

Takoma Park Safe Roadways Committee

Monthly Meeting, September 9, 2014

APPROVED MINUTES

1. The meeting convened at 7:30pm with the following members in attendance: Joe Edgell, Liz Cattaneo, Michael Vincent McCabe, Jr., Ryan Morden, Kathryn Nolfi and Kacy Kostiuk.

2. **Housekeeping:** Committee members moved to approve the meeting agenda for this meeting. All members in attendance voted to approve the agenda.

3. **New Member Welcome.** New committee members introduced themselves to each other and the committee and shared what their priorities are:

Kacy Ward 3: Traffic calming, commuter biking, pedestrian safety for children, improved communications from the city around these issues.

Joe Ward 4: Had been chair of the Environmental Committee in the past, but committee members were often driven by passion. He wants to lead this committee as one that exercises decisions based on data, not emotion.

Liz Ward 4: Cares about public transportation, safe pedestrian issues, sidewalks, better biking, etc

Ryan Ward 5 - TPSRC issues connect to social justice matters -everyone deserves access to safe transportation - via cars, bikes, public transportation, foot.

Kathryn Ward 6 - lives in Takoma Overlook, on NH Ave, has a young child and wants to ensure safe access for her and her family on roads. Is carless - husband has biked to work.

Mike Ward 6 - 2 children, lived here with his wife for a year. Erskine and 13th. First interaction with the city was when sidewalk was installed in front of house, without notice. Daryl came in to help and communicated policies/blueprints. Daughters like to bike, and want to ensure safety for them in the city biking

Sheryl, and Curt, and Sylvia are not present to introduce themselves.

Kathryn -asks - do we talk about buses?

Joe - yes, we talk about it all. **If there's anything people want to talk about, please ask him to get it on the agenda for the next month or the month thereafter.**

4. **Public Comments:** There was one member of the public present, Wren, who came to learn more about the committee's work, but did not have official public comments to register. Wren explains she is an avid biker and walker, lives near Kacy on Lincoln. So this committee is of interest to her. Joe explains that she could actually become part of the committee as we still have space left -- his ask is that potential members commit to showing up and are data driven.

5. Annual Report Discussion.

Joe explains process that we have a duty to report back on our progress to the Council and City. Joe got clarity that the times we can share the report to the City Council are either November 17, or December 1. How do calendars look? What's the preference?

Liz says that Dec 1 unlikely for her. Joe thinks that he should take a step back from doing presentations to the committee - perhaps subcommittee can make the presentation? Ryan, a member of the subcommittee, agrees with that approach

We are meeting as a full committee on 11.13 on Thursday, not on Tuesday due to the city offices being closed in commemoration of Veterans Day. We can either approve the presentation/report during that meeting or we can approve over email. City needs the report a week before the meeting-- we need to send it to the clerk in advance. Mike says he cannot make it to the rescheduled November meeting.

Ryan distributes an outline prepared by the annual report subcommittee (consisting of himself, Liz & Sylvia) and walks through the document with the rest of the committee

The subcommittee recommends the annual report includes:

- An introduction
- Recommendations for 2015 (which are just placeholders for right now)
- A table of contents,
- A summary of the position papers,
- Acknowledgements,
- Appendices, etc

Liz - wanted the report to include recapping the feedback from the council members so that we are able to capture trends but so council sees we cared about their input

We wanted to keep this report short, like 6-8 pages, since we've heard feedback that the council are busy and don't have endless time to read and prepare. Bruce's recommendation is that city will skim - so we should be writing in bullet points for skimming

Mike - if they think we're paying attention, taking the council's feedback seriously, they will see that we are paying attention and may be more bought in.

Ryan agrees - nice to review the meeting notes and see where there's alignment and agreement among the council

Joe - thinks recommendations should be in a separate section.
Ryan and Liz agree

Joe thinks that a lot of committees just meet, we are doing a great job by really advising the city with policy recommendations, and our report will reflect that role via the sections which look back on our assessments and data collection paired with the advice for 2015.

Joe asks what does the annual report subcommittee need from the full committee?

Ryan: Feedback on general structure, and anything else we need to prep for the October meeting?

Next Steps: Ryan will send our report outline draft out to the committee electronically.

All TPSRC committee members should share feedback on the on the document via Google Docs within 2 weeks of our meeting. That feedback can include grammatical edits, structural, and substantive edits. If you think we should include pictures -suggest that.

6. Fall Bike Ride with Council Route Suggestions

Erkin recommended that the contra flow lane at Grant Ave near the co-op was installed because the committee asked for it.

There's a directional sign to allow for bike riding in the opposite direction out on Maple - again because of committee raising with Erkin or the city.

The state put out a supplementary sharrows policy memo that undermined their ability to implement sharrows.

There is clarity to potentially seek around sharrows via SHA and the city.

We've talked about implementing something, when the planner or SHA says no/or determines it's not possible. We could push for alternative/better standards to convince the city that there's a better way to approach it.

Erkin Ozberg, City Planner asked if TPSRC would consider organizing a community ride, maybe with the Council to share and discuss some of the bike and/or other TPSRC concerns.

Erkin may want to demonstrate what's working well with the committee. Alternatively we could show council what's wrong with the bike paths -by locating the paths that aren't ideal to ride on.

