

**MINUTES OF
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
January 19, 2012
6:00 P.M.**

ROLLCALL Answering roll call were Members Bass, Bonneville, Braden, Franzen, Janovy, Nelson, Schold Davis, and Thompson

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Motion was made by member Braden and seconded by member Nelson approving the meeting agenda. All voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 15, 2011

Chair Janovy noted that the bulleted list on page 2 could be confusing later on because it is missing context. After discussion, consensus was reached that the minutes should be done in a narrative style with context for better understanding. On page 2, last paragraph, delete "showing."

Motion was made by member Nelson and seconded by member Thompson to approve the amended minutes. All voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 9, 2012

Page 3, 4th bulleted paragraph, the sentence in parenthesis was revised as follow: *(After additional design, staff expects each residential assessment for the sidewalk to be \$1700. NOTE: this information was determined after the meeting and included here for clarification).*

Motion was made by member Bonneville and seconded by member Franzen to approve the amended minutes. All voted aye. Motion carried.

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT OF JANUARY 4, 2012

Regarding Section B. 1., member Nelson asked which library was being referred to. Assistant city engineer Sullivan said it was the Grandview Library and that the request was referred to the Planning Commission since this area is part of the Grandview Small Area Study.

Regarding Section B. 2., chair Janovy asked if the requestor is okay with the vegetation being removed since the request was to remove the "Stop Ahead" sign. Mr. Sullivan said the vegetation is a low hanging branch which is not allowed by City code; therefore, the best solution is to remove the branch.

Regarding Section C. 1., chair Janovy asked if the request was for the section of W. 51st Street behind Lunds and Mr. Sullivan said yes.

COMMUNITY COMMENT None.

REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

TH-494/Xerxes Avenue – MnDOT Presentation

Mr. Sullivan said this was first brought to the ETC one year ago. He said MnDOT is seeking Municipal Consent from the City for the work to be done on I-494 at Xerxes Avenue, including the Xerxes Avenue Bridge. He introduced Scott Pedersen from MnDOT who explained the project.

Mr. Pedersen said MnDOT is doing three different projects over three phases and they are: I-494 from TH-100 to 24th Avenue; construct auxiliary lanes on westbound I-494; and reconstruction of the Xerxes Avenue Bridge. The project letting will be June 8, 2012, and construction will begin August, 2012, and end Fall, 2013. The three phases are:

Phase I (August to late Fall, 2012)

Construct auxiliary lanes on westbound I-494 between Portland Avenue and Nicollet Avenue; and I-35 and TH-100. Reconstruct the outside shoulders on both eastbound and westbound of I-494. Reconstruct the inside shoulders from 24th Avenue to TH-77, and resurface I-494 from 24th Avenue to TH-77.

Phase II (Spring to Summer, 2013)

Reconstruction of the inside shoulders of I-494 from TH-77 to TH-100. Remove guardrail and curb and gutter and replace with concrete barrier. Reconstruct drainage system in median to facilitate modification to the median.

Phase III (Summer to Fall, 2013)

Resurface I-494 between TH-100 and TH-77.

Xerxes Avenue Bridge construction will be Fall, 2012, to late Spring, 2013.

Mr. Pedersen said issues identified during the City of Edina's open house were proposed typical section under the Xerxes Avenue Bridge; I-494 as a managed facility; and access to Xerxes Avenue from I-494.

Regarding the proposed typical section under the bridge, Mr. Pedersen "MnDOT's 20 year Transportation Improvement Plan and the Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan [do] not identify expansion of I-494" and that "The proposed typical section under the proposed bridge provides for the provision of six lanes in each direction. The only thing not provided by this typical section is the reservation of 26 ft. for future transportation use in the median of I-494." He said further that "...it is a reasonable risk to move forward with the proposed design..." and if I-494 is to be expanded in the future the bridge will be updated.

