

**City of Takoma Park Safe Roadways Committee
Monthly Meeting, May 19, 2015**

MINUTES

1. The meeting convened at 7:31pm with the following in attendance: Nick Finio, Kacy Kostiuk, Wren Rogers, and Mike McCabe, and Joe Edgell. Liz Cattaneo arrived at 7:49pm.
2. Joe added another idea to discussion on the agenda -- reappointments to the committee. There were no other changes to the agenda. Mike moved to approve the agenda with the modification offered by Joe; Wren seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.
3. There was a member of the public attending the meeting, so the committee members introduced themselves to him. Paul Huebner lives on Carroll Ave near Boyd Ave.
 - a. Paul wanted to discuss the topic of Daryl's presentations about crosswalks on Maple Ave that were to cost \$10,000 each for 7 crosswalks, according to Mr. Huebner. He said that one of the council members asked about the lifetime survival of the crosswalks. He doesn't understand why it costs so much every few years to paint crosswalk lines.
 - b. Paul also noted increasing encroachment of the public right-of-way, with residents planting in the right-of-way. He said about 15-20 years ago there was an argument related to this and an alley.
 - c. He also noted that the Carroll/Lincoln intersection is busy and a problematic intersection.
 - d. Joe said he thinks one of the reasons for the high cost of the crosswalks on Maple may have been a proposal to make them raised crosswalks. He also noted that there had been discussion of purchasing a thermoplastic machine so that City staff could repaint the crosswalks rather than contract with an outside company, so this may have affected the price as well.
4. Nick discussed the Takoma Junction traffic study report efforts.
 - a. Nick created a draft of recommendations to the city council and sent a copy to committee members that morning for review. This included the recommendations suggested by committee members previously.
 - b. Mike, Joe, and Liz had taken a look at the draft; Kacy and Wren had not yet. Mike said that the information included in it seemed good. Joe noted that it's important to include traffic simulations in the study so that different outcomes can be assessed and compared.
 - c. Joe suggested that what the developer and what the committee are thinking of as a traffic study are probably different. The developer may be primarily interested in the number of cars turning into and out of the development, whereas the city is more interested in overall flow issues related to the intersection and impacts on pedestrians.
 - d. Joe suggested adding a "why" to the report to explain why such a comprehensive study was important. Nick said he tried to include this by mentioning the importance of the Junction as an area of commerce. Joe suggested adding why specific parameters of the study are important.
 - e. Nick looked up the numbers of bus riders: there are 12,000 on 410 and 10,000 on Carroll, so more than 20,000 people are probably going through that intersection on buses each day. Mike noted that every person – riding a bus or driving – going through that intersection is a potential customer for the developers/businesses at that location. There's also the BikeShare station there.
 - f. Wren said that the new gym and bakery at the Junction has increased the traffic and pedestrians. Wren said that her partner noted that the owners of the gym are worried about people's safety there; there is less parking, but most of the people who go there live in the neighborhood and can walk there.

- g. Joe said that Nick recommended specifically using a document that referred to Los Angeles. Joe noted that Councilmember Fred Schultz had previously shown a disinterest in the idea of “emulating Seattle,” so Joe was worried that the mention of Los Angeles might be problematic because Council Member Schultz might not find the document applicable in Takoma Park. Nick said that the document had the name Los Angeles in it but was about how to conduct a traffic study in general. Joe suggested focusing the name of the reference on the purpose of the document.
- h. Joe suggested that Nick review the committee’s other reports to the council and see if the formats from those might work for this report. Mike recommended listing top recommendations at the very beginning.
- i. Wren suggested counterbalancing the developer’s perspective by pointing out that this is a city of people, not just cars and trucks, and not just people using the Junction as a destination but also a thoroughfare. It’s a junction of people, not just a junction of cars.
- j. Joe said that the Takoma Junction development isn’t a “typical” development, since it is a city-owned property and there are requirements the city can make upon the developers. Joe suggested that the developer might not want to pay for a comprehensive traffic study but that the city could pay for additional aspects of the study, since it is relevant not just to the development but to the city as a whole.
- k. Liz suggested making justifications for why the committee is asking for each point, since it might not be clear just looking at it as a list. Liz wondered if it would be possible to reference Nick’s qualifications as someone who is familiar with traffic studies and/or some other source that gives expertise and credence to this list of recommendations. Joe suggested that it might be possible to list committee members at the end and make reference to Nick’s professional qualifications in this context.
- l. Joe suggested sending the report to Erkin prior to the council for last-minute recommendations from him.
- m. Liz suggested making a recommendation for the traffic study to be done while school is in session. She also asked about considering summer vs. winter traffic of pedestrians and bikes. Perhaps the study could address this in the counts even if it can only be done in winter.
- n. Liz asked about heavy-load vehicles and whether it would be beneficial to count these in the counts – including heavy trucks, fire trucks, ambulances, etc. Nick said it might be but that it didn’t seem like it would provide much additional useful information about the intersection.
- o. Liz asked if there are any longitudinal studies of car and bus traffic that might show an increase over a period of time and anticipated increases. Nick noted said that it seems like numbers in general have remained consistent over the past few years, even if they have increased in particular locations.
- p. Liz asked if there’s anyone else it might be helpful to review the report – one of the people who proposed a different intersection configuration or someone from the Coop. Joe said that he thinks the Committee should focus on the data and keep out the politics, so should submit it to Council without additional review.
- q. Nick wondered if the city has ever done anything similar to this with pedestrian counts. Liz said that she was involved in the research related to the K6 and K9 buses.
- r. Nick will reformat and edit the report, and then committee members will review it. Nick recommended setting a deadline. Joe suggested Friday, May 29, as a deadline. The goal is to send it to Erkin by May 28th and to the city council by the evening of May 31st. Nick will make changes and send a draft to committee members for edits by Friday evening.
- s. Joe brought in drawings of the proposed “mini-roundabout” designed by Barbara Muhlbacher. Joe noted that signals could be added for pedestrians, as some literature says roundabouts can be hard for pedestrians to navigate.

