

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

**MINUTES**

**Housekeeping:**

1. The meeting convened at 7:30pm with the following in attendance: Nick Finio, Kacy Kostiuk, Joe Edgell, Frank Demarais, Mike Moore, and Liz Cattaneo.
2. Meeting minutes:
  - a. Joe took minutes in September and has to finalize them still. He will send them around to committee members to review, and the committee will vote to approve them in November.
3. Meeting agenda:
  - a. Nick moved to approve the proposed agenda. Frank seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Takoma Park Street Festival Report:**

4. The committee members who volunteered at the Street Festival reported that it was very successful.
5. Joe said that the committee got approximately 100 responses to questionnaires.
  - a. The committee needs to pick two raffle winners.
  - b. Joe suggested numbering the questionnaires and using a random number generator to select the winners.
  - c. Joe suggested collecting the questionnaire and oral feedback from the festival into a spreadsheet.
    - i. Liz said she would create a spreadsheet.
    - ii. Frank, Kacy, Liz, and Mike volunteered to review and enter some of the information.
    - iii. Joe will number the questionnaires and split them into piles for Frank, Kacy, Liz, and Mike and will deliver them to the person to review them.
6. Mike said people seemed very interested to give feedback at the booth. It was easy to get people to talk and share their opinions.
  - a. Nick noted that many people who filled out the questionnaire checked that they had an interest in bike lanes.
  - b. Joe said he attempted to get a wide range of nationalities, ethnicities, backgrounds, etc. Those who filled out questionnaires seemed like a fairly wide range of the population.
  - c. Liz noted that the candy was useful in bringing people to the booth. Having an enticement was useful. The location of the booth was also very helpful because there was no booth next to it, so the booth was very visible.
  - d. Liz noted that it would be good to continue to collect contact information from people in the future. She also mentioned a suggestion by Joe to collect ward data from people so that there was a sense of where people lived.
7. Kacy asked if the committee would have had a smaller booth space if We Are Takoma had come to the festival. The committee was supposed to share with We Are Takoma, but We Are Takoma was not able to attend after the festival was rescheduled.
  - a. The committee ended up sharing with the sustainability coordinator for the city so both could use the city's tent, but there was plenty of room. Joe said the booth probably could have been about as large even if We Are Takoma had come.
8. Joe noted that the festival was way more successful than he anticipated. He thanked the subcommittee – Wren, Liz, and Kacy – for coordinating the festival booth.

### **Bikeshare Draft Status/Approval:**

9. Nick sent a new draft of the bikeshare recommendation draft to the committee late last night. He said he basically just rewrote Ryan's bikeshare recommendations from a presentation into a more cohesive report.
10. Joe suggested including plenty of pictures with the text.
  - a. Liz suggested including pictures to clarify locations and not including "fluff" pictures.
  - b. Joe said that Ryan had sent him pictures of people on bikeshare bikes in the snow and at night. He suggested including those.
11. Nick said that the recommendations are:
  - a. Add four new stations: at the recreation center, intersection of 410 and New Hampshire, new Langley Transit Center, and Flower Ave between Piney Branch and WAU (Hudson or Houston Ave)
  - b. Move and expand the gazebo station, and expand the Takoma Junction station to add more docks
  - c. Allow riding on sidewalks
  - d. Develop a city partnership with Montgomery College and/or Washington Adventist University to promote ridership
12. Frank said that he thought for sidewalk restrictions, a relaxation of the restrictions would work well. Joe suggested a 6-month test moratorium on tickets and then consider changing the law.
  - a. Mike said that many people he's talked to have no idea it's illegal to bike on the sidewalk. He said the only problem he's seen with riding on sidewalks is to look out for bus stops when biking on the sidewalk.
  - b. Joe said that objections are usually based on what people think it will be rather than what it may actually be like, so having a test period might help alleviate concerns.
  - c. Liz suggested that the committee encourage the police to collect data during this period.
    - i. There was a discussion of the lack of support from the police department in terms of getting data. Kacy suggested possibly cooperating with the Citizen's Advisory Committee for the police department to gain more cooperation.
    - ii. Joe noted that the police chief does not seem focused on cyclist concerns. The focus seems to be mostly on crime rather than roadways issues.
    - iii. Joe said that he talked with some police officers at the street festival, and they mostly wanted to complain about cyclists not stopping at stop signs, rather than consider safety issues for cyclists. Joe talked with them about the Idaho Rule for cyclists not having to stop at stop signs; this was new information to them, but they did not seem particularly supportive of it.
    - iv. Liz asked how many bike patrols there were with police officers. She suggested trying to work with WABA or another organization to try to foster awareness with police officers of bike safety and the perspective of the cyclists.
    - v. Kacy wondered if there is data on how many tickets are given to cyclists.
  - d. Kacy suggested letting people know about the moratorium rather than just asking police to stop issuing tickets.
  - e. Frank suggested perhaps putting a speed limit restriction on bikes on the sidewalk, if there are concerns for safety in busy areas.
  - f. Joe said that perhaps riding on the sidewalk could be prohibited from Capital City Cheesecake to the DC line due to many pedestrians in that area.
  - g. Frank said that Maple Ave could be an area of concern because of the many kids walking on the sidewalk. Kacy said that some parents want their kids to be able to ride on the sidewalks for safety. Joe said he thinks kids are allowed to ride on the sidewalk but is not sure of the age.