Regarding I-494 as a managed facility, Mr. Pedersen said I-494 is identified "...as a Tier II Managed Corridor" and "...[MnDOT] would like to include language as part of the resolution providing municipal consent for the proposed project to reserve the capacity added to I-494 for the future conversion to a managed lane."

Regarding access to Xerxes Avenue from I-494, Mr. Pedersen said the law does not allow access at this time. He said the spacing has to be at least one ½ mile.

Discussion

Member Bonneville asked about the clearance for an LRT. Mr. Pedersen said 23 ft. is standard but LRT is not planned for I-494. Member Bonneville said he is disappointed they cannot get a westbound access for trucks going north on Xerxes Avenue to the Southdale area as an alternative route to France Avenue. He said the bridge could be enlarged similar to the Penn Avenue Bridge. Mr. Pedersen said besides safety concerns, they are trying to maintain efficiency on I-494.

Member Nelson asked if there are existing exits less than ½ mile. Mr. Pedersen said yes and when improvements are made they are evaluated.

Chair Janovy asked Mr. Pedersen to explain Municipal Consent and the process. He said generally there are three criteria: 1) acquisition of ROW (none in this project); 2) modification of access (none in this project); and 3) additional capacity to the facility – building auxiliary lanes from northbound I-35 to TH-100. He said the process includes a public hearing and probably back to the ETC and then to Council.

Mr. Pedersen said the bridge will be widened to maintain the current 4-lane, add turn lanes, provide 6 ft shoulders on both sides, and 10 ft sidewalk on both sides of the bridge which can be used as bicycle facility later on (designated by the County as bike route). He said the bike lane will not be striped until there is an approaching bike lane.

Mr. Sullivan said it is expected this will go before Council in April and requested a response from the ETC to Council either by motion or comments in the minutes. Mr. Houle said with the TH-169 Municipal Consent, he does not believe a public hearing was held. He asked for confirmation that there is no cost sharing for Edina and Mr. Pedersen said only if pedestrian lighting is needed and he is not aware of any at this time.

Mr. Houle asked that staff be allowed to determine if a public hearing is necessary and who would be hosting it. The comments from the public hearing would be brought back to the ETC and the ETC would make a final recommendation to the Council. He said the timeline would be February to March and Municipal Consent in April.

Member Bass asked if there is a median island on the northern side of the intersection to provide pedestrian refuge and could this be added if not currently included. Mr. Pedersen said one on the northern side at Edinborough Way and a 6 ft median is proposed for the south side, which is not much refuge. Mr. Houle recommended taking a look at their design plan and considers incorporating a refuge and possibly a durable crosswalk. Mr. Houle said this may add minimal cost to the City.

France Avenue Pedestrian Bridge Re-scoping

In recapping events to date, Mr. Sullivan said the City received a federal grant of \$1M for a pedestrian bridge over France Avenue at 72nd Street. He said the Council and ETC has asked staff to take a step back to see if the funds could be applied to at-grade crossing and bicycle enhancements for pedestrians for the corridor. He said Mr. Chuck Rickart of WSB & Associates has been writing a re-scope of the project.

Mr. Rickart said WSB & Associates was retained to look at a scope change and the sunset date for the project. The sunset date for the funds is March 31, 2012. He said the Council would like to expand the scope to look at the entire corridor from Minnesota Drive to W. 66th Street. He explained that the funding application was in 2007 with approval in 2008, and the City set aside \$1M in the CIP for 2011 for the project. In addition to Council's and ETC's concerns with the overpass, a study of the corridor by Hennepin County, in conjunction with the City, in 2009, identified "other" improvements that could be implemented instead of an overpass.

