

Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting – Minutes

Wednesday, January 3, 2018

Present: Neal Baxter, Shaina Brassard, Donna Hemp, Dan Herber, Rachel Bell, Julia Curran, Olivia Hovland, Barbara Olson, Christopher Hoffer, Christian Huelsman, Aaron Berger; Matthew Dyr Dahl, Sarah Stewart, Rattana Sengsoulichanh, Suzanne Murphy, Steve Mahowald, Mackenzie Turner Bargaen, Emily Kettell, Heidi Schallberg, Millicent Flowers; Kelsey Fogt, Liz Heyman, Virginie Nadimi; Luís Dax, pedestrian; Phil Longenecker, Green Corps; Ethan Fawley, Our Streets

Resolutions passed by the PAC:

#1--CIP Recommendations

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) supports the City's data-driven process to prioritize and select street projects, to the extent that it is consistent with the Complete Streets policy, in the CIP, including the 20-Year Streets Funding Plan and pedestrian and bicycle programs in the CIP.

The PAC has the following recommendations for the 2019-2013 CIP, which include program recommendations and stand-alone connections:

Program Recommendations

- Prioritize freeway on & off ramps for intersection/crossing improvements.
- Create a more formal program for providing temporary pedestrian crossing improvements ahead of permanent construction.
- Create a program in the CIP to fund greenways.
- Complete a sidewalk inventory.

Stand-Alone Connections (Trails)

- Great Northern Trail Gaps in NE Minneapolis (formerly known as the 18th Avenue Protected Bikeway).
- Cedar Avenue So., Hiawatha to Franklin Avenue East.

#2--Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan Input

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) has been actively engaged in conversations about the Comprehensive Plan with city staff, as a committee, and in our own communities since late 2016. The PAC has developed the following list of priorities that we believe are necessary to creating and sustaining a walkable and vibrant city during the next 20 years.

GOAL: Grow Our City

RATIONALE: We support growth and welcoming new people to live and thrive in our city. We recognize that greater density of residents supports more businesses and amenities and demand for services like transit and walk/bike infrastructure, and lowers individual carbon footprints. More residents and businesses also increase the tax base, spreading out the cost burden for government services.

STRATEGIES:

21st Century Zoning
Diverse Neighborhoods, Complete Communities
Safety for All Pedestrians, Safety Beyond Policing
City Funding for Public Transit
Set Mode Share Goals for Walking

GOAL: Placemaking and Neighborhood Branding Supports Livability through Greater Walkability

RATIONALE: While known for its lakes and parks, additional jewels of Minneapolis are its neighborhoods. A vibrant and sustainable neighborhood is one in which walking plays an important role in the residents', and visitors', lives, because it is safe, efficient, convenient, and enjoyable.

In order to improve the walkability of neighborhoods, and therefore the residents' and visitors' engagement with the neighborhood, efforts to support placemaking and branding efforts need to be encouraged and supported through zoning, procedure, and policy reform.

GOAL: Great, Plentiful Businesses and Amenities to Provide Services and Jobs

RATIONALE: Business density and variety along commercial corridors and neighborhood interiors is important for walkability, quality of life and environmental sustainability. Businesses create "eyes on the street" and improve real and perceived safety. At the same time, studies have shown that compared to drivers, walkers spend more dollars, more often, at small local businesses.

GOAL: A Thriving Downtown and Vibrant, Community-Enhancing Commercial Nodes and Corridors

RATIONALE: Downtown and our commercial corridors are pedestrian-generators. Attention to creating and sustaining vibrant, equitable, compelling, and competitive public spaces where people are already living, working, learning, shopping, connecting, and playing, will boost walking and the economy.

GOAL: A Legible, Comfortable and Safe Streetscape and Built Environment

RATIONALE: To promote safe, pedestrian-first street features, recognizing geographic realities and challenging historical street design that has focused on vehicles rather than walkability.

