

**MINUTES OF
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
COMMUNITY ROOM
JUNE 20, 2013
6:00 P.M.**

ROLL CALL Answering roll call was members Bass, Braden, Iyer, Janovy, LaForce, Nelson, Sierks, and Spanhake.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Motion was made by member Janovy and seconded by member Iyer to approve the meeting agenda.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 16, 2013 – Approved as corrected.

Motion was made by member LaForce and seconded by member Spanhake to approve the revised minutes of May 16, 2013.

All voted aye.

Motion carried.

COMMUNITY COMMENT – None.

Director Houle introduced new employee Mark Nolan, transportation planner.

REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

54th St. W. Bridge and Roadway Reconstruction Study

Director Houle stated that this project is in the Capital Improvement Plan for 2013 to complete the planning and design phase with reconstruction in 2014. The project includes reconstructing 54th St. W. from Wooddale to France Avenues; reconstructing the bridge over Minnehaha Creek; and designing a stormwater management plan to mitigate untreated stormwater runoff into the creek.

Request for Proposals (RFP) for the planning and design phase were solicited. He said the difference in this project than others was that staff wanted a robust public engagement process. SEH was selected from the four RFPs that were received because they had the best public engagement process which included working with a public relations firm. Director Houle said their approach is to identify issues and needs up front and this will be done through online surveys, intercept surveys and door knocking. The intercept surveys and door knocking will be done in the area from Wooddale Avenue over to France Avenue and from 50th St. W. down to 56th St. W. The online survey can be done by anyone throughout the City.

Director Houle introduced Ms. Anne Carroll from Carroll, Franck & Associates, the public relations firm working with SEH. Ms. Carroll said the RFP made it very clear that the public engagement process was central to the project and they recommended using the International Association for Public Participation framework which is nationally recognized and internationally tested. She said staff chose to use 'collaborate' from the framework to work with all stakeholders, including the ETC.

Continuing, Ms. Carroll said residents were notified of the project via a letter and they started the intercept surveys this morning with a team of ten graduate students asking two key questions:

1. What issues and needs do you see on 54th St. W., including the bridge? (Please focus on needs and issues rather than specific solutions. Example: We live west of Arden Park and kids cannot walk there safely; or, the bridge isn't wide enough for cars, bikes, and walkers.)

2. What issues and needs do you see for Minnehaha Creek and Arden Park? (Please focus on issues and needs rather than specific solutions. Example: Stormwater runoff dumps directly from the road into the creek; or, the canoe landing is primitive and slippery after it rains.)

Ms. Carroll said community input will be gathered as follows (input will be combined and not reported as individual or group feedback):

1. Gather issues and needs about 54th St. W., stormwater, and the creek and park – June-July
2. Gather input on design components – August
3. Gather feedback on refined scenarios – August-September

The City Council public hearing will be October or November.

The ETC was asked to share their input on the two issues above and on issue #1, they shared the following:

- Having a place to stand to see the water (area is narrow);
- Bridge is narrow;
- Need to separate pedestrians, bikers and vehicles;
- Stop sign is unexpected, not likely to stop when biking considering there is an oncoming hill ahead (loses momentum);
- Church parking (private organization relying on public parking);
- Dedicated bike lanes on both sides to build out the system and optimize the street for cycling;
- Need sidewalk to improve safety and access to creek;
- Grade separation so that traffic does not have to go down to the level of the creek;

Issue #2:

- Stairway not maintained in winter;
- Sidewalk on Brookview to get to the stairway;
- Make it easier/safer for canoeists to cross 54th;
- More parking without adding to runoff;
- Make people feel safe biking and parking to reduce vehicle parking;
- Aesthetics of creek – algae blooms;
- Move warming house away from creek for safety, visibility;
- Make Oaklawn a scenic viewing vista;
- Add a trail in the park;

Ms. Carroll thanked everyone for their participation and reminded them that they too, can complete the online survey if other issues came to mind. Director Houle encouraged the ETC to visit the area.

Discussion

- The budget is approximately \$2M to be paid mostly from State Aid funds; the roadway cost split will be 80% State Aid and 20% assessed to residents.
- Member Janovy said she is concerned that some phrasing in the letter sent to residents is vague enough to be misleading, e.g. *“the State will pay for approximately 80 percent of the reconstruction.”* She said the ETC knows what this means but its likely to be misunderstood by the general public. She encouraged rewriting the letter. She is also concerned with how authentic the engagement is going to be given competing interests (sidewalk/bike lanes/boulevard/State Aid standards). In response to the authenticity of the engagement, Director Houle said it is in the engagement process that they will determine what people’s interest are.
- Member Iyer said he likes the idea of collaboration but is worried with the impression that a lot of public input will be part of the decision-making. He said area residents may want things that visiting residents may not want and he asked whose input will be given priority. He said he would have preferred to use “involve” from the framework because it tells residents upfront that they will be listened to but the decision-making

will be based on sound engineering practices and what will benefit the overall City. In response, Director Houle said the process is set up so that no one group gets preferential treatment and the series of workshops are set up to engage residents at different stages.