So let's email each other about what areas in our ward that are unsafe, confusing, or have impediments to ride - or lack of signage altogether so Joe can communicate to Erkin what routes we'd want the council riding on for this event.

This topic opens up other concerns for committee members about bikes.

Mike and Kathryn discuss that better signage for pedestrians and bikes may be needed. – and explaining it's a huge problem at Erskine - Mike/Kathryn discuss some of the challenges for drivers, pedestrians, bikers at that intersection, including poor visibility.

Mike - there has to be a better way to make it safer for cars, bikes, peds on NH there

Joe - once the bridge work is done - could be made into a dedicated ped and bike lane - individually people in ward 6 could make that a priority, but if that's a committee priority we need to make a recommendation to the council about how to get this implemented via lobbying and pushing SHA.

Kathryn recommends that perhaps signs can be installed.

Joe explains he's looked at studies that show signs don't work but fixes that change behavior do.

Liz - what if we were to take Erkin's community ride and take it to the next level – and we were to document all the issues in our ward from a safe roadways perspective -- and then push to tour our ward with our respective council members so they can experience the issues and get a real feel for the problems?

Kacey - agrees walkabout could be a good idea, and something to do in the future

7. Finalization of FY 2015 Priorities

Joe recaps where the committee landed at last month's meeting process wise. Joe is recommending we distill our priorities to 4 major issues that the full committee will be working on next year to have focus so we can have impact. This shouldn't preclude individuals from having pet issues they do the leg work for or for case-by-case issues that come up that could be urgent/timely or helpful for us to address.

The current roster of issues are

- 1) traffic calming
- 2) Pedestrian improvements (larger than sidewalks)
- 3) bikeshare
- 4) Sidewalks
- 5) Intersection issues

Is there anything else priorities want to add to the list? The committee members present agree that nothing else needs to be added to the priority list.

Mike - asks clarifying question. Is there any viability of Bikeshare expanding in Ward 6 since there isn't one now.

Joe -- if this is to be a priority of the committee - we can make that part of the recommendations.

Liz reminds committee that we have already made recommendations to the city on BikeShare to continue building it out/expanding the program in the city.

What else could we cut from this list?

Liz - I could be convinced otherwise, despite my enjoyment and support of Bikeshare, right not sure that it is a full committee priority. We may not have enough influence to expand the program or ensure access to those who don't have financial means.

installing speed bumps

Kathryn asks what the issues are with traffic calming – is it about speed bumps?

Joe --it would be to advise how the city addresses these issues more holistically versus just installing speed bumps, which are the cheapest solution that are not ideal. Speed bumps do not help slow down traffic and cause problems for cyclists-- lots of other ways to do it.

Other methods we could recommend include dips, raised intersections raised crosswalks, rumble strips, roundabouts, and stop signs. Also your Ward 6 council member advised it we take this issue up.

Kathryn - what's the distinction between pedestrian issues and intersections?

Joe explains it's about sight lines for all users at an intersection, while pedestrian issues are more global.

Ryan offers that he could be the lead on the bikeshare to bottom line the process.

Kacy - pedestrian, crosswalk issues, and traffic calming are current priorities for me. I'm a little ambivalent about BikeShare because its such a specific program and there are broader issues that could be addressed.

Kacy - what about pedestrian issues being merged with sidewalk issues?

Joe shares backstory/context with new committee members that city has a very backwards and convoluted sidewalk process. We have an opportunity to give the city and council some cover by recommendation a better project

The updated nominees for priority issues are summarized by Joe for input by the committee.

- 1) Ped improvements including sidewalk policy
- 2) Intersection improvements (all users)
- 3) Bikeshare improvements
- 4) Traffic calming

Ryan approves, Kate seconds. Unanimous decision reached on priorities as a committee.

Mike suggests that it would be good if there was more done about bike education issues especially for school aged children == people don't know the rules of the road.

Joe comments that WABA offers these programs = perhaps we could partner with them. Perhaps Mike can investigate with WABA? This could be something that TPSRC sponsors.

Kathryn says she has experience with WABA education programs and they are excellent
Mike is happy to take this on - and he will talk to the schools about whether there are any existing education programs.

Joe has contact information for the principle at the middle school to pass on to Mike.

Liz suggests reaching out to the bike shops and Erkin too as they have all been good stewards for biking in the city and have done some education at the community center.

Joe suggests that for the annual report that we all take the initiative on writing up short bullets that are punchy and direct regarding our 4 agreed upon priorities. Suggests that we limit our synopsis to one bullet each and when we share our edits to the annual report that the following committee members are responsible for drafting this concise statement:

Ryan on bikeshare
Joe on traffic calming
Kacy on intersections
Liz on sidewalk/pedestrian issues.

8. Next month's meeting date & agenda suggestions

Any agenda items for next meeting

Kathryn: What about Zip car/car share. Takoma Overlook residents were interested in getting a Zipcar station --but it didn't move forward.

Agreement that it should be a topic for next month's agenda. Joe gets Kathryn to take lead on investigating options to present back to the subcommittee.

We reconfirm that the 2nd Tuesday of each month is our meeting schedule, and this works for people.

Joe reminds new members to review the public disclosure laws on the city's website.

The meeting adjourned.