5. Kacy reported briefly on crosswalk flags:
 - a. Kacy previously sent a picture from Gaithersburg, Maryland, where there was a busy intersection that had a sign posted and a box full of orange flags for pedestrians to carry when crossing the street at that location. She showed the picture to the committee members at the meeting.
 - b. Kacy said she wasn't sure whether this was a useful method or whether people use the flags, but it seemed like a good inexpensive option when nothing else could be done. She said that it would be interesting to consider this for intersections that do not have crosswalks but are places where people frequently cross.
 - c. Joe suggested that this might be good to consider as part of the committee's recommendations on intersection improvements. Nick, who is chairing the subcommittee on intersection improvements, said he could look for more information about the flags. Another options that was thrown out was "fake" speed cameras, as these seem to slow people down very effectively.
 - d. Liz suggested that the flags would be useful at the intersection of Elm and 410, where there is a crosswalk but few cars stop for pedestrians.
6. Liz reported on the New Hampshire Ave Recreation Center:
 - a. Liz said that there is interest in revamping the rec center and that there is a survey that residents can complete. There are also meetings scheduled to discuss use of the rec center and plans for the future.
 - b. Liz is concerned that the survey has not been widely circulated and seems a little skewed. However, she looked at the contractor who is working on this and was impressed with some of the community centers they had designed.
 - c. She encouraged all members to take the survey. Liz said she plans to attend the rec center meeting next Wednesday and could bring unofficial Safe Roadways perspectives if desired.
 - d. Liz said that there's no path for bikes to the rec center right now. It could also be a useful space for a BikeShare station. It's close to the Sligo Creek trail and to major intersections. Joe asked Liz to email Ryan to add this to his recommendations for BikeShare.
 - e. Liz said she thinks this could be a way to encourage more people to come to this area and enhance walkability.
 - f. Liz noted that it would be nice for other people who aren't Takoma Park residents to use the rec center. Mike said that there's a developer about to buy the property with the car wash and redevelop it.
 - g. Joe said that next week during the city council meeting there will be discussions related to the Taco Bell redevelopment. Mike said that the new bus hub at University/NH Aves will create a very new look. Joe said that the city has created development standards and will be discussing this at that time. It might be worth making it easier and safer to get from the transit center to the rec center. Joe suggested a public comment at the next council meeting.
 - h. Wren suggested that the Metropolitan Branch Trail could be connected somehow. Joe noted that the Sligo Creek trail could be connected better to the rec center. Joe suggested a 10-foot-wide pedestrian and bike path from there up to the rec center.
 - i. The committee members said they were comfortable with Liz or Joe making a public comment about this at the meetings.
7. Wren reported on updates related to the Lincoln and Carroll Ave intersection:
 - a. Wren said she has not heard back from SHA after emailing them for information about the traffic/pedestrian surveys that were taken. She contacted Councilmember Kate Stewart to ask about it, and Kate said she will follow up with SHA on it.

- b. Paul said he has contact information for one of the people who did the study and shared the number with Wren.
 - c. Liz asked if Ryan got feedback related to the crumbling bridge. Joe said that there are plans to put in a net for protection.
- 8. Joe reminded committee members that they need to fill out ethics forms. Several committee members have not done it yet.
- 9. Joe reported on reappointments and expiring terms on the committee:
 - a. Joe said that there are several people whose terms are going to expire in June: Ryan, Liz, and Joe.
 - i. Ryan does not plan to renew, as he will be moving. Joe said that Councilmember Jarrett Smith told him he has someone in mind to recommend as another member from Ward 5.
 - ii. Both Liz and Joe intend to renew their terms.
 - b. Joe's term as chair of the committee will expire at the same time. He said he is happy to step aside if someone else would like to take over. If anyone wants to take over, he said to let him know.
 - c. Joe said that Ryan is going to continue to work on the BikeShare recommendations and will bring a draft to the next meeting.
- 10. Next agenda:
 - a. Joe said that Ryan will discuss BikeShare and that Daryl Braithwaite may be available to speak.
 - b. Joe is going to email the council members about intersections in their wards that they have heard are problematic.
- 11. The meeting minutes from the April meeting were discussed. Liz moved to approve the minutes; Kacy second the motion. All voted in favor of approving the minutes.
- 12. Wren mentioned the issues of speed bumps for cyclists and complaints from cyclists. Joe suggested asking the people who have complained to email the committee, and the committee can use this in traffic calming recommendations in the report later in the year.
- 13. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.