

Takoma Park Complete Safe Streets Committee

Agenda - 14 May 2020

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

Called to order: 7:04

Adjourned: 8:47

Members

Constituting a Quorum:

Cindy Herrera, Tracy Duvall, Diana McCown, Emanuel Wagner, Jessica Landman, David Cookson, Michael Moore, Mimi Diaz, Michael Moore

Members Absent (excused):

Frank Demarais

Takoma Park Staff Present:

Jamee Ernst

Guests Present:

Daryl Braithwaite and Lucy Neher

Reintroduction of Committee Members

- Ward 1
 - Jessica Landman
 - David Cookson
- Ward 2
 - Emanuel Wagner
- Ward 3
 - Tracy Duvall
 - Diana McCown
 - Mimi Diaz
- Ward 6
 - Cindy Herrera
 - Michael Moore

Introduction of observers or other meeting attendees

None present

Introduction of guest speakers

- Lucy Neher, Safe Routes to School
- Daryl Braithwaite, Public Works

Presentations from guest speakers on Safe Routes to School Program and Sidewalk Inventory

Safe Routes to School in Takoma Park

The Takoma Safe Routes to School program is to make it safe for students to walk and bike to school. The program serves students and families at Takoma Park, Piney Branch, Rolling Terrace, and East Silver Spring Elementary Schools, and Takoma Park Middle School.

The Sidewalk Inventory

- 2008 contracted with Toole Design Group to perform a sidewalk audit for missing sidewalks and ADA needs. The end result was a map of prioritized sidewalk needs around the city, with particular interest in sidewalks closest to the schools.
- There was City Council concern regarding the evaluation criteria used to perform the sidewalk audit.
- The sidewalk audit is a snapshot of a period time and is helpful when used in conjunction with other data and surveys.

Q & A for guest speakers

- What are the gaps in the missing sidewalks that still need to be addressed?
 - Not accepted by council over disagreement of evaluation criteria of the sidewalk audit. Audit was a picture in time
 - Sidewalks have been residency advocacy based/resident driven not necessarily needs based.
- What happens when there is a desire for a sidewalk on a road shared with other jurisdictions?
 - Lots of collaboration is needed
 - Huge project planned for Eastern Ave. by DC DOT
 - Flower Ave.-has three jurisdictions state road, TkPk on onside and MoCo on the other side. Collaboration among all three has resulted in a positive outcome
 - Ethan Allen Ave. has been less successful due to private property.
- Is there a plan to evaluate non-ADA complaint sidewalks?
 - Yes, since 2011 the city funds ADA work on city streets. 80% are compliant. Moving over to state roads
 - New sidewalks and traffic calming are funded from a different budget line than the retro fits for existing sidewalks.
 - Historically, speed humps were the main means of traffic calming. There is a shift away from speed humps and focus on neighborhood traffic calming. It is difficult to get neighborhood agreement on calming measures.
 - ADA-trip, cross slope, width (pinch point of 3 feet), new sidewalks aim to have 5 ft. width
- There was discussion of removing sidewalks/traffic calming from the budget for FY2021, is that true?
 - \$100,000 was approved but it is on hold

- ADA reduced to 250,000 for city roads and 250,00 for state roads but on hold final vote will be next week.
- Talish raised the following concern at the last council meeting; Lot of sidewalks are being impacted by purple line construction.
- Does SR have any recommendations for this committee regarding sidewalks near the schools?
 - Haven't heard anything at this point but Lucy will check with parents and PTAs and let us know.
- Did the sidewalk audit look at the Piney Branch and Philadelphia?
 - Some of the streets are very difficult to add sidewalks due to constructability and jurisdiction. There are 2 crossing guards at PB and Philly to address safety concerns.
- Does a new study need to be completed?
 - Not a new study but perhaps an update or a complication of all the data gathered since 2008.
- Does SR include high school?
 - No, SR is a K-8 grant funded program. MoCo has a county SR program that includes HS because the county pays for it.

Discussion of next steps to address incomplete sidewalks

- Daryl Braithwaite read our committee's recommendations and is supportive but concerned about managing and an increase of requests when the petition process is relaxed. e.g. requests that don't necessarily require traffic calming, i.e. parking in front of a house. The petition process and the community meeting is helpful in getting neighbors to talk to each other.
- Clarification-the committee is not recommending getting rid of the community meeting. But creating specific criteria to apply to traffic calming requests, which replace the need for a petition.
- Changing of speed limits-it is not possible to change the speed limits until the state changes the law.

Discussion of traffic calming and sidewalk procedures next steps

- Are there any plans to maximize on our current status quo and increase of foot traffic in the time of COVID, similar to European cities?
 - No. There are challenges to innovation and outreach at this moment in time
 - Mentioned Closure of Laurel was met with a negative response. Noted the closure of Laurel was brought up on the heels of allocating parking spots for cafes, without community discussion.
- It is a great time to work on planning.

Other business

- Sub-committee-Cindy, Tracy and Emanuel to work on criteria with Toole and Daryl Braithwaite, as subject matter experts.

- We probably need agreement of a rule that criteria will be applied when traffic calming is requested.
- We agree there should be criteria, like a point system but we are not qualified to establish the criteria for all requests. A subject matter expert from or working with Public Works should identify and establish the criteria.

Next Steps

- Jamee will request the GIS files from the Toole Study, overlay it with current sidewalks
- Jamee will begin gathering sidewalk requests and common criteria for determining traffic calming and sidewalks
- Jessica and Jamee will meet to discuss the possibilities of what the next steps for determining criteria
- Review and approve February and May minutes during our June meeting
- Decide on summer committee meeting schedule
- Jamee will confirm the process for committee members whose term is up June 30th
- Mike would like to request police participation at our next meeting to discuss speeding/racing on New Hampshire. Mike to write a letter to the Police Chief on behalf of the committee.