

**MINUTES OF
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
APRIL 25, 2013
6:00 P.M.**

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

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Director Houle called for nominations for chair. Member Janovy nominated chair Nelson and the nomination was seconded by member Bass. Chair Nelson accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, the nomination was closed. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Member LaForce nominated member Bass for the vice-chair and the nomination was seconded by member Franzen. Member Bass accepted the nomination. There being no other nomination, the nomination was closed. All voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Motion was made by member Franzen and seconded by member Bass to approve the meeting agenda.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF MAR. 21, 2013

The following corrections were made: page 3, Safe Routes to School, '...it is completed but *is* concerned...;' page 3, Chair and Commission Member Comments, 'She said, *according to what she's read,...*;' '...aware of the administrative citation option;' page 4, 4th paragraph, '...she would *be cautious of setting* time limit...'

Motion was made by member Braden and seconded by member Bass to approve the revised minutes of Mar. 21, 2013. All voted aye. Motion carried.

COMMUNITY COMMENT – None.

REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Active (Safe) Routes to School Presentation

Ms. JoNette Kuhnau, associate with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., presented an update on Active (Safe) Routes to School. Ms. Kuhnau said they have been working on this project for Bloomington Public Health since last year. She said Safe Routes or Active Routes to School encourages students to walk and bike, do it safer and to make it an active part of their lifestyle. She said in the 1960's over 50% of students walked or biked to school and now there are less than 15%, even when they live less than one mile from school. She explained the benefits as improved health, students' behavior improved and so does their performance in the classroom, and less congestion and pollution. This health initiative project is funded by the MN Department of Health and there are also federal funds available that are administered by MNDOT for planning purposes. The National Center for Safe Routes to School provides resources.

Ms. Kuhnau said they are working in Edina and Richfield to develop a comprehensive plan to prioritize needs and create uniformity at all school sites and having a plan makes the school district and City eligible

for funding and MNDOT needs to see a plan in place when funds are applied for. She said the plan addresses education also since infrastructure changes alone is not enough to see changes in behaviors. To establish baseline conditions, she said they look at the number of students that currently bike or walk; lives within a half of mile to one mile of school to determine target audience; the entire infrastructure on school sites and routes; and district policy for walking and biking to school. They also identify activities that are already happening around walking and biking, e.g. Edina has a walk to school day in the fall.

Ms. Kuhnau said they will make short and long term recommendations around five categories: engineering (infrastructure - sidewalk, bike facilities, bike racks, etc.), education and encouragement (parents/school support), enforcement (drivers' behavior), and evaluation (what's most effective).

Data gathering in Edina includes a working group made up of Edina city and district staff, two members of the ETC and Bloomington Public Health staff, and the group has had several meetings where they've discussed data needs, challenges and overcoming them, etc. Ms. Kuhnau said they've collected various maps from the City and the school district showing sidewalks, walking area, and has done site reviews for Creek Valley, Cornelia, and Highlands Elementary Schools and the rest will be completed by May 2013. Additionally, she said they've had meetings with all principals to learn about concerns at their specific site; conducted student tally to see how students arrive at school (teacher tally during first hour).

The next step said Ms. Kuhnau in the data gathering process is a Parent Survey to determine attitude towards walking/biking and to identify obstacles that they will need to overcome to encourage walking/biking. The survey will be mailed to all families within the district and will also be available online.

As they wrap up the data gathering process and work towards finalizing a draft plan, Ms. Kuhnau said some of the challenges and opportunities that they've seen in Edina are schools already have active and engaged principals and parents (wellness initiatives and past participation in walk and bike events); over 150 students live in the walk zone; the City has plans for additional sidewalks and bike facilities; students may live close to school but the direct route is long -- probably could get easements to shorten route, especially in areas where students are already cutting thru; physical education curriculum; schools' liability concerns (schools are not taking on increased liability because they are laying out a plan); bicycling on sidewalks is not allowed in some communities but they make exceptions, for example, children 10 years or younger can bike on sidewalks, and New York allows children 12 or younger or a 26" wheel diameter.

