



**MINUTES OF THE
Edina Transportation Commission**
Thursday, July 20, 2006
Edina City Hall
4801 West 50th Street
Community Room

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Les Wanninger, Warren Plante, Jean White, Marc Usem, Geof Workinger, Joni Kelly Bennett,

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ellen Cerf, Marie Thorpe, Dean Dovolis

STAFF PRESENT:

Steve Lillehaug, Sharon Allison

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by chair Wanninger.

Wanninger reported that he met with the Council and they approved the ETC public hearing for July 31. He would like all ETC members to attend the public hearing as well as the SAC members. All residents in the study area will be notified of the public hearing via US mail. The public hearing will be televised and rebroadcast. Following the public hearing, a 30-day comment period will be open until August 31. The ETC will hold a special meeting on September 7 to review all comments and consider the final report which will be presented to the Council in October. Wanninger said he would like the Commissioners to be well prepared and ready to support the entire report if the Council starts questioning parts of the report.

Wanninger said he explained to the Council that the study has identified many solutions that are beneficial to the community and he encouraged them to approve the study in its entirety for full implementation and not pick it apart. He also explained that there is strong support outside of the city.

Wanninger suggested that the ETC should adopt a policy called Commissioners Responsibilities and Ethics. He said on other boards he has served on, it is unethical for a member to publicly or privately work against an issue if the member voted in favor of the issue. Wanninger explained that he was taken by surprise when he received a phone call from a council member saying that Bennett was not in favor of the study based on a letter that the council member had received. Wanninger said some boards have a policy stating that you are duty bound to support an issue based on your vote and he recommended that they consider adopting such a policy. He said having such a policy would create unity which might help to remove some of the negativity that is in the community.

Bennett said the letter was not stating her personal position and was not written by her. She said she is a member of the Morningside Steering Committee which she helped form in 2003 and the letter was written to reflect the views of the steering committee, which is not in opposition to the study. She said they are in favor of the arterial changes, but there are some concerns regarding costs, time when public meetings are held, speed limits, etc.

Useem said it would have been appropriate if the letter had been presented to the ETC before going to the Council. Workinger said a dissenting vote is good, but the ETC, or the chair at least, should be made aware of opposition so that he can prepare. He said they have a responsibility to each other and when they vote unanimously, the support should be there. Bennett said she sought the advice of at least three council members regarding the letter and she was told to present the letter directly to them and not to the ETC.

Wanninger said he is going to draft a Commissioners Responsibilities and Ethics policy for review and approval.

For the public hearing, Wanninger said all of the Commissioners should be there. He said this is an opportunity for them to listen to the residents. Some of the ground rules are: no personal attacks (these individuals will lose their opportunity to speak) and each allowed five minutes and time will be tracked with a timer.

Draft #3 is now available on the web. The executive summary and intersections figures will be posted on the web separate from the complete report for easier viewing. Lillehaug said he will have cost estimates by July 31.

II. Old Business

a. West 70th Street (Highway 100 to France Avenue) Corridor Study – Detailed Scope of Work

SRF was hired to conduct the corridor study on West 70th Street (from Highway 100 to France Avenue) to develop possible solutions for transportation and land use issues within the corridor. Marie Cote filled in for Beth Bartz who is the principal for this project. Cote said the corridor is similar to NE Edina with high volumes of traffic and difficulty getting in and out of side streets.

Cote said facilitation with residents will be important, as well as data evaluation such as turning movement counts; a.m. and p.m. peak hour counts after school starts to see if there are any unique issues; the Met Council's Regional Model will be used to determine who is using the roadway and number of trips per day (the regional model includes traffic patterns for the last 20 years); crashes and transit or multi-modal. Cote said the regional model will be complemented with intersection movements and tube counts to see how close the model is to actual traffic patterns.

Discussion included the following:

Will this study identify the reasons drivers are using 70th, such as cutting through to avoid a congested regional system? Cote said the current volume on 70th is actually lower than it was 20 years ago which could be due to an improved regional system or Southdale not getting as many shoppers as it once did.

