

Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, June 7, 2017

Present: Greta Alquist, Neal Baxter, Julia Curran, Donna Hemp, Christian Huelsman, Christopher Hoffer, Bob Loken, Dan Herber, Julia Tabbut; Matthew Dyrdaahl, Kelsey Fogt, Sarah Stewart, Julie Danzl, Rattana Sengsoulichanh, Sierra Saunders, Mackenzie Turner Bergen, Carrie Christensen, Millicent Flowers; guests: Luis Dax, pedestrian; Ethan Frawley & Nick Busse, Our Streets; Kathleen Mayell & Don Pflaum, Public Works

Resolutions:

1. The Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee supports the Oak Street SE Protected Bikeway Upgrades Project, with the following recommendations:

Narrow travel lanes to 10' from 12' south of Essex. Narrow total width of southbound roadway to 18' maximum, except in the accessible parking portion.

Ensure that tactile markings on islands and leading to accessible parking are in keeping with current standards and clearly communicate path options and directionality for those with impaired vision.

Tighten southeast corner radius to allow for directional tactile markings and to create a safer pedestrian crossing.

Explore bump-outs from Essex into Oak, in lieu of a refuge island.

2. The PAC supports placing Parklets on our community corridors, including Hennepin County roads.

Chair Greta called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM, and asked all present to introduce themselves.

Administrative Update—Matthew Dyrdaahl

Millicent Flowers is Program Assistant and will send the agenda items to everyone from now on. She handles the administrative functions for the PAC & BAC. Kelsey will continue to attend subcommittee meetings.

Complete Streets Update—Kathleen Mayell & Don Pflaum

The City Council adopted the Complete Streets policy in May 2016. The new modal hierarchy which was included has already influenced policy and practice.

Studies underway include: winter maintenance, which we will finish in June 2017

Traffic signal operations—we're studying past and potential uses

Multi-modal level of service and curbside uses

Greenways

Shared-use streets like West 29th St.

We're looking at national best practice and what we've learned locally.

Improvements made this year include the complete re-striping of city crosswalks with zebra markings, which will be done by the end of the year; elimination of the on-site inspection, which will cut the time to deal with winter sidewalk complaints; two new CIPs—Pedestrian Safety and Closing Sidewalk Gaps; proposed changes to Hennepin Avenue in the Uptown neighborhood were driven by Complete Streets; the 8th Street project downtown; Samatar Crossing (across I-35W between Cedar-Riverside & downtown); the 42nd Ave. N. project, which closes sidewalk & bike route gaps.

We have new tools thanks to the Complete Streets policy, including the CS checklist, the decision to attach PAC & BAC resolutions to the checklist, the website re-design which makes the resolutions easier to find, and improvements planned for the bicycle path network for 2018.

Among on-going programs note the 20-year funding for city and park streets

The Comprehensive Plan update

The Access update

And improvements to County roads as the opportunities arise

Chris Huelsman: is there a full list of the work on zebra markings we can look at to check progress?

MD: most of the North Side is done, downtown is nearly finished, and the balance of the city will be re-striping from the East Side clockwise to the Lakes.

CH: And where are the shared-street locations?

KM: There is a demonstration on East 29th Street, and a small one in North Loop near 2nd Avenue, plus West 29th Street.

Don: We need to evaluate W. 29th before we install more of these. Maintenance has posed problems, among others.

Approval of the Minutes

Donna moved to approve the minutes for May; Bob seconded. Approved.

Walk Encouragement Event—Ethan Frawley

Parenthetically, the Bicycle Coalition has a new name—Our Streets—and a new mission, to make biking, walking and rolling comfortable for everyone. Our priorities are: traffic lights, winter snow clearance, improved pedestrian crossings and making the new Comprehensive Plan as walk-friendly as possible.

