



**MINUTES OF THE
Edina Transportation Commission**
Thursday, August 17, 2006
Edina City Hall
4801 West 50th Street
Community Room

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Les Wanninger, Warren Plante, Marie Thorpe, Marc Usem, Geof Workinger, Joni Kelly Bennett, Ellen Cerf, Dean Dovolis

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jean White

STAFF PRESENT:

Steve Lillehaug, Sharon Allison

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by chair Wanninger.

II. Old Business

a. NE Edina Transportation Study

o Implementation Strategy

Lillehaug said a 3-tiered approach is included in the study to address the identified traffic issues. The areas identified are Highway 100, arterial roadway intersection improvements and residential safety improvements. The areas have multiple jurisdictional authorities and therefore will require their participation (Mn/DOT, Hennepin County, St. Louis Park and Minneapolis).

Mn/DOT is adding a third lane to Highway 100 until funding becomes available for a permanent fix and Lillehaug is recommending that the city continue to support this.

The primary source of funding for the Arterial Roadway Intersection Improvements will most likely be 2007 or 2008 Municipal State Aid (MSA) funds which are for those intersections that are MSA routes. Other source of funding would be from the other jurisdictional agencies which are still to be worked out.

Residential Area Safety Improvements are anticipated to be funded by each individual city. The study area is broken into two sections – the Country Club Area (a previously planned project) and the Greater Northeast Edina Area. The Country Club Area project start date is expected to be for 2008-2009 and will include safety improvements, per the Master Plan. Funding may be a combination of the City's Revolving Funds (general levy) and special assessments.

Implementation cost for the Greater Northeast Area will be higher than the Country Club Area because at this time the area is not scheduled for any reconstruction improvements and none is planned for the near future. However, because the intent is to implement the whole Master Plan, staff will evaluate the area for reconstruction. Anticipated timeframe is 2008-2011 and

the cost is approximately \$405,000. Funding would be a combination of MSA, the City's Revolving Funds and possibly special assessments.

Workinger said the suggestions are practical but it is counterintuitive to the ETC wanting all the safety improvements agreed upon, not implemented, as a Master Plan and he asked if staff supports this and if this is difficult to do. Lillehaug said staff is supportive; however the Country Club Area is big project that will result in diverted traffic no matter how the plan is implemented.

Workinger asked if staff knows how the safety improvements will be assessed in Country Club and if so, can the same method be applied to Morningside. Lillehaug said they do not know which streets in Morningside need to be reconstructed like they do in the Country Club.

Wanninger suggested adding another paragraph to the Implementation Strategy that explains why the approach that staff is recommending is necessary.

Dovolis said most of the improvements will not be implemented until the streets are being reconstructed because this is the only way that the reality of the funding is going to be affordable to allow it to occur without doubling or tripling the cost and getting beyond what the residents will want to be assessed. He said what this is saying is that the real safety improvements are going to occur when the streets are being reconstructed and the pavement management system will help with this. He said it is unfortunate because the chance is once every 30 years or so and the challenge for the ETC is to coordinate traffic studies with reconstruction projects. Wooddale was mentioned as an example of a street that was recently reconstructed without any traffic measures. Lillehaug said another chance of implementation is with seal coating projects that are done by Public Works.

Wanninger said there are three areas to consider: approval, funding and implementation. He said the approval of the Master Plan does not necessarily mean that everything has to be done all at the same time. He said the residents at the public hearing were more concerned with the ETC being sensitive to minimizing diverting traffic.

Bennett asked if the intent is to ask for Council's approval of a map that include all the devices, build the portion of the safety measures included with a street reconstruction project, and assess costs against residents of that street reconstruction area using a formula yet to be determined. Wanninger said the beneficiaries are yet to be determined and one could argue that the whole of Edina will benefit and therefore the city should pay or if it's only a couple streets then those residents pay. He said the ETC should recommend a plan for the Council to consider.