While a.m. and p.m. peak hour counts will be done, midday turning counts are not planned to be taken. An hourly count will be done to see the fluctuation throughout the day. Bennett recommended a shuttle bus during the noon hour from the west side of Hwy. 100 over to Southdale.

Where 66th St. is concerned, will its effects on 70th be evaluated in this study? 66th St. is not included as part of this study, but parameters could change based on evaluation of traffic pattern. A selective analysis will be done on 66th St. to determine local vs. regional traffic.

What is the purpose of 70th? Is it to carry traffic to Southdale or is it to calm the traffic? The focus of the study is to identify the role of the roadway and then a design will be created that will accommodate the role. Currently, 70th is classified as a B-minor road and B-minor roadways carry a higher volume of traffic.

Plante asked what can be done when a road is at maximum capacity like 70th. Cote said when this happens, the focus is on peak hours to make sure there is capacity for vehicles to get out onto the road. Plante said this is a key artery and it is already at capacity. Cote said because of the commercial attraction, it could be that there are higher volumes during the off peak hours and this will be revealed during data collection.

Wanninger asked that an option be added to the scope that would allow them to gather more data if they find it necessary after reviewing the initial data collection.

Although land use change is not anticipated along 70th, there will be a model that can be used to create different scenarios. The consultants will be looking at options including a no build, minimal acquisition and significant acquisition including a parkway. A traffic origin-destination study is not included in the scope and Lillehaug does not believe one is necessary because the tube counts will give a general idea of what is going on.

To summarize the discussion, Wanninger said it appears everyone is in agreement that they need to create a calmer 70th St. with better accesses and exits for the residents and no one is advocating to turn it into something other than a residential street.

Public involvement will include one open house after data collection. Residents will be able to view different alternatives and provide feedback. The Study Advisory Committee (SAC) will include residents, business representatives, school representatives and others as necessary. SAC meetings will begin in October. Project updates will be posted to the city's website by SRF.

III. Handouts

a. Safe Routes to School – 2006 Edina Application

Lillehaug said an application was submitted for funding.

b. Traffic Signal Crosswalk poster/flyer

The poster was not completed.

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting, June 15, 2006

A motion was made by Plante and seconded by White to approve the June 15 minutes.

Ayes: All

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

b. Special Meeting, June 29, 2006

A motion was made by Workinger and seconded by Plante to approve the June 29 minutes.

The following corrections were made to the June 29th minutes:

p.2, para. 2: White said....**would be a detriment to the area.**

p.2, para. 2: Bennett said...**residential improvements will cost and who will pay for them.**

p.2, last para.: **Bennett noted that the 4 p.m. time of the May Open House prevented many people from attending.**

p.2 last para.: Bennett said...announcing the **public hearing.**

p.2 last para.: Lillehaug asked...**and was told yes.**

Ayes: All

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

V. Planning Commission Update (Commissioner Workinger)

No update.

VI. Open Discussion

White reported signage, speed and lack of pedestrian safety at the crosswalk at 51st and Halifax was brought to her attention. She said when people are crossing at the crosswalk they do not know when the light above is signaling them to cross the street because the signaling sound is off. Lillehaug said the signaling sound is an ADA for the blind and it was taken out because it gives a false indication that vehicles are actually stopping. White asked if the pedestrian island at 51st and France can be expanded. Lillehaug said he will look into the possibility of expanding the island.

Lillehaug said the Council is considering a Bikeway Taskforce to be headed by Steve Rusk. The group would be supported by a consultant. The city is updating its Comprehensive Plan, as required by the Met Council.

Bennett said a State Fair exhibit will spotlight bio-fuel; "Who Killed the Electric Car" is showing at the Edina Theater; and she suggested as an educational tool, the PACE Car Pledge, which is a pledge to drive no more 20-25 mph in residential areas.

VII. Meeting adjourned.

The next meeting is schedule for August 17, 2006, 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Community Room, City Hall.