



**MINUTES OF THE  
Edina Transportation Commission**  
Thursday, January 21, 2010  
Edina City Hall  
4801 West 50<sup>th</sup> Street  
Council Chambers

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**Geof Workinger, Jennifer Janovy, Tom Bonneville, Jean White, Michael Schroeder, Julie Sierks**

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**Warren Plante, Usha Abramovitz**

**STAFF PRESENT:**

**Jack Sullivan, Sharon Allison**

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**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by chair Workinger.

**II. Comments**

**a. Chairman Comments**

Chair Workinger noted that there were students in attendance. The students said they were observing for a class project.

**b. Community Comments**

None.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**a. Regular Meeting of October 15, 2009 and December 17, 2009**

The minutes of December 17, 2009, was modified as follows: page 2, item VI, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence, strike *Planning Commission*; page 3, item VIII, strike *January* and replace with *December*.

**Commissioner Bonneville motioned to approve December's modified minutes and October's minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Janovy. All voted aye. Motion carried.**

**IV. New Business**

**a. TH 169 & Bren Road Interchange Presentation**

City Engineer Lee Gustafson, City of Minnetonka, explained that the City of Minnetonka has developed plans to upgrade the TH 169 and Bren Road interchange. He said the interchange is at capacity as determined by traffic study due to redevelopments and new developments in the Opus area, and new developments cannot proceed until the interchange is upgraded. He said the plan includes a new, wider bridge with more lanes to prevent back-ups, plus a

**b. The Colony of Edina – 6200 Colonial Way**

Assistant city engineer Sullivan said discussion began in 2009 on this 150 apartment (194 beds) development for the site located west of Tracy Avenue and north of the Crosstown (behind the new fire station). The site is currently being used as a parking lot by Colonial Church. He said the developers were asked to study the intersections at Tracy Avenue & Olinger Blvd; Tracy Avenue & Colonial Way; and the area from the Crosstown entry/exit ramps up to Tracy Avenue & Colonial Way. Mr. Sullivan said after review, it was determined that these locations would continue to operate at level of service A & B.

Additionally, Mr. Sullivan said the developers were asked to respond to six issues, all of which have been addressed satisfactorily. One of the issues included the stretch of road from Crosstown to Tracy Avenue. The concern was with cars stacking while waiting to make a left turn to go onto Colonial Way. It was determined that there would be enough gaps between vehicles to prevent stacking. However, should this become an issue in the future, Mr. Sullivan said Tracy Avenue is wide enough to accommodate a left turn lane.

Mr. Jay Jensen with The Waters Senior Living, Minnetonka, MN, spoke on behalf of the development team. He explained that a similar development was done in Eden Prairie with underground parking of 70 stalls, most of which are empty. With an average age of 86, Mr. Jensen said majority of the residents are no longer driving. He said the Edina site will have 100 underground parking stalls for residents and employees with 80 surface parking spots. He said traffic generation will be minimal and will be mostly from visitors in off-peak hours. He said the facility will have a van to take residents on day trips, and a couple cars to drive them to appointments.

In regards to the church losing a parking lot, Mr. Jensen said a parking study was conducted and the church will continue to have sufficient parking for Sunday services, plus a cross easement will be established so that they can use the 80 surface parking spots. Additionally, Mr. Jensen said they will offer incentive for the 75 employees to use public transit (the area is served by two buses with a park and ride conveniently located across the street).

**After discussion, Commissioner Bonneville motioned to accept staff's recommendation as follow and the motion was seconded by Commissioner White.**

***“If so desired by the Transportation Commission, adopt a motion recommending that the ~~Transportation Study~~ traffic for 6200 Colonial Way does not adversely affect the adjacent transportation system.”***

At Commissioner Janovy's recommendation *“Transportation Study”* was struck and replaced with *“traffic.”*

All voted aye. Motion passed.

**c. Transportation Commission Role in Development Review**

Commissioner Schroeder explained that the discussion of the ETC's role in the development review process came about as a result of the Zoning Ordinance Update Committee's review of ordinances and other issues. He said the newly formed committee, made up of Planning

Commissioner Schroeder said through feedback from residents, they've learned that the public is interested and wants clarity regarding how the review process works. He said the same feedback was shared by planning commissioners from other cities when their input was sought. He said there are four things being looked at:

1. Bringing the ordinances in alignment with the Comp Plan;
2. Difficulty in navigating ordinances;
3. Development review process;
4. Content change, i.e. planned unit development (PUD), etc.

Additionally, Commissioner Schroeder said there are four commissions that give input in the development review process; they are: Heritage Preservation, ETC, Energy, and Planning Commission, and of these four, only the Heritage Preservation and Planning Commission have statutory authority. He said clarification is needed regarding the role and responsibility of each commission and how the public interacts with each. He said there needs to be a public input process that is recognized and is consistent throughout the entire review process.