Dovolis said they cannot buy everything all at once, especially in a larger geographical area and there is no good solution except to be sensitive. He said the most economic then is street reconstruction which forces them into a phased-in situation; this makes the assessment minimal. The reality is that Country Club will get improved and other areas will not. Bennett said if there is going to be an area-wide assessment there needs to be an area-wide common understanding of the definition of the problem, which there is not. If this is what is being contemplated there will be trouble. Dovolis said the phase in, because of funding, will be trouble. He said the public will have to understand that the improvements will have to be phased in over 5 years. Bennett said the phone calls that she is receiving are related to the costs and if moved to area-wide assessment there will be a great deal of resentment.

Lillehaug does not believe that the city can legally assess the entire city because Chapter 429 stipulates that they must prove that properties being assessed are receiving a benefit from the improvements. Wanninger said this is a decision for Council.

Useum asked if as a point of comparison, it would be helpful to show the cost if the improvements were done without other projects. Lillehaug said that projection is already included in the handout.

Workinger asked if NTMP requests from the area will be set aside while they work on the Master Plan. This will be discussed at a later time.

Lillehaug said he would like to include in the Implementation Strategy why the Master Plan cannot be implemented all at once and present it at a later date for approval. Dovolis asked if he could also include the most cost effective way to maximize the funds. Lillehaug said he would like to put it on the web as soon as possible to make it available to the residents. Workinger asked that he also include that discussion took place 8/17 and that changes are expected at a later date. Also add a section describing the rationale to include the cost effectiveness and what the city has the capacity to work on in a given year.

Dovolis motioned approval of Draft 1. Seconded by Bennett

Ayes: All

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

II. Old Business (cont'd)

o Final Draft Report Comments (received as of August 11, 2006)

In reference to a letter received from Mr. Rick Anderson in regarding parking in the West 44th & France area, Wanninger said he has spoken with him and he said he is comfortable with the plans. Bennett said she spoke with him on July 31 and he is not happy. Wanninger said some of the language that is included in the report was agreed to by Mr. Anderson and he has not spoken to him since. Wanninger said he spoke with Council member Hodges and she said the Fulton Neighborhood has unanimously endorsed the plan and she's heard both pros and cons from the business community. Plante said he spoke with the owner of the Edina Cleaners and he likes the plans.

Bennett said she's observed similarity between the concerns that were raised at the public hearing and the written comments. To summarize them, she said that as much as there is common definition of the problems, speed and driver's behavior seems to be the problem, not volume, and even a couple people said they do not expect the city to do anything about the volume. People do appear to understand what speed humps are and if using them to address speeding, put them in mid-block not at intersections. Bennett said the most important point raised is has the draft been sent to safety personnel for review. Lillehaug will forward a copy to the safety personnel.

Wanninger said he would like a summary of the issues raised by the public for discussion at the September 7 meeting.

III. Handouts

a. Transportation Commission Attendance Spreadsheet

Wanninger noted that City Manager Hughes commented during the discussion of the 25 mph speed limit review that commissioners' attendance was low when that vote was taken.

Wanninger said they've had a lot of extra meetings and it is possible that the extra meetings may have affected attendance. Dovolis said they've never had to cancel a meeting for a lack of a quorum. Bennett said at least two meetings were started late because they did not have a quorum and the ordinance is discretionary on the part of the Council but if a board member misses more than three consecutive meetings or four in a year the Council can dismiss the member. Wanninger said the time of the meeting may not be convenient and he asked the commissioners to consider a new time that might work best.

b. Traffic Signal Crosswalk Poster

Very nice poster. An error was noted and will be corrected.

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting, July 20, 2006

The minutes should have noted that Bennett questioned why the City Council was not told the ETC had agreed to send notice. Workinger also raised this issue, and thank Bennett for calling it to the City Council's attention.

It should be noted that the above correction was made to the June 29, 2006 minutes.

Other corrections:

pp. 1, para. 5. Bennett *circulated copies to each ETC member of a memorandum to Edina City council from the steering committee of the Morningside Neighborhood Association (copy attached). She explained that the memo was authorized by the steering committee and written by the subcommittee.* She said she is a.....

