

City of Takoma Park Safe Roadways Committee
Monthly Meeting, September 19, 2016

MINUTES

1. The meeting convened informally at 7:30pm with the following members in attendance: Joe Edgell, Kacy Kostiuk, Mark Sherman, and Frank Demarais. Mike Moore and Liz Cattaneo arrived at 7:40pm to create a quorum.
2. Troy Jacobs, who lives in Ward 5, spoke as a member of the public. He's a pediatrician and when he lived in California became interested in the built environment as it relates to childhood obesity. His area of expertise is immigrant health. He noted that there are some funding opportunities that could be taken advantage of. One is from the Robert Johnson Foundation, which had funding about 6 months ago, as well as others. He wanted to come to the Safe Roadways Committee meeting to see what the committee does as it relates to applications for funding projects.
 - a. Joe noted that sometimes city staff availability and time affects whether an application for funding is completed. He said that the committee may be able to assist in some cases but could not be the primary group working on an application, as this would be the city's responsibility.
 - b. Mark asked what Troy thought the funding might be useful for. Troy noted that the foundations want there to be community buy-in for projects, rather than providing a wholesale project themselves.
 - c. Joe pointed out the committee's list of priorities for 2016, including traffic calming, outreach, improving data collection, and bike lane improvements.
 - d. Kacy noted that many times the focus on transportation infrastructure is on the historic district rather than on issues that may be focused on immigrants in the city. Troy said that some of the funding focuses on this issue.
 - e. Joe noted that there are a few vacancies in the committee and that Troy should consider applying to be a part of it.
 - f. Troy asked if the committee has suggested a larger plan for the city or has addressed smaller individual topics. Joe noted that the emphasis has been on comprehensive recommendations but that the committee has focused on obtainable initiatives that are specific enough to be effective and achievable.
3. The meeting was officially convened at 7:43pm when Mike and Liz arrived and a quorum was reached.
4. Housekeeping:
 - a. Joe asked if committee members had a chance to review the agenda. Mark asked to add two additional items at the end (temporary crosswalk on Piney Branch and utility cables). Frank moved to approve the agenda; Mike seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
 - b. Mark moved to approve the July meeting minutes; Frank seconded the motion. All voted in favor of approving the meeting minutes.

- c. Frank will recirculate the meeting minutes from August because some members had not reviewed them yet.
5. Street Festival Outreach:
- a. The Street Festival is Sunday, Oct 2. Kacy said that she has arranged with the city for the committee to have a booth. It would be shared with the Arts and Humanities Commission.
 - b. Kacy said that the Outreach committee wanted to be sure that there is a clear goal for participation in the festival and that there are people willing to work at the booth. She asked whether people feel it's worthwhile to participate in the festival and if so, what the purpose of the participation would be.
 - i. There was a brief discussion of members' interest in participating in the festival. Liz said that she had a lackluster interest this year because she was disappointed after working on the festival booth last year and finding that the city council had a lack of interest in the committee doing surveys and putting those results to use. She said that she doesn't want to just have an informational booth if it does not have a clear purpose or is attempting to achieve something.
 - ii. Frank asked what the committee wants people to do or what type of outcome the committee might want from the festival booth
 - iii. Mark said that he is enthusiastic about the festival booth and would be happy to lead the effort at organizing a booth. His objective would be to educate the public about the committee and get a sense of what problems people see in the city.
 - iv. Joe said that the committee's goals last year were to gather information from citizens and inform the citizens about the committee. Liz added that the committee also gathered contact information for some people but has not used this information.
 - v. Mark suggested having a form for people to fill out with the name and contact information, as well as problems they see related to transportation. Joe said that the committee should be careful not to give the impression that we can solve all problems for people. Mark said that he ran into a meeting at the Coop related to the width of the sidewalk on Ethan Allen. There had been no communication to the committee about this meeting and wants to change this so that the committee is informed more often and thought of when there are situations like this.
 - c. Kacy said that she's willing to work on the planning for the festival booth but does not feel comfortable being the driving force. Liz is backing out of the subcommittee for outreach. Mark will take over as the lead for the festival booth planning with Kacy providing assistance.
 - d. Kacy, Frank, and Mike can take 2-hour shifts at the festival, and Mark will take the lead and can work for various shifts as needed. Kacy noted that it may not be necessary to be staffed the whole time. Signupgenius.com can be used for signing up. The festival is 10am to 5pm. Mark will recruit additional bodies from the community to help with the booth if needed.

