approximately 4-6 additional trains at nights on the Dan Patch line passing thru Edina. He said TC&W is evaluating the Savage Swing Bridge to put it back in service.

Mr. Christiansen said the Kenilworth is a major service area for freight and the Met Council is moving forward with plans but the Minneapolis City Council said they were promised that freight rail would be taken out of the Kenilworth area; additionally, the bike path currently runs next to the railroad. One suggestion is a shallow tunnel for the LRT with the bike path on top and freight remains in same location. He said the conundrum that they are faced with is to spend more money and stay in Kenilworth or move into St. Louis Park.

Passenger Rail

Mr. Christiansen said they are working on plans for high speed rail but funding is not yet available. They are Minneapolis to Duluth and the plans should be completed by the end of this year; Rochester to the Twin Cities and

the plans should be completed within 18 months; and Chicago to the Twin Cities and plans should be completed by end of this year (this one requires the cooperation of Wisconsin and they pulled out two years ago). Another route is Mankato to Minneapolis but this one does not have local support (would run on the Dan Patch line).

Quiet Zones

Mr. Christiansen said there is a method and engineering formula that communities can use to create quiet zones and the railroad has to shut-off their horn; however, the quiet zone application does not include pedestrian safety. To include pedestrian safety at crossings, the cost is between \$75,000 and \$500,000 per crossing. Edina has about six crossings.

The following questions were asked of Mr. Christiansen:

- Are there guidelines for adding bike trail next to the CP rail? There are none at this time and the railroad gets nervous when you want to add anything next to them. He said to use common sense and they suggest a fence between the trail and railroad.
- What do you get for \$75,000 vs \$500,000 when upgrading a crossing? There are many factors to consider – current ADT, number of lanes, signals, number of trains, etc. Also, an upgraded crossing may need to be re-engineered later on if circumstances change (traffic increases, etc.).
- Does MNDOT have funding available to upgrade crossings? There is a small budget for crossings but Edina would not qualify because quiet zones are considered quality of life improvement and not safety related.
- For the LRT, will Edina be required to provide municipal consent? No, because Edina will be affected on a secondary level.
- Is the Southern Arm being considered? Not at this time but this could change.

Active Routes to School Presentation

Member Bass explained Edina's Active Routes to School plan starting with the name. She said the nationwide program called Safe Routes to School began as an initiative to increase walking and biking to school but the plan covers more than just safety so they decided that Active Routes to School was a more appropriate name.

She said the benefits of walking and biking includes healthier children, better academic performance and less traffic congestion. The plan goals include supporting walking and biking where it is safe to do so and making changes in unsafe areas. She emphasized that it does not include making everyone walk, bike, or eliminate school busses and cars but to make it possible and safe for those who want to walk or bike; especially the 16% of students within the district's .7 mile walking zone.

Continuing, member Bass said the plan was developed to serve as a vision for the community; identify and prioritize short and long-term improvements such as engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation; and funding opportunities (MNDOT requires a plan when seeking funding).

She said the plan was developed by consultant Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. by gathering data; site visits; stakeholders input from a working group that included City and District staff, members Bass and Janovy from the ETC, a City of Bloomington Public Health staff; principal interviews; Edina High Student Council; and a parent survey. There were 369 responses to the parent survey and the reasons most cited for not regularly walking or biking to school were traffic (amount and speed); infrastructure (intersection and crossing safety, presence of sidewalk/pathways), and distance (for high school); and 59% said a child had asked for permission to walk/bike in the last year.

Member Bass said the plan's recommendations were categorized by short, mid or long-term plans and implementation would be done by the City or District or jointly.

Finally, she said the plan would be presented to other committees for review and input and adoption by City Council and the School Board; establish a working group to help with implementation; and monitor funding sources.

Discussion

Member Iyer recommended a sidewalk on W. 66th St. west of TH-100 (on the steep hill); establish drop-off locations that students can walk from; create an efficient pedestrian connection from the Cornelia Neighborhood to South View and Concord which would include a pedestrian bridge over TH-62 that accommodates bikes (existing bridge is not bike friendly); consider higher fines when drivers park on street during the winter and snowplows are not able to plow properly; and reduce the number of garbage trucks on the streets when students are walking.

Member Boettge said she did not recall receiving a parent survey and asked how the survey was distributed. Member Bass could not recall all the avenues that were used but some included the District's In The Know newsletter, Edina Patch and other means that individual principals used. Member Boettge asked if more surveys are planned and member Bass said not a parent survey but student surveys are included in the plan.

Member Janovy asked if the ETC would like to make a recommendation to forward the report to the City Council for adoption. Member Iyer said he would like his suggestions addressed before forwarding the report to the City Council and he asked if there was an opportunity for more people to be involved. Member Bass said she would forward his suggestions to the consultant for inclusion and that he could participate in the working group. The consensus was to include member Iyer's suggestions and bring the plan back next month for a final review.

