

Inaugural Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting

March 8, 2007

3:00 – 4:30 pm

Room 220, City Hall

Attendees

PAC Member	Attendees	Representing	Present
X	Jim Adams	Senior Citizens Advisory Committee	X
X	James Andrew	Metropolitan Council	X
X	Deborah Boyd	Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board	X
X	Theresa Cain	Metro Transit	X
X	Anna Flintoft	Minneapolis Public Works, PAC Chair	X
X	Anna Gillette	North Loop Resident	X
X	Loretta Grewe	Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities	X
X	Diane Hansen	12 th Ward Citizen	X
X	Sarah Harris	Walking Minneapolis Foundation	X
X	Janee Harteau	Minneapolis Police Department	
X	Elizabeth Haugen	Minneapolis Communications Department	X
X	Diana Hawkins	City of Lakes Chamber	X
X	Steven Hay	Minneapolis CPED	X
X	Robin Hennessy	City of Minneapolis Attorney's Office	X
X	Mary Jackson	Minnesota Department of Transportation	X
X	Karen Nikolai	Hennepin County	X
X	David Rak	Minneapolis Dept of Health & Family Support	X
X	Mike Rumppe	Minneapolis Fire Department	X
X	Jan Sandberg	7 th Ward Citizen	X
X	Steve Sanders	University of Minnesota	X
X	David Smith	Minneapolis Public Schools	X
X	Mackenzie Turner	Bicycle Advisory Committee	X
X	Mary Watson	6 th Ward Citizen	X
	Shaun Murphy	Minneapolis Bicycle & Pedestrian Programs	X
	Jon Wertjes	Minneapolis Director of Traffic & Parking	X
	Patty Bowler	Minneapolis Dept of Health & Family Support	X

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Committee Mission and Responsibilities
3. Pedestrian Master Plan
4. Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program
5. Next meeting

Summary of Items Discussed

Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves and noted their interests in pedestrian issues. Anna Flintoft introduced herself as chair of the Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) and explained the mission of the PAC. Jon Wertjes introduced himself and expressed that the mayor and city council are very excited about the PAC. The group was thanked ahead of time for the work they will do.

Pedestrian Master Plan

Anna Flintoft explained the upcoming pedestrian master plan. The plan will be funded by two grants, one from the NTP (Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program) and the other from Blue Cross Blue Shield.

The pedestrian plan will have two foci. First, a needs evaluation will identify locations for priority pedestrian improvements, based upon infrastructure, pedestrian demand, safety, existing policy, and community input. The needs evaluation will have a significant public involvement component. Second, a policy and design evaluation will evaluate and recommend improvements to all city and partner agency policies, programs and guidelines which affect the pedestrian environment, including street and intersection design, lighting, street furniture, snow removal, land use, permitting, and traffic laws. The policy and design evaluation will heavily involve city and partner agency staff.

It is anticipated that a consultant will start work on the pedestrian plan in July and that the plan will be finished in 12 months.

PAC comments on the pedestrian master plan included:

- Enforce existing pedestrian laws (a good example is the Bay Area).
- Research best practices to find out what cities are doing a really good job.
- Focus on what we can do with current resources, and look for future resources.
- Use neighborhood organizations to complete needs assessments.
- Investigate the policy environment, including ordinances, lighting, and snow removal.
- Inventory what agencies and private sector entities are responsible for pedestrian-related needs.
- Focus on aesthetics.
- Strike a balance between having activities along sidewalks and making it safe for people who are blind.

Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program

Anna Flintoft gave background on the NTP (Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program). The NTP is a federal pilot program to increase biking and walking by investing in infrastructure and education. Transit for Livable Communities (TLC) manages the program. The funding is

targeted for Minneapolis, although cities which border Minneapolis are also eligible. \$7.3 million is available in the current round of funding, and applications are due April 10.

On February 21st an open house was held to gather public input about what types of projects the city should propose. 125 people attended the event. People were asked what the barriers are to pedestrians, what & where the opportunities are to increase walking, and what the pedestrian plan should address. An online survey was also gathering input. Safety came up as the biggest barrier to walking in Minneapolis, much larger than issues about having narrow sidewalks. Weather was also a big one, as well as long distances between destinations (no place to walk to). Snow removal, freeways, and ugliness were also seen as barriers.

The PAC and the BAC (Bicycle Advisory Committee) were asked to provide input to the city council for projects that are proposed for this round of funding. Potential projects must satisfy a list of essential criteria, which was drafted by public works staff. Projects should show a capability to increase walking, provide improvements in underserved areas, contribute to system connectivity, close gaps, be complete by 2009, be cost effective, and have a maintenance plan. Additionally, desirable criteria include appeal, safety, innovation, public support, and supplemental funding.

11 projects were brought forward to the committee. Three were proposed recommendations from the Access Minneapolis Downtown Action Plan. Three were proposed by the Safe Routes to School program. Two were proposed by the Minneapolis Park Board. Three were proposed by city staff based upon comments from the public open house.

Planning

- North Loop Pedestrian & Transit Connections - \$20,000-50,000 (TBD)
- Freeway Entrance/Exit Ramp Evaluation - \$50,000

Infrastructure

- Ventura Village-Elliot Park-Nicollet Mall Pedestrian Connection - \$3.0 million
- 13th Street Pedestrian Plaza - \$2.0 million
- School Sidewalk Connections (Dowling & Kenwood Schools) - \$75,000
- Bike & Pedestrian Trail Improvements (Park Board) - \$1.3 million
- Upper River Bike & Pedestrian Trail (Park Board) - \$1.0 million

Operations

- Citywide School Patrolled Crosswalk Improvements - \$125,000
- Lake Harriet School Crosswalk Improvements - \$30,000
- Citywide Pedestrian Crosswalk Striping and Enforcement - \$150,000
- Citywide Pedestrian Countdown Signals - \$150,000

Anna explained that it is anticipated that more bicycle projects will be proposed and awarded in the first round of funding. The BAC has been working for many years to develop and implement the bicycle system and has a large number of projects ready to be implemented. The City has never had a PAC before and does not have a list of priority pedestrian improvement projects.

This will be one of the tasks of the Pedestrian Master Plan. As such, it will be challenging for the PAC to rank these projects at their first meeting.

PAC comments included:

- Concern about ranking these projects on such short notice and without much knowledge of the projects.
- Who will be responsible for maintaining the 13th Street Pedestrian Plaza, given the challenges in funding maintenance of the Nicollet Mall? Anna explained that this has not yet been determined.
- Concern that the proposed school projects may address safety issues, but not produce substantial increases in walking and may not rank well for NTP funding. On the other hand, school children are impressionable and may be more likely to walk in the future.
- The Minneapolis Health Department has received an \$80,000 grant to perform education and outreach to support walking at schools.
- Would crosswalk markings have tactile elements for people who are blind?
- The committee needs a clear outline of the timeline and tasks necessary for it to prepare for the next NTP solicitation.
- Interest in further reporting on the online survey results.

Committee members were asked submit their rankings of the proposed projects to Anna Flintoft by Monday, March 10, at 12:00pm.

Next Meeting

PAC meetings will take place on the first Thursday of each month at 3:00 pm. The next meeting will take place on April 5th.