

April 18, 2017 Takoma Park Safe Roadways Committee Meeting
Members: Kacy Kostiuk, Mark Sherman, John Gorman, Frank Demarais
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., Hydrangea Room

1. Housekeeping (agenda and meeting-minutes approval)
 - a. Agenda Approved; March minutes approved unanimously.
2. Public comments

Diane Curran and Fred Feinstein asked to speak about the Junction development.

Ms. Curran expressed her concerns about pedestrian and vehicle safety issues related to the approved development plans, especially the plan for a truck 'lay-by' in the City's approved plans. She explained that she understands some jurisdictions prohibit lay-bys when pedestrians are affected. She wanted to know how to work with the SRC to ask the City re-review the traffic issues and have a review of lay-by independent of the developer, noting that a full traffic study not needed to address the lay-by. Mr. Feinstein shared Ms. Curran's concern, and noted that during the public discussion of traffic related to the development, the Fire Chief noted that the lay-by could create specific challenges for fire response. He also noted that the lay-by has only been introduced in the past 6 months. The traffic at that intersection was described as already at saturation during rush hour, and seemed illogical to dismiss the development as immaterial to the traffic problem. Public testimony on the development consistently attempted to get attention on pedestrian prioritization, and on sidewalk improvements on Sycamore.

Kacy Kostiuk thanked Ms. Curran and Mr. Feinstein and that the agenda would include a Junction discussion later.

3. New Hampshire Ave Bikeway – Jamee Ernst

Ms. Ernst reviewed the development of plans for New Hampshire Ave bikeway funded by a May 2016 grant obtained by the Council of Governments. The plan looks at options for redevelopment of underutilized service lanes along with park land between Holton Lane and East West Highway. The grant funds a design up to the 30% level, which analyzes options, but does not involve detailed specifications. The plan had been reviewed in a public meeting March 16th, and would be further reviewed in a stakeholder meeting May 3rd with Bra

The committee asked question about the limitations of the plan, with no direct connection to University Blvd or any of New Hampshire Ave south of East West Hwy. The design was explained to address the segment covered by the grant, focused on the underutilized service roads and if developed would be a segment for future connections. The 2008 concept plan for a continuous connection from Langley Park to the District line remains as the long term vision for bicycle options on New Hampshire Ave. Detailed information on the plan and other elements of the New Hampshire Ave planning at <http://www.thenewave.com/> and the City website <https://takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory/new-ave-bikeway/>.

The Committee was offered an opportunity to submit comments, and Kacy requested any comments be sent to her for organizing.

4. New City Planner – Daniel Sonienklar

Mr. Sonienklar introduced himself to the Committee as the new City Planner, with a background of a planning degree from Virginia Tech, having served as Environmental Planner for Prince George’s County, and had recently worked in Bogota Columbia on road safety under Bloomberg Foundation grant on best practice implementation. He explained the Planning Department is aware of Junction issues. There were no specific traffic studies at this point at the Junction development, but developers looking at traffic study options and the City would review any study. At the Junction, the City is the land owner, and the developer is a contractor for the City. SHA would be involved in evaluating any traffic study.

5. Traffic calming recommendation, next steps

Kacy reported that the Council was scheduled to discuss the Traffic Calming recommendation of the Committee on April 26.

6. Newsletter – Frank

Frank reported that he had circulated a draft of an article for the Takoma Park newsletter on bikeway design elements prepared for Takoma Park roads by the County Planning bicycle master plan process asking for comments.

7. Bikes on sidewalks

Kacy reviewed the history of the discussion of bicycles on sidewalks. The Council had indicated a consensus on changing the law to allow bicycles on sidewalks on an unrestricted basis, but that support seems to have waned, with latest proposals to limit it to children. The discussion seems to need more facts to support the allowance, with research so far not finding factual support.

8. Proposed FY2018 city budget – Kacy

Kacy reported that the City has dedicated funding for sidewalk improvements on State Highway roads for the first time in a long time, with \$200,000 for FY2018. The TP PW department has asked for input on sections needing most repair. The Committee has an opportunity to develop a process for providing input and recommendations, with the request to focus on contiguous sections. Any repairs will require coordination with SHA. John Gorman suggested an effort to conduct a bicycle tour by Committee members to view sections and develop a list.

Mark opened the issue of revisiting the Junction design and development, with a focus on pedestrian and community interests being prioritized. The entire concept of developing public land into commercial interests has environmental and transit implications which he challenged the Committee to consider raising with the Council even though the Committee hasn't considered development issues part of its mission.

Committee meeting extended past 9:00 by voice vote.

9. Working with the Council – deferred until next meeting

10. Discussion of committee structure and roles – deferred

11. Next month's meeting data & agenda suggestions

Items from the agenda distribution for future consideration

- Outreach efforts and racial equity initiative
- Identifying areas of need for repairs on state highway sidewalks
- Next steps on priorities

Upcoming Safe Roadways-Related Events

- Wed, April 19: City Council meeting – Daryl will discuss traffic calming
- Wed, April 26: Public hearing on proposed FY 2018 budget
- Sun, May 7: TKPK5K
- Wed, May 10 (6:30-7:30pm): Committee Volunteer Reception
- Fri, May 19: Bike to Work Day
- June 26-30: icanbike Camp
- Sun, Oct 1: Street Festival

Reminder of Committee 2017 Priorities

- Improve state highways for non-motor-vehicle users
- Improve bike lanes
- Make pedestrian improvements

Meeting adjourned 9:10