Traffic Safety Committee Report of January 2, 2014

Section A1. Another issue in this area said chair Nelson are the two left turn lanes under the TH-100 bridge – one turning north to TH-100 (north left turn lane) and the other presumably to the frontage road (south left turn lane). He asked if there could be better signage because if you're in the south left turn lane trying to go onto TH-100 it is difficult and traffic often backs up to Rabun Drive because of the turn lanes. Transportation planner Nolan will look into this (member Janovy noted that this area has been looked at in the past).

Section B1. Member Janovy asked for clarification on what the request was and transportation planner Nolan said it was for additional (unspecified) signage; however, the area is already signed and staff did not think advanced warning sign would be effective. Member Janovy said limiting parking near the crosswalks was raised in the past and she suggested checking to see how far back from a crosswalk parking is allowed and extending that even further back to allow for pedestrian visibility.

Section C2. Transportation planner Nolan said Hennepin County has offered to install a rapid flashing beacon and an enhanced crosswalk in 2014 and he is checking to see if they would consider straightening out the crosswalk and adding a pedestrian refuge.

In the appendix, member Janovy suggested identifying marked pedestrian crosswalk as City of Edina policy to make it clear what is controlled by the City.

Motion was made by member Janovy and seconded by member Bass to forward the January 2 Traffic Safety Report to City Council. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Updates

Student Members - None

Bike Edina Task Force

Member Janovy said the Bike Edina Task Force is now Bike Edina. She said they are accepting new members and the application is online at BikeEdina.org. Member Bass asked why Bike Edina did not conduct the Bike Rodeo this year

and if they may not be interested in the future. Member Janovy said it was only for this year because of reorganizing and liability concerns. Member Bass suggested partnering with other organizations for future rodeos.

Living Streets Working Group

Chair Nelson said they met on Jan. 2 and discussed network connections and design guidelines.

Communications Committee

Member Janovy asked if the communications plan for the France Avenue Intersection Enhancement project has been revisited now that the project has been approved. Transportation planner Nolan said he saw the plan for the first time today and he and interim city engineer Millner will be working on it. Member LaForce suggested sharing the final project plans with the ETC.

CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS - None

CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Janovy asked if there are any noise walls planned between crosstown and W. 50th Street. She said the chain link fences along the ramps at W. 50th Street and TH-100 aren't in good shape and asked what the process was for replacing them. Transportation planner Nolan will check on these.

Chair Nelson said the Park and Ride on the east side of Southdale is now opened with express services to downtown Minneapolis and to the University of Minnesota.

Member Bass asked about the timeframe for filling the city engineer's position. Transportation planner Nolan said they are down to two final candidates and they expect to fill the position by next month.

STAFF COMMENTS

- Transportation Options - transportation planner Nolan said he met with commissioner Whited to discuss the upcoming Transportation Options workshop and she suggested some things for the ETC to consider before the workshop next month. In response to her suggestions, chair Nelson suggested a formal or informal survey to see what transportation options are currently available. Member Bass said they could also look at data already available like the Quality of Life survey conducted by the City; member Janovy concurred and said the survey asked how people get around the community and it also captures their age.
- France Avenue Intersection Enhancement Urban Design - a meeting is being planned to share design concepts; more information to come on the meeting date and time.
- W. 54th Street – engineering services agreement was approved; staff is working on a variance for the advisory bike lane which will mostly like be approved; a neighborhood meeting is planned for 1/27 for bridge design feedback.
- Xerxes Avenue – the County will mill and overlay from W. 54th to W. 66th in 2014. Member Janovy suggested looking at pedestrian crossings and transportation planner Nolan said the County has agreed to install a crosswalk at W. 64th.
- Three Rivers District asked cities to submit proposals for the Transportation Alternative Program Solicitation and Edina was one of six from 27 proposals that were accepted. If funding is approved the money would be used to construct a path at Oaklawn and Parklawn Avenues (an Active Routes to School path).

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

ATTENDANCE

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ATTENDANCE - 2014															Work Session	# of Mtgs	Attendance %	
NAME	TERM	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D					
Meetings/Work Sessions		1															1	
Bass, Katherine	2/1/2014	1															1	100%
Boettge, Emily	2/1/2014	1															1	100%
Iyer, Surya	2/1/2015	1															1	100%
Janovy, Jennifer	2/1/2014	1															1	100%
LaForce, Tom	2/1/2015	1															1	100%
Nelson, Paul	2/1/2016	1															1	100%
Whited, Courtney	2/1/2015																0	0%
Sierks, Caroline	student																0	0%
Van Dyke, Jackson	student																0	0%

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Allison, Secretary