- e. Kacy said that Wren has a lot materials from last year; she will get these from Wren for the festival. Joe suggested having some copies of the report from data from last year.
6. Traffic calming recommendations:
- a. Joe asked if there were comments related to the sections that people had written drafts of and circulated. There were no comments at the time of the meeting.
 - b. Joe said that he will try to have a final draft of the report by the next meeting and get it to the city council by the end of the year.
 - c. Joe asked committee members to take a look at the drafts of sections that were sent by John, Nick, and Kacy and to send comments.
7. Data from the city and city police department:
- a. Joe said that it's been a challenge getting data from the police department. The committee has asked the city manager to help with this. There was a recent email exchange in which the police chief said the department doesn't collect much data of interest, but Joe asked for the committee to get access to it anyway. The police chief said that would be okay. Joe thinks it will be necessary to continue to request this and push to get access to it.
 - b. Joe asked committee members to consider as a priority for 2017 better data collection by the city.
 - c. Liz asked if there is a police-related committee. Mike noted that there is a police chief's committee. Liz suggested that a committee like this might be interested in data as well. Joe noted that there is a crime analyst for the police department.
 - d. Joe said that the police chief does not seem to have been responsive in the past to bicycle issues.
 - e. Joe said that it would be useful to make recommendations about new types of data that could be collected.
 - f. Joe said that he will contact Erkin to follow up regarding interest in helping the city with bike counts.
 - g. Mike asked about planning a bike ride with the city council. There was a discussion about the timing for this. Joe said that he would like to take council members biking on New Hampshire Ave to observe the safety issues there. Mike will take the lead on planning this ride. He will contact Erkin as a starting point.
 - h. Troy asked whether the bike counts include counts of how many are helmeted or not. He also asked about enforcement of rules by bicyclists (i.e. speeding by bikes). He asked about the idea of making media events or conversation pieces that could help inform people in the community and start conversations.
8. Takoma Junction update:
- a. Mark passed around a proposal for how trucks may access the Coop in the new development plan. Mark asked whether this issue was within the purview of the committee. Joe said that issues at the Junction related to roadways seem to be within the jurisdiction of the committee. He noted that the committee would have to decide as a committee whether we wanted to make a recommendation related to it.
 - b. Mark saw trucks in the parking lot recently and met someone from the development who was doing drilling related to the development. He talked with him about the

proposals and learned that the one he circulated was only one for several proposals being considered.

- c. Mark is concerned that this change could overload an intersection that is already at capacity. Joe said that he does not think this would increase the overall traffic flow at the intersection because it involves only Coop trucks that already exist. Mark said that there may be new trucks related to anything in the new development and there would be a different traffic pattern.
 - d. Joe noted that it seems like the Coop could use smaller trucks and thus could use the side loading dock rather than a new one. Mark noted that in addition to the Coop and the developer, it seems like the community could be a third voice on the matter of this development. He is concerned that the Coop does not necessarily represent the people and is going to make things more difficult for the community. He sees a void for the community that may need to be filled.
 - e. Frank said that it would be useful to know what is going to happen next in terms of agreements with the city and next steps. Frank said that he's interested in working to get the city council share the information related to this with the committee.
 - f. Joe noted that the committee had asked the council to do traffic studies at this intersection, and the city has shown only mild interest in it. Joe is concerned that the committee should focus on traffic-related issues and try not to get embroiled in the politics related to the development issue, as there are very strong feelings on all sides.
9. Carroll Ave Closure Update:
- a. There was an email complaint about track trailers using Flower and Sligo Creek, but this seems to be a fairly isolated incident.
 - b. Frank has not heard back regarding the traffic light on Maple and Sligo Creek. Mike said that the light is confusing because drivers see the light facing the traffic on the other street and could get confused about whether or not they have a green light. Frank asked Daryl to let him know when she hears back about this from SHA.
 - c. The three-way stop at Sligo Creek and Old Carroll Ave is concerning because it's hard for cars to see the stop sign when coming around the corner. Frank has seen a warning sign by the stop sign at Sligo Creek and Old Carroll Ave. Both signs are small, and there's foliage. Frank is going to follow up with SHA on this.
 - d. Troy said that the signs at the four-way stop at Flower and Maplewood are hard to see because of the RideOn sign on Flower Ave heading east. Frank said that he noticed this issue, too, and will mention this to SHA.
 - e. Frank had a meeting with his neighborhood and Mayor Stewart, Daryl, and Ethan – there are complaints about the lights and pedestrians because the lights are slow for pedestrians. They said it would take a long time to retime the lights. This was the biggest issue raised.
 - f. Kacy asked about the light at Philadelphia and Carroll, since it has been retimed during the construction and seems to be causing frustrating backups for cars coming from Carroll Ave by the bridge and having to wait a long time at the Junction and again in front of the firehouse. Joe and Frank suggested taking photos to show the problems. Mark offered to take a look at this and see if he can get video or pictures.

- g. Frank said that someone raised an issue about buses not pulling into the bump-outs. RideOn has decided never to pull into the bump-outs anymore because it's a safety issue for pedestrians crossing in front of the bus.
 - h. Frank has connected with the newsletter person and will create a calendar for people to write 300-400 word articles for the newsletter. He will send a list for people to sign up.
- 10. Bikeways Program Annual Report:
 - a. Joe asked committee members to read and give feedback to Erkin.
- 11. Flower & Sligo Creek Intersection:
 - a. Joe said that a WSSC project there took out pavement there. Now the right turn from Flower to Sligo Creek is too sharp. The city will look at realigning the intersection.
- 12. Temporary Crosswalk on Piney Branch:
 - a. Mark said that SHA has added "crosswalk ahead" signs in other locations but have not done in on Piney Branch where traffic coming from Flower cannot see the crosswalk. He has not gotten much response about this after initially meeting with them.
 - b. He postponed a discussion about utility cables to the next meeting.
- 13. The meeting was adjourned at 9pm.