- Additionally, member Iyer said there is no mention of how this project fits with the Comprehensive Plan, Safe Routes to School, etc. and suggested that these should be included. Director Houle said the draft Living Streets Policy will be implemented and it is mentioned in the tasks. Member Bass said they need to tie the pieces together (stormwater issue, multi-modal transportation, etc.) in a more overt way so that residents can make the connection. Member Janovy added that in the past, residents could refuse a sidewalk in their neighborhood because the option was there; but this project so far, has communicated that these things are non-negotiable. She asked how you invite input when there are things off the table that may be important to residents. She said the draft Living Streets Policy has been a struggle up until now because people object to sidewalks. She added further that door knocking for her would be intrusive and you're invited to give input but is told that certain things are off the table.
- Member Bass said she understands that not everyone likes door knocking but it is a great opportunity to involve residents because you are meeting them where they are and they are more likely to participate in the design process. She added that this is good step and will be a growth process for them.

2013 Capital Improvement Plan and Work Plan Update

Director Houle updated the ETC on their Work Plan progress. He said the 2014 Work Plan is due to the City Council in September. He recommended adding this to the August agenda for discussion. Member Iyer recommended a working group to brainstorm ideas. Member Bass suggested asking City Council if there is anything that they would like the ETC to work on. Director Houle will distribute the 2013 Work Plan Update to City Council for the next scheduled work session.

2014 Neighborhood Reconstruction Projects

Director Houle said the ETC will receive the feasibility studies in September and make recommendations to the City Council in October. He said even though the Comprehensive, Bike, and Sidewalk Plans does not include these neighborhood streets he asked if they should review them to see if sidewalks should be added because the draft Living Streets Policy mentions sidewalks everywhere. He said if there is a chance that sidewalks will be recommended by the ETC, he would like to know this sooner rather than later so that residents can be informed and provide feedback (a neighborhood open house is scheduled for July 29).

In the Bredesen Park D Neighborhood, for example, traffic volume is low but Director Houle asked if it makes sense to add a sidewalk along Tamarac Lane to connect with the future Nine Mile Creek Trail. Member Iyer asked what the criteria for adding sidewalks were and Director Houle said there are no specific rules but his general rule is 500-750 cars per day.

Member Bass said since it will be too late to fully implement the draft Living Streets Policy into the 2014 neighborhoods; in the meantime, they could offer rain gardens as options to residents or use 54th St. W. to demonstrate what a Living Streets is like. She said there are elements of the policy that could be implemented. (The policy is expected to be approved this summer.) Director Houle said they have options in Bredesen Park D because all the curb and gutter will be replaced. Member LaForce is concerned that there are few houses, low traffic volume and a cul-de-sac. Member Iyer suggested criteria such as park, traffic, school for adding sidewalk. Member Janovy said they were lacking information to make decisions (volume counts/speed, etc.).

In the Morningside B Neighborhood, chair Nelson said there are sidewalks that ends abruptly for no apparent reason or that continue on the opposite side of the road. Director Houle said they are recommending continuing the sidewalks that ends mid-way on both Alden and Scott to 42nd and on 42nd, he asked if they are still considering only the northside to France Ave. He said they could also continue it to the border (to the west) and they could also consider including Grimes from 42nd to Inglewood to the border (petition coming for this segment). Member Janovy said she does not believe the two sidewalks (Alden and Scott) need to be continued and that more information is

needed to make a decision on 42nd (to construct on one or both sides). Member Bass said if they do not complete Alden and Scott the perception could be that they are inconsistent in what they are doing which is filling in missing gaps of sidewalks and it will be another 30 years before these roadways will be redone; however, she does believe that 42nd is more crucial.

Birchcrest B Neighborhood has some concrete streets and staff is analyzing them to determine if they should keep the concrete or replace it with bituminous. A petition was received for a sidewalk along the Benton Ave frontage road. Also, residents have asked if they could get a sidewalk on Valley View Rd (not on Sidewalk Plan). Member Janovy said she thought they were no longer using the Sidewalk Plan because the Comp Plan is so much better. After a brief discussion, member Iyer motioned to make the Sidewalk Plan obsolete. Director Houle said the Sidewalk Plan is a good starting point so he would not recommend making it obsolete. The motion failed for lack of a second.

In Strachauer Park B Neighborhood, the ETC recommended a sidewalk along the perimeter of the park to have a safe place to walk after parking. There are many complaints about on-street parking in this area. Bike facility was also suggested to encourage biking to the park.

There is nothing unusual about the Countryside F Neighborhood.

Traffic Safety Committee Report of June 5, 2013

Section D – it was noted that the ETC usually get the data for this section.

Section C-2 – Chair Nelson lives in the area and he said he did not receive the survey. Both he and member Braden agreed that throughout the day there is a steady flow of traffic.