Discussion

- Why are there fewer walkers now? Because the number of vehicles per household has increased, number of parents working outside the home, new schools are built further out of city centers, and schools are on county highways.
- Will the comprehensive plan need to be updated annually? No required updates at this time.
- Will you be meeting with students to see why they do not walk/bike and how this could be improved? Member Sierks said she is on the Student Council and thinks this would be a good idea. No plans currently but this could be included. Member Bass agreed with member Sierks and also suggested meeting with the district's Wellness Committee.

Lake Edina Pathway Proposal

Director Houle said this was brought to the Park Board by the Park and Recreation Department and the Park Board voted it down. He said an ETC member requested adding this to the ETC agenda. The path is from Parklawn Avenue to the cul-de-sac on Kellogg Avenue, on park land at Fred Richards Golf Course. He

said two reasons for denial are that they are planning a study to develop a master plan for the course and also planning to install a play structure at Lake Edina Park. City Council will be holding a public hearing on May 7.

Member Janovy said she asked to add this to the agenda. She said they discussed it at the BETF meeting with a Park Board member and it is in the Bike Plan as a primary route and in the CIP to be built in 2013. She said it is a transportation path and it would serve the purpose as discussed above by Ms. Kuhnau. She noted that there was a letter of support from a resident showing value to adults.

Discussion ensued about the relationship of the Three Rivers Trail to the path and it was determined that the trail would not be impacted by the path.

Member Bass clarified that the project (trail and play structure) was not introduced and hosted by do.Town as stated in staff's memo. She said it was the Family Resource Center that hosted the event after residents expressed an interest and do.Town was in attendance to talk with residents. She agreed that there is a need for moving people and serving neighborhoods and the path was cited by neighbors as a transportation and recreational need.

Motion was made by member Janovy and seconded by member LaForce supporting the Lake Edina Park Path and to write an advisory communication to the City Council expressing support for the reasons stated tonight. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Traffic Safety Committee Report of Apr. 3, 2013

No comment.

Updates

Student Members – None.

Bike Edina Task Force

Received minutes of Mar. 13, 2013. Member Janovy said there will be a Bike Rodeo at Cornelia Elementary School on April 27.

Living Streets Working Group

Chair Nelson said they are continuing to meet and their next meeting is scheduled for next Monday.

Transportation Options Working Group

Member Whited said she revised the advisory communication (Senior Transportation Option Study) and it was forwarded to Director Houle to be included on the City Council's May 7 agenda.

Communications Committee – None.

CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

A. Correspondence relating to transportation issues

None.

CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Member LaForce asked if the “Expect bid delays” sign on France Avenue was related to their France Avenue Intersection Enhancement project. Director Houle said it is a County project that continued from last year. Member LaForce asked how this project will impact the City’s project. Director Houle said the City’s project will not have nearly the amount of delay like the County’s project. Anticipated start date for the City’s project is early July and the County should be done with their project by this time.

Member LaForce asked what communication has taken place regarding Wooddale Avenue since it has been approved for restriping. Director Houle said a letter was mailed to homeowners adjacent to Wooddale Avenue explaining the City Council’s decision. Member LaForce said they should consider educating the public on how to drive on Wooddale with the new restriping. Member Janovy asked if staff received any feedback from residents on the letter that was sent out explaining the new restriping plan and director Houle said none have been received to date.

Chair Nelson asked if director Houle was aware of any other projects that the County or MNDOT is doing. Director Houle said Minneapolis and the County are reconstructing Penn Avenue, north of the crosstown and in July/August, the bridge will be closed for redecking.

Member Bass urged residents to complete the Parent Survey that was mentioned earlier. She asked Director Houle to see if the City’s communication staff could help to promote the Parent Survey.

