

Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Present: Philip Ailiff, Neal Baxter, Scott Engel, Diane Hansen, Donna Hemp, Dan Herber, Peter Janelle, Michael Jischke, Jacqueline Knight, Jason Lord, Kathleen Mayell, Don Ostrom, Julia Tabbut; Mackenzie Turner, Joe Bernard, Rose Ryan, Mike Mechtenberg, Gina Mitteco, Leslie Foreman, Kathy White for Steve Elmer

Chairman Don Ostrom called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.

Approval of May Minutes

Scott moved to accept; approved.

Announcements

Kathleen: her new job in the Bike & Pedestrian section of the transit office of MNDOT gives her more leverage to push pedestrian interests;

Mike: the committee examining transit in the Lake St./Midtown area has 3 options before it: a streetcar along the Greenway, an enhanced bus on Lake Street, or both. More on this when he has it.

Hennepin County Pedestrian Plan—Rose Ryan

Our committee has put together the first such plan; now it moves into a 45-day period for public comment. Note that Hennepin County doesn't work on sidewalks in Mpls; only half of the county's roads have sidewalks or trails; and 75% of the county's ped/vehicle crashes occur in Mpls.

The Plan recommends a) improving traffic safety; b) expanding the sidewalk and trail network; and c) cutting the number of pedestrian-vehicle crashes.

Focus is on transit stops, esp. pedestrian access to new light rail lines; pedestrian destinations such as retail, schools, parks and workplaces; locales with high population density, and infrastructure improvements in areas with chronically high rates of disease. Also, the County plans to fill in the sidewalk gap, assess sidewalks per ADA, and develop accurate data for evaluation.

Discussion followed:

Leslie and Scott asked about responsibility of Mpls for crosswalks across county roads. Rose and Mackenzie agreed to find out where responsibility lies.

Joe: Cedar Ave. is an example of a spot where an inventory of non-compliant sidewalks would've been helpful before roadwork began.

Scott: the County continues to focus on needs of cars along Washington Avenue; outmoded thinking!

Don: what input does the City enjoy on re-designing roads?

Rose: the Council must approve the final design of all City streets.

Infrastructure & Policies Subcommittee—Scott Engel

Plan to rebuild Washington Ave. is: 6 lanes (2 eastbound, 3 westbound, a center turn lane), and a right turn lane at 4th Avenue, eastbound only.

Scott moved the following resolution:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed design options for the Washington Avenue Reconstruction project between Hennepin Avenue and 5th Avenue. While we appreciate Hennepin County's plan to narrow traffic lanes and add streetscape elements, the Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) objects to the clear priority shown to automobile traffic in all of the current layouts with six traffic lanes. Washington Avenue will remain unfriendly to pedestrians for the foreseeable future unless the plan is reworked to better balance the needs of all users, consistent with Hennepin County's Complete Streets policy.

Following are our specific comments:

--The three-lane westbound design will facilitate fast moving traffic and result in wide, dangerous pedestrian crossings. We recommend that the third westbound lane be eliminated.

--As we understand it, the six-lane layout is considered necessary based on a traffic analysis that presumes 0.5% automobile traffic increases every year for twenty years. The analysis does not properly take into account the significant growth of the downtown residential population, investments in transit, and a growing desire for more walkable places.

--Layout 1 without bicycle facilities provides adequate sidewalk space but falls short of creating the Complete Streets policy of the County. The preferred design should include a dedicated bicycle facility.

--All of the current concepts with bike facilities result in sidewalks that are too narrow, considering the street is located in the heart of downtown Minneapolis. Potential elimination of the third westbound lane would create additional sidewalk space on both sides.

--In Layout 3a, the interaction of the cycle track at the back of curb with bus stops needs further coordination based on industry best practices.

--Layout 3b is not preferred since the cycle track separates the sidewalk from the amenity zone.

--In general, the sidewalk should be more than a conduit for circulation with straight pedestrian and bicycle "lanes". Instead, variation in the streetscape layout would create a more desirable sidewalk environment.

The PAC looks forward to the opportunity to review further development of the project design.

Scott moved the resolution, which was **Approved** after modifications as above.

Discussion followed.

Diane: why 4 westbound lanes?

Scott: due to turns at 3rd, et al., at peak hours, and thinking 20-years ahead.

Jackie: development in the north loop will be affected by the unfriendliness of this area's streets.

Hilary Dvorak will discuss the environmental impact of the new Vikings stadium at our next meeting.

Programs & Policies Subcommittee—Dan Herber

The committee came up with a list of Great Walks in Mpls. PAC members suggested others (Shingle Creek, Cedar-Riverside, etc.).

Peter: find criteria to cut this list to 8 items (food, parks, odd-ball);

Leslie: link it to Nice Ride outlets;

Dan: I urge someone on the PAC to promote this;

Mackenzie: Preserve Mpls just published their list of walks.

At the July meeting, Mike Kennedy will discuss data gleaned from the Snow Removal pilot program. Also, Joe Bernard will inform our understanding of Special Service Districts.

Snow & Ice Removal Resolution Update

Shaun meets with CM Colvin Roy next week, and a short meeting is scheduled with the Mayor on June 13.

Bike-Walk Week—Nick Ray Olson

It's coming again. Registration on-line, team competition and pit stops with prizes awarded will, one hopes, make this event bigger than ever.

Upcoming Term Expiration

Please turn in applications if you want to serve another term.

Walkable City Book Club—Don Ostrom

After the meeting, all are invited to discuss the insights in *Walkable City*. Today we meet at Mona's. We will also discuss how to make downtown more attractive for (and to) pedestrians.

New Business

Leslie: a draft of the City's Climate Action Plan is now on-line. The Regulatory Committee of the City Council will discuss the draft on Monday, June 17, at 1:30 PM, in the Council chamber. Goals 4, 5 and 6 of the Plan are specifically pedestrian-oriented.

Donna: the City's D.I.D. Program is under review. Some business owners in the Warehouse District want the City to end this service (which they are taxed to support).

Neal moved to adjourn. Adjourned at 5:33 PM.