- h. Liz suggested starting the recommendation without placing restrictions on where bikes could be used on sidewalks but identifying a few spots where it might be necessary to prohibit bikes if changes are needed. Kacy said that she agreed with the idea of starting from a position of a stronger recommendation.
  - i. Joe noted that some councilmembers and members of the public are likely to not support allowing bikes on the sidewalks. He suggested letting people who wrote comments about this on questionnaires know if there is a council meeting related to this so they can come out and make public comments.
13. Nick said that Councilmember Grimes wants to move the Old Town Station to the Laurel/Carroll intersection.
- a. Nick noted that this would be more visible.
  - b. Joe said that this was previously discussed, and the committee did not support moving the station at that time, partially because of concern with a possible \$25,000 price tag for moving it. He said that he has talked with bikeshare employees since then and thinks the \$25,000 is very high; the bikeshare employees said that the stations generally don't cost much to set up.
  - c. Kacy said she doesn't see an overwhelming reason to try to move the bikeshare station from the gazebo.
  - d. Joe suggested that taking out two parking places and putting in more bike spaces might send a message that the city supports bikeshare.
  - e. Joe suggested writing the recommendation so that it says the committee doesn't oppose the change as long as it doesn't derail the plans to expand the station.
  - f. Liz asked if the city is going to have to pay for equipment upgrades for bikeshare after the initial years. Liz suggested that this might be something the city needs to keep reserves to pay for this. Joe said that he thinks this is possible but that focusing on this might make people more wary of expanding the system to make it as useful as it could be.
14. Nick will make edits to the report and send it to the committee. Committee members should review by Saturday. The committee will then have an electronic vote on the final version.
- a. Liz suggested that if anyone advocates for making substantive changes to the content rather than just wording edits, they should make it very clear so other members are aware of it. Joe recommended turning on track changes so it's obvious to everyone what edits are being made.

### **Carroll Ave Update**

15. Frank said there is nothing particularly new related to the Carroll Bridge construction but that there are some issues related to old recommendations from residents that have not been addressed. He recently sent an email summary to the committee of the key things that the council did not take action on in the last go-round. There were several things that were not pursued, including:
- a. Carroll Ave crosswalks at Boyd, Lincoln, Old Carroll, and Flower (Daryl said SHA is going to consider these, but it's unclear if SHA is actually doing anything related to these things)
  - b. Carroll Ave traffic signal at Lincoln (maybe a flashing light?)
  - c. Add another stop sign request from the city at Lincoln and Carroll, after the original was denied by SHA
  - d. Maple Ave crossing guards (the council directed the police to review this proposal)
  - e. A Maple Ave and Maplewood stop sign
  - f. Speed bumps requested on Maplewood, Old Carroll, Lincoln – Joe asked that the recommendation be for temporary speed bumps so they can be removed and that they have a gap for bikes

