

Takoma Park Complete Safe Streets Committee

December 10, 2020

7:00 pm-9:00 pm, Zoom Virtual Meeting

Called to order: 7:10

Adjourned: 9:08

Members

Constituting a Quorum:

Diana McCown, Jessica Landman, David Cookson, Tracy Duvall, Emanuel Wagner, Members

Absent (excused):

Frank Demarais, Mimi Diaz, Michael Moore

Takoma Park Staff Present:

Jamee Ernst

Guest and Presenters

Daryl Braithwaite

Committee Discussion

- I. Review November Meeting Minutes
 - A. Minutes are located in the CSSC Google Drive folder.
 - B. Diana resent the November minutes, approval will take place virtually within the week after committee reviews.
 - C. Going forward Jamee will add a line to the agenda for Minute approval and Diana will note the electronic approval date
 - D. Diana will confirm accessibility of minutes on the city website
- II. Update on sidewalk data and traffic calming locations
 - A. TRAFFIC CALMING REQUESTS
 1. Kansas Lane – proposal for 1-way street
 - a) Received 2016
 - b) Proposed after new sidewalk request was received
 - c) Next step is Public Hearing
 - d) Cost estimate – signage, under \$3,000
 2. Larch/Hopewell/Kentland – request for traffic calming and sidewalk on Hopewell
 - a) Received September, 2019
 - b) Public meeting was scheduled for March 26, delayed by pandemic
 - c) Next step is public meeting, followed by hiring engineering firm to design
 - d) Cost Estimate \$25 - \$35K for design, Construction \$35K to \$50K
 3. 7600 block of Central Avenue – two speed humps and a bump out at intersection
 - a) Received September 2019

- b) Next step is Public Hearing
 - c) Cost Estimate - speed humps \$8K, bump outs \$10K
 - 4. 7600 Wildwood Drive – Speed hump request
 - a) Approved by Council June, 2020
 - b) Installation when funding is available and weather allows
 - c) Cost Estimate - \$3,000
 - 5. 4th Avenue – 6400 and 6500 blocks, 4 bump outs
 - a) Received November, 2020
 - b) Cost Estimate - \$20K
- B. NEW SIDEWALK REQUESTS
 - 1. Kansas Lane – request received from Neighborhood Association but delayed
 - a) Resolution of process tied to the request for 1-way street designation
 - b) Cost Estimate - \$8K for design, construction \$10K to \$20K
 - 2. 7900 block of Maple Avenue
 - a) Request received and awaiting funding in the queue
 - b) Request is for a second sidewalk, one already exists on one side of street
 - c) Council’s prior intention was to prioritize sidewalks where none exist
 - d) Cost Estimate – design \$8K, Construction \$10K to \$15K
 - 3. Hopewell Avenue
 - a) Neighborhood request for traffic calming and sidewalk
 - b) See notes in traffic calming list above
 - c) Cost Estimate – see above
- C. The above list would be farther along in a normal year, meaning most of the projects would be complete or near completion. Given the current pandemic, spending is on hold.

- 1. Although, for sidewalks, it can talk up to 6 months

III. Discussion with Public Works Director, Daryl Braithwaite

- A. How are traffic calming measures submitted and tracked?
 - 1. Recorded request then moved to public hearing
 - a) If additional design studies are required then the hearing is to proceed with the evaluation process
 - 2. Depending on the complexity of the request, the process can move quickly from request submission to Council approval. Once a approved by Council the request goes into the project queue that is weather and funding dependent
- B. Daryl would like to see specific criteria to be applied to traffic calming requests. The documents she received reference general criteria but specific definitions of the criteria appeared to be missing
 - 1. Criteria as detailed in the 2012 Toole sidewalk study
 - 2. Criteria (the specific details of the following items have not been defined)