Mr. Rickart said the current approved proposal is as follow: *Construction of a Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge over France Avenue in the vicinity of W. 72nd Street to provide a safe and efficient connection between the commercial, retail and offices east of France Avenue with the residential neighborhoods west of France Avenue; approximately 6000 ft. of 10 ft. wide bituminous trail, trail lighting, landscaping, benches and signing.*

He said they are seeking a sunset date extension and a scope change with the sunset date extension of one year being the more critical of the two. He said certain requirements such as approvals of environmental documents; right-of-way certificate; MnDOT plans; and letting the project within 90 days of the sunset date must be met for the extension to be granted. Additionally, they must show progress has been made on the project to date; give unique reasons why extension is needed; and demonstrate that the project can be completed within the year. He said the process includes a review and concurrence by MnDOT and then to the Met Council TAC Funding and Programming Committee for review and approval.

Continuing, Mr. Rickart said examples of progress made to date are adjacent property owners are aware of the project and preliminary ROW discussions have been completed; and Hennepin County and the City completed a corridor study evaluating potential optional pedestrian accommodations. He listed some unique reasons for the extension as Council, ETC and BETF review of the proposal and concern with overpass versus at-grade crossing; concern over the need and effectiveness of a pedestrian bridge in this location; new state, county and city emphasis on Complete Streets; and Council's and ETC's decision to proceed with a study of at-grade options.

Mr. Rickart said the project can be completed within one year and the schedule would be June, 2012: Environmental Document; October, 2012: ROW; August, 2012: Final Plan approved; November, 2012: Bidding; and Spring, 2013: Construction.

In reference to the scope change, Mr. Rickart said the requirements are that new elements must be eligible for funding; no additional funding will be provided; provide complete project description, location map, new project layout, list of work to be completed, revised project cost estimate, and updated responses to key criteria from original submittal. The process is the same for the sunset date extension.

Mr. Rickart said the new project description is as follow: *Construction of pedestrian and bicycle connections across France Avenue between Minnesota Drive and W. 66th Street to provide a safe and efficient connection between the commercial, retail and offices east of France Avenue with the residential neighborhoods west of France Avenue. Construction of intersection enhancements include: median refuge island with pedestrian push buttons; APS pedestrian signals with countdown timers; enhanced crosswalks; enhanced pedestrian corner treatments; and landscaped medians. Approximately 6000 ft. of bituminous trail or sidewalk; and trail lighting, landscaping, benches and signing.*

Mr. Rickart showed a layout of the proposed intersection changes and the pedestrian/bicycle framework. He said the total cost for the current proposal was \$2,090,000, and the cost for the revised proposal is \$2,045,000, not including ROW cost.

In conclusion, Mr. Rickart said the schedule for requesting the sunset date extension and scope change is: January 27 – submittal to MnDOT; February 3 – submittal to Met Council TAC F&P; February 16 – Met Council TAC F&P meeting; and if approved, the new sunset date will be March 31, 2013.

Mr. Rickart asked that commissioners review the draft handout and send comments by next Wednesday via email to staff.

Discussion

Member Braden, an employee of the Met Council, said it is really important to make the case that the pedestrian crossing bridge does not meet the needs of the corridor and that having two or three at-grade intersections is more financially feasible, and also to emphasize the recently completed W. 70th Street intersection as a priority.

Member Bonneville said since asking for reduced funds, this could probably be shown as one of the priorities and that conditions have changed regarding the City's needs.

Chair Janovy said there is no sidewalk on the eastside and asked Mr. Rickart what is the balance. He said the 6000 ft. of trail is primarily for the eastside. She said the entire project could probably be completed with the monies available. City Engineer Houle said he believes the CIP does have more than \$1M set aside and will report back on the exact amount. She asked if there were any concerns about over-reaching if all nine intersections were done versus only doing four. Mr. Rickart said by doing only four they would be able to focus pedestrians to those intersections. Chair Janovy said there has been a host of changes within the past few years that seem to support at-grade crossings, including a 2009 Access to Transit Study that looks at France Avenue and recommended at-grade crossing. She suggested including this.

