

Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, November 2, 2016

Present: Philip Ailiff, Greta Alquist, Neal Baxter, Shaina Brassard, Julie Curran, Christopher Hoffer, Christian Huelsman, Bob Loken, Donna Hemp, Dan Herber, Tamir Ali Mohamud, Julia Tabbutt, Matthew Dyrdaahl, Joe Bernard, Mike Mechtenberg, Heidi Schallberg, Sarah Stewart; guests: Robin Hutcheson, Director of Public Works

Chair Greta Alquist called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM, and asked for introductions from everyone.

Resolutions:

#1: The PAC supports the Seward Bike Boulevards as presented (with the modifications as clarified at Seabury). We encourage the inclusion of planters in the traffic circles to enhance beauty and visibility.

#2: The PAC supports the Anderson School Pedestrian improvements and bikeway design and hopes to see clear tactile pedestrian crossing markings through the bike trail at 28th & 12th, clear markings and signage aimed at drivers exiting the alley that crosses the trail; and an inquiry into possible crossing enhancements and bumpouts at 28th & 11th.

#3: The PAC is excited about the proposed changes to the Bde Maka Ska and Lake Harriet trails. We have a strong preference for an ADA-accessible pedestrian path along West Lake Street, an adjacent bike-pedestrian path north of Lagoon Avenue, and improvements at the Lake St. & Calhoun Parkway triangle that will make safe and pleasant bicycle and pedestrian crossings possible.

#4: The PAC supports the BAC request for two-way bike traffic under the bridge. A clear-usage option & barrier-separated space will decrease potential conflict. The area is deserted & has blind corners; for safety for those on foot, increased traffic helps.

Committee Process—Julia Tabbutt

Due to our first contentious vote last time, the executive committee deemed useful a discussion of voting and the bringing business out of the subcommittees. Discussion included the following:

MD: our by-laws say that a motion needs a majority of those present to vote Aye.

SB: which means that those who must abstain due to conflict of interest in effective vote Nay. Do we amend the by-laws?

Choff: that brings in other problems, in the extreme case, one vote approval in face of 11 abstentions.

Julia C: we've never considered enforcing attendance at subcommittees, because of the barriers to attendance.

Phil: is attendance mandatory?

MD: no, but we strongly encourage it.

Julia T: a working group or subcommittee needs to work on this.

Julia C: let's start with a document laying out the details of the by-laws, next month.

NB: I'll work on that, due in December.

Programs & Policies Subcommittee—Shaina Brassard & Julia Curran

We discussed the Walk Friendly Community gold status application first, the barriers to achieving platinum rank and how to commit the City to work which justifies that level of recognition. It's hard to analyze the re-certification award, as it carries no comments about the application. We want to add to the press release about re-certification something of PAC's vision for future change.

We talked with Jill Chamberlain about next year's National Walking Summit in St. Paul. She wants ideas for demonstrations, and PAC members can submit those. Jill will return to the committee in December.

Zoning came up, too. It's a loaded and wonky and complex. How to arrive at a consensus among members for changing the code while remaining positive is tricky.

Joe B: I'd like to get together with PAC members and develop a work plan. My colleagues and I on the Comp plan committee are setting policy now.

Bob: The Planning Commission has just approved the following changes to zoning for all Pedestrian Overlay Districts:

Amendments to ALL Pedestrian Oriented overlay districts:

Window sills at street level reduced from 4 feet max to 2'-6" max

Parking lot width reduced from 60' to 40'

Massively expanded geographical area of Uptown PO overlay to include Hennepin, Lyndale and Lagoon

Amendments specific to Hennepin/Lyndale/Lagoon/Lake PO overlay:

Minimum FAR of 1.0; minimum height of 2 stories

Elimination of front yard setback; buildings must be placed no more than 8' from front lot line

Density bonuses for mixed use, enclosed parking and affordable housing increased from 20% to 25%

As-of-right 4 stories and 56' height for all zoning classifications

No required parking for non-residential uses

For corner lots, curb cuts prohibited on Hennepin, Lagoon, Lyndale and Lake *

Mike: shared mobility is an idea MetroTransit is talking about. A pilot project is under discussion.