He said this is on the agenda for discussion because initially, the committee recommended eliminating the ETC from the review process (relative to traffic studies) because, upon reviewing the ETC's ordinance, it was determined that this was not one their responsibilities. However, based on discussions at one of the committee's meeting that Commissioners Workinger and Bonneville attended, the recommendation was tabled until a later date. Chair Workinger then explained that the purpose of the discussion was to review the value the ETC brings to the development review process.

The following summarizes the discussion that took place:

- Determined that City engineer staff or traffic consultant do not attend the Planning Commission meetings when development proposals are being discussed.
- Commissioner Bonneville suggested that the ETC could become involve when: a) there is a PUD; b) the project generates more than 1000 ADT; c) the project generates more than 100 cars during the am/pm peak hours; d) the roadway is currently congested (level of service E or worst), or is at 80% capacity; and e) when requested by the Council or Planning Commission. He also suggested five improvements to the review process starting with: 1) preliminary staff and developer meeting; 2) system of design (who/what/when/and how process will flow); 3) system design of interactions of people involved (developer/staff/commissions, etc.); 4) system design of decision-making process; and 5) post decision action by City/developer.
- Not known if the number of traffic studies that the ETC review would be reduced based on Commissioner Bonneville's suggestion.
- 90-day review process could be jeopardized when decisions are delayed (process begins with the ETC, followed by the Planning Commission and then the Council).
- In the case of Little Schezuan Restaurant, the ETC could not separate onsite circulation

- Suggestion that the Planning Commission ignore the ETC since operating at the same level; and that the Planning Commission does their review concurrently; the ETC is responsible for the Transportation Chapter and public roadways, while the Planning Commission is responsible for the site; Planning Commission looks at transportation issues from a different point of view and will not have as much interest in the Transportation Chapter.
- Suggestion that the ETC becomes advisory to the Planning Commission.
- Each commission brings different insight and this should not be lost because residents lack clarification.
- Developers are not required to attend the ETC meeting, but they are encouraged to attend and present their proposal and answer questions; they are aware that the ETC is advisory to the Council.

Commissioner Schroeder said the committee does not have a set decision-making timeframe and suggested that the ETC assign two members to gather input from the public.

At the conclusion of the discussion, vice-chair Janovy suggested that commissioners email assistant city engineer Sullivan their points-of-view on the discussion. Chair Workinger asked that responses be sent by the following week Thursday.

#### **d. Small Area Planning Process Presentation**

Commissioner Schroeder explained that less than 10% of commercial space identified in the Comp Plan would go through this process. He said the Small Area Planning process was presented to the Council and they would like it applied to the old public works site. The process is designed to work as follows:

- Engage residents and stakeholders to develop a plan that would be led by community volunteers in a short, but intensive initial planning period (one month);
- The group would be made up of a Design Team (resident experts); a Technical Advisory Group (city staff and other agencies); a Community Advisory Team (representation from the each commission, school board, etc.); and the Public who are encouraged to attend all scheduled meetings.
- Meetings dates and times will already be established before the groups are formed.
- Results expected is to develop a plan that would guide further planning and development.

Some community members will be selected by the Planning Commission and others will be selected by residents and other stakeholders in attendance. Commissioner White volunteered to represent the ETC on the Community Advisory Team.

#### **V. Planning Commission Update (Commissioner Schroeder)**

See Commissioner Schroeder's presentations above (Items IV c & d).

## **VII. Staff Liaison Comments**

### **a. Southwest Transitway Route 3A**

Assistant city engineer Sullivan reported that Route 3A was selected (this route bypasses Edina).

### **b. NTMP Deadline**

Assistant city engineer Sullivan reported that February 9, is the deadline for applications to be submitted to the Engineering Department. Applications are online or also available in the Engineering Department.

### **Other Comments:**

Commissioner Bonneville asked assistant city engineer Sullivan to give a brief update on the W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street project at future meetings.

Regarding the Complete Streets Resolution that was passed recently by Council, Commissioner Janovy asked what is the next step in the process. Assistant city engineer Sullivan said on February 4, the legislators will reconvene to develop a statewide framework. He said there are no plans to do anything locally, except to continue with those things in the Comp Plan and Transportation Chapter that are similar. Chair Workinger said he would like to see the City develop a checklist of the major elements of Complete Streets that are implemented in local plans.

Chair Workinger asked that the minutes going out to others for their meeting, even in draft form, be sent to all ETC commissioners.

Chair Workinger said vice-chair Janovy will be chairing the next two meetings in his absence.

## **VIII. Adjournment.**