2012 ETC Priorities

Chair Janovy said the top three priorities as discussed previously are Living Streets, France Avenue/Greater Southdale Area Pedestrian/Transit/Bike Improvements, and Safe Routes to School – High School Traffic (Valley View between Antrim and Gleason). Other ongoing priorities are Capital Improvement Projects; Transportation Options Working Group, Review TSC Reports. A carry-over from 2011 is TLC Bike Boulevard and from 2010 is TIA/TDM/Zoning Code Update.

Additionally, chair Janovy said she will be meeting tomorrow morning with the chair of the Planning Commission, Director Teague, City Engineer Houle and Assistant City Engineer Sullivan to discuss Transportation Impact Analysis for redevelopment which the ETC passed on to the Planning Commission last year.

Motion was made by member Thompson and seconded by member Nelson to approve the 2012 Priorities. All voted aye. Motion carried.

ETC Meeting Schedule for 2012

Chair Janovy said they are to sign off on the meeting schedule and attendance would be based on this schedule, plus, there could be work sessions with the Council that would be required meetings. She said a Council member suggested that they meet the first Thursday of the month. It was noted that the current schedule is what everyone have planned for and new members being interviewed have been told this schedule. A 7 p.m. start time was suggested instead of 6 p.m. Mr. Sullivan said a change could create meeting room conflicts which could be worked out. Member Bass suggested making the decision in 2012 for implementation in 2013. Most commissioners were okay with the current meeting schedule but were also flexible to a new schedule. The October 18 meeting was rescheduled for October 25 because it conflicts with a school holiday.

Motion was made by member Nelson and seconded by member Franzen to approve the meeting schedule as the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6 p.m., except for the October meeting which is scheduled for the 4th Thursday.

UPDATES

Student Members

Chair Janovy said student member Housh has resigned.

Transportation Options Working Group

Member Schold Davis said since this is her last ETC meeting she still needs to figure out how she will continue on as the chair of this group. She said there is a grassroots community group that began meeting before the Transportation Options Working Group and they are working on gathering information about the Independent Transportation Network and will be creating a proposal. The two groups will meet eventually.

Chair Janovy said she has not received the final bylaws but it allows member Schold Davis to be a co-chair with a current ETC member. Member Schold Davis said she would continue on as co-chair. The other co-chair will be selected at a future meeting.

Bike Edina Task Force Update

Chair Janovy said they had two guests from Do.Town at their meeting to talk about their purpose and how they can work with the BETF.

Grandview Small Area Study Update

Member Nelson said the group is meeting tonight to get final steering committee approval. He said residents can comment at www.edinacitizenengagement.org. Public comments will begin January 25 on the draft plan. The plan will be presented to the Planning Commission in February and April 14 to the Council.

LIVING STREETS WORKING GROUP

Member Bass said the Policy Development workshop is scheduled for February 15. She said a list of potential participants has been generated and invitations will go out tomorrow. The morning session will include Introduction to Living Streets and a discussion on how it may look locally, and the afternoon session will be focused on developing policy language. The instructors are Ryan Snyder and Tom Vonschnieder. A session will be held the evening before, 7-8:30 p.m., at the Edina Community Center, and it will be open to anyone who is interested in learning more about Living Streets.

Community Organizer, Katie Myer, with Do.Town, said her role is to meet with members of the community to create a dialogue and most recently she has been promoting the Living Streets Workshop.

CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS None.

CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Janovy thanked members Bonneville and Schold Davis for serving on the commission. Member Bonneville thanked everyone for their support. Member Schold Davis will continue to serve on the Transportation Options Working Group.

STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Sullivan said the Council approved the following requests for funding at their last meeting:

- **Tracy Ave and Crosstown Interchange**

The state legislature will be approving \$10M for local road improvements to be dispersed in \$500,000 increments and the City will be applying for funds by February 3.

- **France Avenue and Crosstown Interchange**

Hennepin County is applying for the same funds for realignment revisions to the France Avenue and Crosstown interchange.

- **Bike Boulevard**

Alliant Engineering is to start the feasibility study and final documents.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

ATTACHMENT

Attendance Spreadsheet