

**City of Takoma Park Safe Roadways Committee
Monthly Meeting, November 16, 2015**

MINUTES

Housekeeping:

1. The meeting started late due to several committee members making public comments at the concurrent city council meeting.
2. The meeting convened at 7:49pm with the following in attendance: Joe Edgell, Kacy Kostiuk, Mike Moore, Liz Cattaneo, Wren Rogers, and Frank Demarais.
3. Liz moved to approve the meeting agenda. Mike seconded the motion. Committee members unanimously voted to approve the agenda.
4. Frank moved to approve the October meeting minutes. Liz second the motion. All except Mike voted in favor of approving the minutes. Mike abstained because he had not read them.

Public Comment:

5. Brian Rostron attended the meeting as a member of the public. He has applied to be a member of the committee and is awaiting city council approval. He introduced himself to the committee.
 - a. Brian lives in the New Hampshire Gardens neighborhood in Ward 6. He briefly discussed the Taco Bell development and an interest in safe roadways in general, traffic calming, roadways infrastructure, and the Carroll Ave bridge construction.

Bikeshare Report:

6. Joe said that the committee's bikeshare report was sent to the City Council in advance of the meeting today.
7. Liz noted that Erkin Ozberk had sent an email following up after seeing the report and that she was confused by his comment regarding bikeshare trips. In the email, Erkin pointed out that trips are counted as departures and arrivals, so the total number of actual trips might be lower than the committee had estimated in the report. Joe said that people aren't always starting and ending in Takoma Park. Joe said he doesn't think there was a large amount of overcounting. Erkin thinks it's better to count either departures or arrivals, but this can also be misleading. Joe will follow up with Erkin for further clarification and also suggested asking Capital Bikeshare to count Takoma Park separately from Montgomery County.
8. Wren said that this information might already be tracked based on what she had seen.
9. Joe said that maybe the committee should review this before doing the presentation to the City Council and if necessary, amend the report to reflect any needed changes. The presentation to the council will probably be in January.

Street Festival Report & Annual Report:

10. Liz drafted a report on the committee's activities at the Street Festival and sent a rough draft via email for committee members to review. All members except Kacy had taken a look at it.
11. Liz said that she incorporated every comment from the surveys, no matter how seemingly relevant or not. She noted that this could be trimmed down, but she wanted to show the substance and frequency of the comments. She also organized the feedback into themes based on the categories of priorities that were listed on the survey. For tracking purposes, she identified all the comments based on the source for each person, so it's possible that someone's comment could appear multiple times in the report but in different categories based on multiple themes.
12. She wanted to know if the organization of the report seemed logical. Committee members agreed that it was. She asked committee members if they thought the report should be used to suggest

recommendations or if it should just be an opportunity to present the raw information, with comments from the public to be used as needed in future reports.

- a. Frank said that the raw information is interesting in and of itself. He said there were a lot of people who commented and it's useful to share this information with the council and staff to show what people are truly interested in. This information could be useful to council members and staff. He thinks there is value in sharing the raw information itself, even if the committee intends to use certain comments to make specific recommendations in the future.
 - b. Joe said that he has some concern about packaging this so that the council will read it, as some members may not get past the first page. He thinks that a quick summary paragraph with "themes" that the committee wants to capture may help in case council members don't take the time to read every comment. Liz said that she started trying to do this at the top of each section.
 - c. Wren said that the chart was very clear and made it easy to see that bike lanes were important to a large number of people. The individual feedback is interesting to read.
 - d. Mike said that in some cases, specific comments could be added in an appendix.
 - e. Kacy said that she thought the report worked as a stand-alone document and also as supporting documentation for future recommendations. She felt that it was well organized and liked the chart.
 - f. Mike noted that one of the best things about bikeshare is that more people are riding bikes and that when those people are in their cars, they may be more careful of the bikers.
13. Joe asked if committee members felt the Street Festival report should be a stand-alone document or the main part of the annual report.
- a. Frank suggested that the committee's activities related to each section could be flushed out in the report to include additional information as well as the Street Festival responses.
 - b. Liz asked what other things people would like to see included in the annual report.
 - i. Joe recommended having a section called "Public Outreach" that includes the bike ride Wren and Joe did with Erkin and the Montgomery County Bike Master Plan folks, the Street Festival, etc. It could also include the meetings when Daryl and Erkin spoke to the committee.
 - ii. Joe noted that data from the police department in Takoma Park isn't included in official county reports related to data on collisions with cars and cyclists.
 - iii. Liz suggested a "Success Section" that lists things that have happened as a result of some of the efforts of the committee. Joe suggested that the committee can point out that the committee brought several things to the council's attention and encouraged conversations about important topics, even when major changes on those topics have not yet been made.
 - Examples of "successes" might include:
 - a. Counterflow bike lanes
 - b. Snow clearing
 - c. Carroll Ave bridge (8-foot wide pedestrian bridge)
 - d. Worked with fellow Takoma Park citizen committee – Streetscapes Committee – to adjust their recommendations in a way that was bike- and pedestrian-friendly (particularly focusing on ADA access issues for sidewalks)
 - e. Requested more bike racks, including those that have been installed at the community center
14. The annual report committee includes Liz and Kacy. Mike offered to help with editing. Joe offered to help with layout.
15. Timeline and festival outreach – Liz asked if it makes sense to contact the people who filled out the survey and provide them with links and more information about the committee, or if it would

be better to wait until the annual report is finished and link to it so that people can see their feedback in action. Kacy said she likes the idea of waiting to link to the report. Wren noted that it would be helpful to contact people if know the council is going to have a discussion about something like bike lanes. Joe suggested using MailChimp to send emails.