- a) Safety (25% weight)
 - b) School Access (15% weight)
 - c) Transit Access (5% weight)
 - d) Equity (15% weight)
 - e) Key Destinations (10% weight)
 - f) Public Input (20% weight)
 - g) Cost (10% weight)
3. More details are needed to to further explain the criteria areas
- a) Who will develop the detailed criteria?
 - (1) The committee is probably not the best qualified subset to be defining the specifics
 - (2) Perhaps the committee can recommend some high level suggestions for defining the criteria
 - (3) Daryl has no concerns with broad weighted criteria categories, other than recognizing traffic incident data is difficult to obtain.
 - (4) The intent is provide a data driven tool that will facilitate the approval and prioritization of traffic calming requests
- C. Stop signs are not considered traffic calming measures
- 1. Road signs are at the review and approval of the City Manager
 - a) This process works well. If changes are to be made, this is a different process than traffic calming
- D. The intent is to provide Public Works and the Police Department a process by which to evaluate traffic calming requests
- E. Traffic incident data is very challenging to obtain as fender benders are not recorded by police
- F. Noted the combined total of pending traffic calming and sidewalk requests are not very substantial in number or price tag.
- 1. There are far fewer streets, in Takoma Park, without sidewalks at this point in time
- G. The current process, which requires neighbor signatures, has some value as it allows neighbors to talk and discuss issues. Which helps to identify potential pitfalls early in the process
- H. Project requests seem to be cyclical based on the neighborhood organizations
- 1. In 2009/2010 Public Works moved forward on sidewalk/traffic calming based on data from Safe Routes to School. Two of the three projects came to fruition but all were met with a great deal of neighbor opposition.
- I. Does public works need additional action from the committee regarding pedestrian/bike route displacement due to construction? E.g. the displacement caused by the Purple Line.
- J. In a normal year, Public Works is well funded. The challenge is limited staffing. If a large influx of requests come in, the ability to respond and process will be limited by labor hours.

- K. There is no GIS capacity in Public Works. If someone within the city government has GIS experience, they will be challenged entering the data into GIS because the current data is missing exact coordinates and will require a ground level
 - L. Most traffic calming doesn't require maintenance.
 - M. Daryl is curious about the difference between community requests and staff requests, as most all requests are community generated. Even requests that come up on the staff side need community support. Ultimately, requests are supported by both and are not separated within Public Works
 - N. Is the committee proposing any changes to the current sidewalk process, which is currently quite involved?
 - 1. There is a need to maintain the ability to demonstrate public outreach has taken place
 - 2. Committee may need to review our sidewalk process recommendations, to ensure public outreach and the important pieces of the current process are retained.
 - a) What percent of the opposition can stop a project?
 - b) What is the nature of the vote?
 - c) Include processes that include technology and do not require in-person participation
 - 3. Are we proposing that if the criteria are met the project is a go, or if criteria are met does the project move to public discussion, which can cancel the project?
- IV. Plan for presentation to Council-scheduling and presentation format
- A. Need to refine our recommendations based on this evening's conversation with Daryl
 - B. No availability on the Council agenda in January but we can present in February
 - C. Jessica will ask Jennifer Toole to provide broad definitions for the criteria areas and David will also take a stab at defining criteria. Jessica and David will connect off-line
 - D. David will compare the current sidewalk request process with our recommendations to ensure we have a recommendation/or recognize a deficiency in our recommendations for determining the final yes/no decision
 - E. Diana will merge all three recommendation documents into one document
 - F. Our January meeting will be focused on finalizing the document with our recommendations for Council, to be presented in February.
 - G. Final recommendations should include criteria suggestions, placement of public input and ability to make a final yes/no decision that is not undermined by one person
- V. Update on speed limit legislation from Emanuel
- A. Montgomery County Delegation - Mayor Stewart spoke in support of Delegate Moon's bill
 - 1. Coming up in January
- VI. Other business
- A. Signing of the ethics documents

1. There is a requirement to report ethical violations but does not specify where to report violations. Essentially, committee members are being required to sign a memo that will hold them liable for not reporting violations but are not told where or how to report them. All committee members agree this is a concern and would like clarification before signing.
2. Emanuel will draft a memo to the Council and Mayor regarding our concerns and submit on behalf of our committee. All are in favor.