

City of Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee Field Walk

Summary Notes

Wednesday, April 7, 2010

3:00 pm to 4:30 pm

Location

Cedar/Franklin/Minnehaha Improvement Project, focusing on Franklin Avenue between Bloomington and 21st Avenue

Participants

Anna Flintoft, Minneapolis Public Works Dept.
Anna Gillette, PAC member (and son Charles in stroller)
Bev Warmka, Minneapolis Public Works Dept.
Diane Hansen, PAC member
Elizabeth Haugen, PAC member
Jan Sandberg, PAC member
Kristin Klinger, Minneapolis Health and Family Support Dept.
Martha Hage, PAC member
Mary Jackson, Mn/DOT
Mike Kamnikar, Mn/DOT
Sally Holzapfel, Seward Re-Design
Sheldon Mains, Seward Neighborhood Group
Tony Hull, PAC member

Observations

- **GENERAL IMPRESSIONS** – Participants commented that the area is dirty, uncomfortable, bleak, and generally oriented to automobile traffic, not pedestrians. The business districts at either end of the field walk area are much more pedestrian-friendly than the area on either side of the LRT station.
- **UNDER BRIDGE ENVIRONMENT** – The two underpasses under Hiawatha and under the LRT tracks are uncomfortable environments. Both were dark and dirty. Under both bridges, the sidewalk is at a higher elevation than the street, and there is a sloped concrete between the sidewalk and the street; this was particularly pronounced on the Hiawatha underpass, where participants commented on the concern about slipping in winter conditions. While both underpasses were observed as being dark during daylight hours, the LRT underpass (despite being a shorter length) was observed to feel darker than the Hiawatha underpass. Improved lighting under the bridge, perhaps by placing lights directly overhead, rather than mounted on the wall, was mentioned by several participants as a potential solution.
- **SIDEWALKS** – Some of the sidewalks were cracked or crumbling. There was a lot of gravel, garbage and broken glass along the sidewalk, particularly under the two bridges. This contributed to a feeling of that the area was unsafe for walking. Maintenance responsibility for cleaning debris on sidewalks needs to be identified and pursued. Between 16th Avenue S and Bloomington Avenue S there were some nicely-designed and well-

constructed stamped sidewalk designs, that were observed to enhance the walking experience and worked well for wheelchair users.

- CURB RAMPS – A lot of the curb ramps were old and poorly designed for accessibility because of diagonal orientation, deteriorating concrete, steep slopes, and lack of level landing. Most of the ramps did not have detectable warnings. There were also several ramps with potholes at the bottom of the ramp.
- LRT STATION ACCESS – Cow paths on the NW & SW quadrants of Cedar/Franklin accessing the LRT station were observed.
- CROSSWALKS – Many observations were made related to crosswalks:
 - General signal issues – Countdown signals at long crossings are recommended. All intersections should be evaluated for potential accessible pedestrian signals.
 - Franklin/16th Ave S – Vehicles were observed to not stop at the crosswalk because sight lines were poor from 16th Avenue S.
 - Franklin/17th Ave S – The north side of this intersection is extremely wide, given its use as a driveway to the LRT maintenance facility. Because of the existing sweeping corner radius on the northwest corner, there is no boulevard, and the sidewalk is very narrow. The pedestrian refuge island on the north side is too small. The crossing on the south side is much narrower.
 - Franklin/Cedar – The existing median is wide, but does not provide a good pedestrian refuge. The existing crosswalk markings zig-zag to provide access to the median. It may be possible to extend the nose of the median island.
 - Franklin/Minnehaha – The pedestrian refuge island is too small, and there is a lot of unused street space in this large intersection. There appears to be missing pedestrian signal heads on the south side of this intersection.
 - Minnehaha/22nd St – Improvements to this midblock crossing, such as curb extensions or a pedestrian-actuated overhead flasher, might improve pedestrian safety and comfort at this location.
- GREENING/TREES – Despite many trees in the median of Franklin Avenue and some trees along the boulevard of Franklin Avenue between the LRT station and Cedar Avenue, participants generally observed this area as need a lot more trees and greening. The boulevards on Franklin between 16th Avenue S and the LRT station are steep and have no trees. Many of the trees in tree grates between 16th Avenue S and Bloomington Avenue S (part of the streetscape carried further west) were broken, dead or needing additional care.
- BICYCLES – We observed several groups of bicycles riding on the sidewalk. Safe, on-street facilities were observed as being a potential solution.
- EDUCATION – Observations were made about the potential for business and neighborhood groups to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety and generally enhance the community's stewardship for the pedestrian environment in the area.