Sarah: The next walking audit will take place at the senior high rise at 2121 Minnehaha Avenue, on November 16. Please RSVP if you'd like to join us. We'll gather at 2:30 PM and end about 4:30. Another walking audit is scheduled for 11 AM next Thursday at 315 Lowry North.

Infrastructure & Engineering Subcommittee—Bob Loken & Julia Tabbut

We first looked at the improvements planned for Seward's streets—bumpouts and crosswalk markings. Bob read the resolution (#1 above), and Neal seconded. Approved.

The plan calls for local people to care for the greenery in the planters. The City welcomes volunteers to take this responsibility. If enough of these planters spring up around town, the City may assign a caretaker from staff to tend them all. Anderson School plan—we liked what we saw, but had many questions. Bob moved the resolution (#2 above), and C. Huelsman seconded. Approved.

Donna suggested adding more tactile markings to set off the bike way.

The Calhoun/Harriet improvements were next on our agenda. We discussed the bike traffic under the Lake Street bridge, and what it means for pedestrians. Lake Street will lose one lane of traffic here, under the plan. The plan is quite complicated at Lake Harriet's southeast approach. Julia Tabbut moved the resolution (#3 above), Bob seconded. Approved.

MD: the BAC has told planners about the bike traffic under the Lake Street bridge, and advised that bikes will likely continue to travel both directions here (an outcome not foreseen in the plan). Discussion ensued about the BAC's resolution, and how to respond to it.

CIP Presentation---Matthew Dyr Dahl

The 20-year ordinance interrupted this year's focus on the 2018/2022 CIP proposals. Matthew pointed out the highlights of the PAC's recommendations for capital improvement projects for the next 5 years.

Hennepin-Central area needs more long-range planning before we can really propose changes to the pedestrian environment there. Matthew and his staff are looking at how to develop a program for filling sidewalk gaps, and a way of prioritizing the gaps then becomes a need.

The Defective Sidewalk program will annually replace bad sidewalks and build ADA ramps.

Among the reconstruction projects, note that the Samatar bridge will be for non-motorized traffic only (just announced).

BP01 will be a dedicated CIP for Safe Routes to School projects. (That's a first in the nation).

Next steps include: designing SWK02 (filling sidewalk gaps); collecting data on all City sidewalks, which will help with all the pedestrian projects; a concrete rehab plan, to replace poor quality ADA ramps; engaging PAC on pedestrian & ramp programs.

PAC Strategic Plan and Accomplishments with Robin Hutcheson

Ms Hutcheson introduced herself to the PAC as a walker by choice with a transportation background, and very focused on pedestrian safety. Next Julia Curran, Donna, Greta, Neal & Shaina explained for Robin the 5 Strategic Priorities that PAC approved in March 2016.

Finally, Robin urged PAC members to remain committed to pedestrian work and to keep giving Public Works our ideas. She looked forward to working with the PAC, and promised to have clear & transparent reasons when Public Works and the PAC disagree.

20-Year Street Funding Plan--Nathan Koster

The 2 criteria for the list of projects to include under the 20-Year street funding ordinance are data-driven and seize & create opportunities. A great deal of public engagement is expected for these projects, too.

Staff asked themselves: What does equity mean? What inequities exist? What outcomes signal success? We didn't remove projects from the CIP list, we added more to it. The City will reconstruct 50 miles of road in the next 5 years, guaranteed.

Here Julia Curran read the resolution she had fashioned (#4 above), and C. Huelsman seconded. Approved.

Approval of the Minutes

Shaina moved the minutes for October, Julia Tabbut seconded. Approved.

Neal moved to adjourn; Julia Tabbut seconded. Approved, and adjourned at 6:04 PM.

*see <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/meetings/planning/WCMSP-188931>
<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/meetings/planning/WCMSP-189466>