Member Janovy asked for an update on Vernon Avenue. Director Houle said he is meeting with the County on Tuesday to talk about the bike plan as Vernon is scheduled for a mill and overlay in Sept/Oct.

STAFF COMMENTS

France Avenue Intersection Enhancement Update – staff met the March 31st deadline and all submittals, including easement acquisitions were approved by MnDOT. MnDOT is reviewing the final plans which could take about three weeks and then the project will be advertised for bids. The first Urban Design meeting for this project took place on April 22 and the plan is to schedule another meeting. Minutes from the first meeting will be distributed.

Byerly’s Redevelopment Update – City Council approved a feasibility study for a roundabout on Hazelton Road and staff is hoping to have a layout ready for the ETC’s May 16 meeting and a public hearing on June 4. A condition of the site approval is to have a right-in/right-out on France Avenue and staff is working with the County to make this happen.

Pedestrian Plan Update – A transportation planner should be hired in about one month. Staff is beginning to review the Pedestrian Plan as they plan for 2014 projects and would like the ETC to help prioritize the order in which sidewalks should be built. Additionally, staff is recommending that at least one sidewalk be built in 2013 from the six sidewalk feasibility studies that were approved by City Council but funding was not available. The approved locations are School Road, 42nd Street, Interlachen Blvd, West Normandale Trail, Xerxes Avenue, and East Normandale.

The Pedestrian Plan was not fully analyzed and Director Houle suggested that each ETC member look at their quadrant of the city and lay out where sidewalks should be, or clarify for him if the intention was to put sidewalks on every street or based on traffic counts. Member Janovy said the draft Living Streets Policy proposed principles and a priority system for sidewalks. In reference to the overall Pedestrian Plan,

member Janovy suggested waiting until the Active Routes to School plan is complete, until they are further along with Living Streets and the transportation planner is hired, and regarding the sidewalks already approved, she suggested picking one or two to build. Director Houle noted that some Councilmembers have been inquiring about the Pedestrian Plan. Member Bass added that she appreciated acknowledgement of the delay but would prefer to wait and work with the transportation planner and to have an open and engaged public process.

Xerxes Avenue Update – Residents’ concern is that this is a two lane roadway that drivers drive as though it is three lanes (using the parking lane as a 3rd lane). Last fall, the County restriped it and the paint flaked off. Until they can repaint, they’ve placed barricades in the parking lanes and will be adding a variable message board telling drivers not to drive in the parking lane. The new layout will include bump outs at the intersections and traffic control delineators in the bump outs. Additionally, staff will be coordinating with the County and Minneapolis to do a traffic study from Heritage Drive to crosstown because as you might recall, both Penn and Xerxes Avenues bridge decks will be redone (pushing traffic into Edina) and it is good time to look at realigning the traffic lanes to make it safer. Member Janovy asked if they could also do video counts of pedestrians and bikes and Director Houle said yes. Member Whited asked which days counts would be done because traffic increases on the weekends and Director Houle said it would be done for a full two weeks.

Neighborhood Roadway Reconstruction Update – Project start kick-off meetings are scheduled in the field with residents to meet the project inspector and contractor. The first one was last night but because of rain it was held at Public Works; feedback from residents was positive.

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										4	
Bass, Katherine	2/1/2014		1	1	1										3	75%
Braden, Ann	2/1/2014	1	1		1										3	75%
Franzen, Nathan	2/1/2016	1	1		1										3	75%
Iyer, Surya	2/1/2015	1	1	1											3	75%
Janovy, Jennifer	2/1/2014	1	1	1	1										4	100%
LaForce, Tom	2/1/2015	1	1	1	1										4	100%
Nelson, Paul	2/1/2016	1	1	1	1										4	100%
Schweiger, Steven	student	1	1												2	50%
Sierks, Caroline	student	1		1	1										3	75%
Spanhake, Dawn	2/1/2016			1											1	25%
Whited, Courtney	2/1/2015	1	1	1	1										4	100%