Ayes: Workinger, Bennett, Plante, Wanninger, Usem, Cerf, Dovolis

Nays: 0

Abstain: Thorpe

Absent: White

Motion: A motion was not made.

b. Special Meeting, July 31, 2006

The corrections submitted by Bennett will not be listed because of the enormity but will appear in the July 31, 2006 minutes in bold font.

A motion was made by Plante to approve the minutes with the corrections submitted by Bennett, subject to verification. Seconded by Thorpe.

Ayes: All

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: White

Motion carried.

V. Planning Commission Update (Commissioner Workinger)

Workinger reported the Normandale Tennis Club is in the process of being converted into two skating rinks and it was on the agenda because they are planning to add a bubbled training rink outside and discussion centered around whether the bubble should be permanent or temporary, how it will support the roof, water sprinkler system, cooling ducts, etc. Approval was granted.

VI. Open Discussion

Regarding the Executive Summary, Lillehaug said there are three drafts in circulation (June 19, June 27 and July 18) and he would like direction regarding what the final Executive Summary should say.

After some discussion surrounding the term “calm and civil,” Lillehaug explained that it is used by the consultant to describe the percentage of vehicles going over the speed limit which is neither calm nor civil. Bennett said this should be described as speeding and if they can infer that 70% of traffic is local and characterized as being heavy for a residential area, what is the point and what is the proposal for addressing it. Bennett said this is not fact based, but characterization.

Dovolis said the data supports that traffic is neither calm nor civil. Workinger suggested removing the quotation marks and reword it to read ‘It is widely held that traffic in this area is neither calm nor civil.’ He said it does not have to be fact based if the perception is that traffic is not calm nor civil. Bennett said what she’s looking for is something that would prevent a resident from coming back in three to four years saying you told us the remaining 70% of traffic is very heavy and that traffic is not calm or civil and it is still not calm or civil and what you are going to do about it. Wanninger said there is nothing that they can do about it because even with improvement measures the traffic will still be high. Bennett said it should be stated this way then. Lillehaug will reword.

Wanninger said the Executive Summary for the Council should be more along the lines of the one that was given to them previously, reflecting those issues for which they will be deciding on. He said the summary for Sept. 7 should include the various issues that have been raised, including those tonight and the final report should reflect how the final decision was made.

Update from White: Metro Transit is scheduled to go from Southdale to the State Fair; fee is \$5.00; Hennepin County will be making a recommendation soon and will hold open houses in the fall for the alternative analysis study that was conducted for the Southwest Transit LRT.

Bennett asked if the residents in attendance, from West 70th Street, could get the opportunity to speak. Wanninger said if someone wants to speak they should make that known before the meeting begins or get on the agenda ahead of time. One resident commented that they are just there to learn, not to speak and another said she was told that there would be a public comment period at the end and she was not aware that they could get on the agenda. Wanninger said if they would like to make a comment they can, however, the West 70th Street Corridor Study will not be on the agenda until October. He acknowledged receipt of the letter from the West 70th Street Homeowners Association.

Residents Comments

Harold Babb, 4701 West 70th Street: Mr. Babb said they are in attendance to learn the procedures. He asked Lillehaug what is the relationship between the Safety Committee and ETC. Lillehaug said the Traffic Safety Advisory committee is made up of staff who reviews traffic safety issues, while the ETC deals with issues that are traffic related but on a broader level. There is no overlapping of duties between the two groups. Stop signs requests are handled by the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee.

Regarding the West 70th Street Study, Wanninger said Lillehaug is working with the consultants on data-gathering. He said the Study Advisory Committee (SAC), when formed, will help figure out the findings and develop strategies for addressing the findings. He said

they will rely on the professionals to give recommendations on what will work. Residents will be involved on the SAC in similar fashion to the NE Edina Study. He said the letter from the Homeowners Association has already given the ETC some insights as to what the issues are.

Meeting adjourned. The next scheduled meeting is a special meeting on September 7, 2006, 6-8 p.m. in the Community Room. The next regular scheduled meeting is September 21, 2006, 6-8 p.m. in the Community Room.