GOAL: Dense and Varied Housing Encourages and Supports Robust Walkability

RATIONALE: A diverse housing supply allows for residents of all incomes, family types, and circumstances. Housing density provides the economic

and social base to support thriving commercial options and a vibrant cityscape, which encourages walking. New housing provides more ADA accessible units, benefiting those who walk and roll.

Shaina Brassard called the meeting to order at 4:08 PM, and asked all present to introduce themselves.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Aaron moved the minutes for the December meeting; Donna seconded. Approved.

Overview of the Capital Improvement Program—Liz Heyman, Public Works

The 20-Year Street Plan was passed by the City Council in April 2016. The plan was meant to speed up repair of the City's infrastructure, and to do so in an equitable way. To ensure equity and focus, the Plan will undergo frequent review. Public Works sought out residents of the city, throughout 2017, at Open Streets events, farmers' markets, and the like, and asked for their priorities for streets that need work.

The process for choosing projects to include in the CIP program involves a great deal of data on road conditions, use, etc.; data on safety and utility needs to meet; information on community demographics, vehicle availability by neighborhood, pedestrian counts and use of sidewalks, bikes and transit. Staff also look at combining projects to rationalize upgrades (by coordinating with other agencies), and to avoid closing too many streets in an area and assessing property for too many projects in a short time. After considering all these factors and the various data streams, staff selected the projects to include in the 2019-2023 CIP list, which the CLIC committee will critique from April to July.

Christian: do you collect data on alleys?

LH: Yes, we do.

PAC Recommendations for the CIP—Matthew Dyr Dahl, Virginie Nadimi and Kelsey Fogt

For inclusion in the 4 programs already in the CIP list (Safe Routes to School BP001, Pedestrian Safety BP004, ADA Ramps PV104 and Sidewalk Gaps SWK02) the following criteria were considered:

BP001—number of children within walking distance of their school, number of non-white pupils at the school, eligibility for breakfast at school, which school is the most efficient choice for work on its access routes;

BP004—the focus here is on unsignalized intersections on streets not under state or county jurisdiction. The signalized intersections draw money already and are eligible under other street projects. In addition, these projects will improve more intersections for less money, as signals are expensive. We'll work on fixing separate corners for now, and look at changing corridors later.

Sarah: How do residents bring complaints to your attention?

MD: 311 is the most efficient way, and suggestions brought to our attention by PAC members.

PV104—for this program, we focus again on unsignalized intersections, and clusters of corners take priority. We will not build bump outs with this program.

SB: did you use census data to locate disabled users?

Kelsey: no, but we may later.

Lastly, SWK02, the sidewalk gap program, will prioritize gaps in the network that coincide with streets that won't see work crews for many years.

Neal moved the resolution on the CIP list (#1 above); Christian seconded. Approved.

Dan: the CIP programs should implement the Complete Streets policy. Using data over other factors not only creates a focus on the needs of drivers, but misses other needs, too.

MD: I agree that Complete Streets should steer us toward which sites to upgrade. Equity points even the score.

Aaron: how about pairing road improvements with traffic calming, to avoid making the street friendly to higher speeds?

Infrastructure & Engineering Subcommittee—Julia Curran

In lieu of looking at projects, at our last meeting we had a good discussion among us about the CIP list and the role of the committee.

Whereupon the PAC broke into a discussion of when and which projects come before the subcommittees.

Programs & Policies Subcommittee—Shaina Brassard

We opened with a presentation by Diane Nelson & Lynn Nelvik-Levitt of the 311 office. We learned a lot about how 311 calls are handled, and were impressed by ongoing efforts to improve the service. Lynn asked PAC members to call her to report a problem.

A smaller group met last month to draft a list of suggestions for revising the Comp Plan, and also propose a resolution to send up to the City Council. We came to no conclusions about how to summarize the suggestions for the Council.

Discussion followed, and the PAC decided to send the shorter resolution (#2 above) to the City Council, with the full list of proposed suggestions as an attachment.

Donna moved to approve the Comp Plan resolution; Julia Curran seconded. Approved.

Donna moved to adjourn; Christian seconded. Approved, and adjourned at 6:00 PM.