- g. Three parking spaces on Maple in front of the community center be removed so that people can turn right onto Philadelphia (cars get an arrow, but there are parking places blocking the space, so the flow of cars is interrupted and causes jam-ups)
- 16. It originally looked like the council was going to talk about it more this evening but it's not on the agenda. Frank said he doesn't know when the council will focus on it again. The SRC made comments in the past on this.
- 17. Frank will draft an email about what needs to be done, share with Kacy and Wren, and then will send to everyone on the committee. The plan is to eventually send it to the city staff and city council.
- 18. Closure of the bridge has been pushed back to summer of next year.
  - a. Frank said that concurrent with the Carroll Ave closing, Montgomery County is going to close the Park Valley bridge for repairs. It will start next summer and go for a year and a half.
- 19. Frank went to the firehouse for the Carroll Ave sidewalk session. There is planned work to widen the sidewalks by WAU. They are going to move the power line poles to make the sidewalks wider. This will happen after the bridge is finished. The plans include bike lanes feeding into the bridge, which SHA said originally wouldn't be a part of the bridge, so it's unclear what the current plan is. They cannot do this other work while the bridge is closed. They are going to be widening sidewalks all the way down to Garland.
  - a. Kacy asked why SHA is doing this, since it seems like sidewalks on state roads have been determined to be the city's responsibility. Joe said that he thinks SHA is going to renovate this because it doesn't meet the code requirements but won't do maintenance on existing sidewalks.
- 20. Joe noted that in the past, the committee discussed making a Carroll Ave master plan. He suggested possibly revisiting this in the future.

#### **Annual Report Drafting Subcommittee**

- 21. Liz asked for committee members to submit any suggestions for things to focus on or include in the annual report.
  - a. Joe said to definitely include the festival.
- 22. Kacy said she had contacted Ryan to ask for a final Word document version but had not heard back. She'll write to him again. Liz said she may have a copy.

#### **Montgomery County Bicycle Master Plan**

- 23. No one from the committee attended the sessions on this. Wren was going to bring the master plan to this meeting and talk about it but had to miss the meeting for an emergency situation.
- 24. Joe encouraged members to look through the draft master plan, email the planner any thoughts, and mention affiliation with the committee. Joe said he thinks the county needs more encouragement to think about the Takoma Park area.
- 25. Liz encouraged people at the festival to give feedback on the master plan, particularly if people weren't from Takoma Park.
- 26. Nick said there is the ability to look at other people's comments on the website for the feedback map, so people can see what others have said and comment on them or add new ones.

#### **Next meeting, agenda suggestions, and miscellaneous:**

- 27. The city manager will come to the next SRC meeting on November 16.
  - a. This is also the night of the city council swearing-in, so it's hard to say what time she will come to the meeting.
  - b. Joe said the primary topic will be asking her to help get data from the police department on a regular basis and encourage the police department to study data related to issues of concern for pedestrians and cyclists.

- c. Joe encouraged committee members to think of other questions to ask. Members should email the committee questions so that a list can be compiled. Joe does not think the city manager will be in the meeting for long – maybe 10-15 minutes.
- 28. Traffic-calming recommendations – Joe is going to work on this. He noted that there were a lot of anti-speed-bump comments at the festival. Liz noted that she also heard some pro speed-bump comments. Kacy said it seemed like some people wanted traffic to slow down and felt speed bumps were the only way to do that but didn't actually like speed bumps themselves; people didn't seem to have a sense of other options.
  - a. Nick said that the city doesn't seem to have much interest in long-term planning for roadways
  - b. Joe pointed out that the only option the city really provides is speed bumps, as there is a process for people to come to the council to request a speed bump but not general "traffic calming."
  - c. Kacy pointed out that some people seem to have unrealistic expectations of how slowly people ought to be going on streets with speed limits of 25 MPH. Frank referred committee members to see the report he just emailed around with estimated speeds that are mostly around 25 to 30 MPH – most speeds weren't higher than that.
- 29. Joe will put the annual report on the agenda for the next meeting. Liz will work on drafting a report section on the festival.
- 30. Kacy discussed the possibility of a bike lane on Maple Ave. Frank suggested putting something like this into future planning for the city. Joe noted that Portland, Oregon, has a bike master plan and that it might be a good idea to try to create a bike master plan for Takoma Park. This would be a much larger endeavor than just a recommendation, however.
- 31. Liz noted that the former SRC committee chair had stopped by the festival booth and was interested in creating temporary bike parking spaces on Sundays. He said he had talked to Erkin about this but might also email the committee.
- 32. Frank said that the third Monday in December is the 21<sup>st</sup>, and this might be a tough day to meet. The committee agreed to move the meeting to the 14<sup>th</sup> instead. The January meeting is currently scheduled on MLK day; the meeting has been moved to January 11 tentatively with the possibility of having to change it due to not having enough people for a quorum (Mike and Kacy may be unavailable).
- 33. The meeting was adjourned at 9:01pm.