Director Houle was asked what the police do if they do not issue speeding tickets until over 15 mph and he said they do smart enforcements – Engineering data helps them determine when/where to send out enforcement.

Motion was made by member Braden and seconded by member Bass to forward the Traffic Safety Committee Report of June 5 to the City Council. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Updates

Student Members - None

Bike Edina Task Force

Received minutes of May 9, 2013. Member Janovy said they are starting the process of filling out the Bicycle Community Friendly Application and in the fall they will offer training to individuals who are interested in becoming league certified bicycle instructors.

Living Streets Working Group

Chair Nelson said the draft Living Streets Policy is making its way around to boards and commissions and they have all been very receptive to it.

Transportation Options Working Group

Chair Nelson said member Whited is having ongoing discussion with the City Council regarding the Senior Transportation Option funding. He said the City Council is working on finding funds and member Whited is working on a grant separately. Director Houle said this was well received by the City Council.

Communications Committee

Member LaForce said they requested a copy of the draft France Avenue Intersections Enhancement communication plan for review and offered some recommendations. Director Houle their recommendations were received and he would follow up with them next week.

CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

A. Correspondence relating to transportation issues - None

CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Bass reported that she and member Janovy met with the Edina High School Student Council (arranged by ETC student member Sierks) regarding Safe Routes to School. She said she asked the students if they had education on safe bicycling and pedestrian behavior and some said they had. She said they all knew it was illegal to ride on the sidewalk but they were conflicted because their parents will not let them ride in the street and with a lack of sidewalk, their parents are worried about their safety. She said the consultant's report will probably recommend that they revisit the no riding on sidewalk policy.

Additionally, bike security was mentioned as a concern. She said there is a bike rack but it is not in a visible location and the bikes could be tampered with. She said at Richfield High or Junior High they have a best practice bike parking cage with a close loop surveillance system so students do not have to worry about their bikes. She said there are concrete things that can be included in their Safe Routes to School plan.

Member Bass said Bloomington Public Health is giving out \$5,000 Community Transformation Grants to assist with promotion of the Living Streets policy but she is not sure yet what promotion means.

Member Janovy said there is an issue with all the school buses leaving the campus one right behind each while traffic with the right-of-way waits. She said she wrote to David White but have not gotten a response. She said she was aware that this was not the purview of the ETC but somehow they need to let the school district know that their choices are affecting others. Director Houle added that they have internal circulation issues that spill onto the roadway. He said he use to meet regularly with them and they should probably get these meetings started again.

Member Janovy suggested placing signs to signify who is working on a particular project with a phone number to call with questions. She said she has seen this in Minneapolis. She also suggested a street obstruction permit process.

STAFF COMMENTS

- The 2013 projects are progressing on schedule despite the weather.
- Wooddale Avenue has been restriped to sharrows.
- France Avenue Intersections Enhancement – bid opening is June 27; the second urban design meeting is scheduled for July 9.
- The School Road sidewalk was approved by City Council. Staff went door knocking and residents were receptive to the sidewalk. Bid opening is July 9.
- The Xerxes Avenue Bridge is opened. Staff is working with Bloomington and Hennepin County to move the 4-way stop sign from the south side of the Bridge to the north side because there is more traffic on this side.
- MnDOT will be working on the TH494 auxiliary lane thru fall.
- Crosstown, Penn Avenue and Xerxes Avenue – Penn Avenue Bridge was shutdown recently for redecking and traffic was pushed to Xerxes Avenue. To alleviate back-ups which is sometimes all the way to 56th St, staff is working with Hennepin County, Minneapolis, Richfield and MnDOT to eliminate the parking lane from Crosstown to 60th and adjust the timing on the traffic signal. Xerxes Avenue Bridge is scheduled for redecking this fall and the roadway to the north will be milled and overlaid.
- The Lake Edina pathway is under construction.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

ATTENDANCE

NAME	TERM	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Work Session	# of Mtgs	Attendance %
Meetings/Work Sessions		1	1	1	1	1	1								6	
Bass, Katherine	2/1/2014		1	1	1	1	1								5	83%
Braden, Ann	2/1/2014	1	1		1	1	1								5	83%
Franzen, Nathan	2/1/2016	1	1		1	1									4	67%
Iyer, Surya	2/1/2015	1	1	1		1	1								5	83%
Janovy, Jennifer	2/1/2014	1	1	1	1	1	1								6	100%
LaForce, Tom	2/1/2015	1	1	1	1	1	1								6	100%
Nelson, Paul	2/1/2016	1	1	1	1	1	1								6	100%
Schweiger, Steven	student	1	1			1									3	50%
Sierks, Caroline	student	1		1	1	1	1								5	83%
Spanhake, Dawn	2/1/2016			1		1	1								3	75%
Whited, Courtney	2/1/2015	1	1	1	1	1									5	83%