The Walk Event is meant as an improvement on Bike/Walk Week, which folded a few years ago. Our Streets is trying to convince the City to proclaim a Walk Week sometime in 2018. Ethan asked PAC members for ideas for a successful Walk Week, and the following ideas surfaced:

Explore making winter walking easier

Cultivate the self-image of citizens as walkers

A series of Great Walks, with points of interest

Walking challenges/scavenger hunt (local bias)

Walking as part of other activities & errands

Removing barriers to local walking, errands, etc.

An app to promote Pedestrian Trips (easy local walks)

A welcome kit for new businesses and residents

“Slow strolls”, delightful local walks

A walk awareness kit for local business owners

Walking bingo

An education campaign, walk awareness

“Bus stop & walk” modeled on Safe Routes to School

De-stigmatizing walking—that's what your legs are for!

Don't forget ideas for the blind, too

Good wayfinding; signs giving mileage to, and highlighting, destinations

The focus, we decided, should be utilitarian, promoting walking in concert with other modes and making walking normal.

Programs & Policies Subcommittee—Julia Curran

We first looked at the Winter Maintenance Study with Connor Cox of Toole Design. The current process: after a complaint is turned in, owner has 6-8 days to remove snow/ice from sidewalk; the “clock re-sets” with each snow fall, postponing the day of reckoning for owner by 6-8 days; the City never issues a citation, only a bill. Two sets of changes present themselves: enhanced service (easy to set up) vs. enhanced Plus (more complicated). In May the committee suggested these changes, for enhanced service:

Develop a winter priority re-think

Prioritize cleaning at bus stops and shelters

Develop performance standards

Move to pro-active enforcement

Accelerate enforcement

Snow/ice removal by City staff for seniors and disabled residents in their homes and in high-rises

More transparency over responsibility for clearing corners

Expand free sand program

Maintenance awareness campaign, with schoolchildren dropping off reminders at houses, etc.

Environmental campaign

Education campaign throughout the city, on the City's website and by other means

Enhance the City's winter maintenance web page

The committee voted for what they would like to see the City do to improve snow & ice clearance. Next steps include developing alternative strategies, estimating their cost, and meeting with the PAC & BAC. The final study will be released in June.

Kurt Wayne presented the 2016 Mpls Bike and Pedestrian Count Report. He explained the methodology, and how the data are used. See the City's website for the complete study.

We also celebrated National Public Works Week with carrot cake.

Infrastructure & Engineering Subcommittee—Bob Loken

We heard more about the Oak Street project, and proposed resolution #1 above. Bob read the resolution and Neal seconded. Approved.

Matthew: Oak Street is a laboratory for new ideas.

We also heard an update on the Bike/Ped Safety Initiative. Nearly all crosswalk markings will be replaced by zebra striping soon. The North Side and downtown are nearly finished, and the rest of the city will get zebras in short order. Zebra markings cost no more than the old style, and will allow 2 paintings per year. Also, cameras developed by the Miovision firm will be installed. They will count traffic and more.

Lindsey: Hennepin County has decided not to allow Parklets on its roads this year. A liability concern moves this change.

Her announcement led the PAC to craft a resolution (#2 above), moved by Julia Curran and seconded by Julia Tabbut.

Approved.

Thanking Outgoing Members and Looking Ahead—Matthew Dyrda

Matthew handed out certificates of appreciation to all those present whose service on the PAC is drawing to a close. Five new members will join us at the July meeting, and 5 current members will begin a new term. Many thanks to the Julias for the activity they led at this time (gathering insights, ideas and lessons learned from all PAC members). We hope this collected wisdom will help new members adjust quickly to the rigorous demands of the PAC!

Announcements

Julia C.: please attend the Upper Harbor Terminal open house, on June 8. The address is 3350 N. 4th Street.

Luís: the Strawberry Full Moon is coming!

Sarah: the North Side Greenway Project has closed, and now evaluation of the project begins.

Julie Danzl: the first draft of the Safe Routes to School Strategic Plan is coming in June.

Neal moved to adjourn; Bob seconded. Approved, and adjourned at 5:54 PM.