Carroll Ave Update:

16. There were no updates related to the Carroll Ave bridge construction. Frank said the timeline is still TBD. Construction underlay work is happening at the moment, and it appears they are building the pedestrian bridge below the main bridge and perhaps will lift it into place when it's ready.
17. Joe said that he spoke with Rizzy (the new Ward 3 councilmember) at the Street Festival and that he seems interested in discussing roadways issues. Joe mentioned that he is going to try to encourage him to reconsider the stop-sign at Lincoln Ave intersection. Wren mentioned that she cannot get any progress on adding a streetlight there. Liz suggested contacting Tom Hucker as a good line to contacting Pepco.
18. Kacy asked about the pedestrian bridge crosswalk area – has there been any progress on this? It doesn't seem like it. Frank is going to take a look at it again. He said that SHA seemed to have agreed to it, but it's not entirely clear what their immediate plans are.

Traffic Calming Outline:

19. Joe shared a recommendation paper the committee had created but never distributed in April 2014 related to traffic studies and traffic calming. He said that this could be used as an outline to build on for the traffic calming recommendation paper.
20. Frank asked if there is a policy related to how the city currently evaluates the need for traffic calming. Joe said that only tool the city currently has is a process for requesting speed bumps. People petition for a speed bump, so the city then goes ahead and does it. But there is no option for other possibilities. Joe suggested possibly writing up a policy document with a recommendation for traffic-calming policy. He suggested including recommended speedhump design features.
21. Liz asked if there are examples from neighboring communities or organizations. Joes said SHTO has some standards but they need to be paid for; other groups have others. Joe said he would like to focus on traffic calming consistent with the speed limit of the street. In Takoma Park in many cases, the speedhumps are for 5 MPH traffic calming but speed limits are 25-30 MPH. People don't seem to be considering what the best speed limit is for various streets but that might be a better starting point than adding speedhumps to reduce speeds to very low levels at one point, rather than reducing overall speed limits on a street in general. Joe noted that street design plays a major role; parked cars, narrower streets, etc., can help slow people down from the beginning. Joe noted that on some streets, people want a wide street but slower cars, which isn't consistent.
22. There was a brief discussion of possible hierarchy for traffic calming changes:
 - a. First should evaluate street speed
 - b. Design traffic calming for the speed desired
 - c. Traffic-calming measures, when added, should follow their own hierarchy:
 - i. Speedhumps could be consider but not necessarily as the first-line of thinking (Mike noted that they are cheaper; Joe pointed out that speed bumps slow down emergency vehicles, so he is going to try to work with the Takoma Park Fire Department; Liz noted that she knows someone interested in these issues and will contact him about this)
23. Joe asked committee members to take pictures of traffic calming examples that are well done and upload it to the Safe Roadways shared album.

24. Frank asked about the timeline for the report. Joe said he would aim to have a draft by the December meeting. He recently asked Jessie to have a meeting with the council in late January to discuss the annual report; he'd like to have the traffic calming recommendations finished by then.
25. Mike said that when he was on the city council in the early 1990s, it seemed like the council would often agree to speedhumps if they were requested and got 60 percent of the neighborhood in support of them, rather than doing a complete review to figure out if they were necessary or not. Kacy added that it seems like there isn't much data gathering and consideration of whether people actually are speeding prior to adding speed humps. Joe pointed out that a policy outlining the need to collect data and identifying when traffic calming measures should be undertaken could give cover to the staff and council to point to say no to requests when they seem unnecessary.
26. Frank said that the machines for counting recently collected really complex and interesting information related to the Carroll Ave side streets in preparation for the bridge work. If these machines could be used, they could collect information really fast. He suggested using these machines every few years to review all streets and look at data long-term. The city could data map all streets and systematically gather data throughout the city, starting with high-priority streets and moving down from there. Liz wondered if the data could be collected without a lot of additional staff to review it, or if extra staff time would be required.
27. Wren said that there's the perception of speed vs. whether people are actually speeding. There are a lot of other factors besides just speed – visibility, width of street, etc. Just looking at how cars move through and recording speed limit may not be enough to make a determination. Wren noted that data should not just include speeds but also who uses the street (lots of kids, bus users, etc., vs. other locations).

Next meeting, agenda suggestions, and miscellaneous:

28. Since the city manager was not able to attend and speak at this meeting due to a long city council meeting at the same time, Joe will ask if she can attend and speak at the December meeting instead. He asked committee members to identify any questions they'd particularly like to ask her and email those before the meeting so that a list could be compiled.
29. The meeting was adjourned at 9:04pm.