

COLUMBUS TRANSPORTATION AND PEDESTRIAN COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
109 NORTH FRONT STREET, GROUND FLOOR, ROOM 100
TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2012
5:00 P.M.

Present were:

Voting Members: Croasmun, Simmons, Simonds, Stephens, Wood

Advisory Member: Mull

Executive Secretary: Austin

Division of Mobility Options Staff: George, Popa

Division of Planning and Operations Staff: Kendrick, Wilfong

Guests: Tricia Kovacs, Nancy Reger

Call to Order: 5:10 p.m.

Motion for approval of February 14, 2012, minutes: Simmons; 2nd, Croasmun. Motion carried.

ACTION ITEMS

Lane Avenue Campus Safety Study and Speed Study

Campus Safety Study

Nick Popa reported there was a request by OSU student Nick Parker to examine pedestrian safety on Lane Avenue east of High Street; specifically, that intersections be examined for new marked crosswalks at Lane and Tuller Street, Lane and Waldeck Avenue, and Norwich Street at Tuller Street. In addition, the students inquired about the re-marking of the existing crosswalk at the signalized intersection of Lane Avenue and Indianola Avenue.

Mr. Popa indicated staff has conducted a standard crosswalk evaluation study in response to Mr. Parker's request; the conclusions of the study are:

- 1) a marked crosswalk is not warranted at Norwich Avenue and Tuller Street;
- 2) the existing pavement markings at Lane Avenue at Indianola Avenue are in excellent condition, so no additional markings are recommended;
- 3) at Lane Avenue and Waldeck Avenue, a marked crosswalk is warranted but not recommended due to the proximity to Lane Avenue at Tuller Street which has the higher volume of pedestrians crossing; and,

- 4) marked crosswalks on Lane Avenue at Tuller Street are warranted, and the recommendation is to install marked crosswalks on the east and west legs of Lane Avenue at Tuller Street. Associated pedestrian signage will be installed to go along with those crosswalks. This work will be completed sometime in 2012.

Discussion.

The Commission requested additional information on the safety study/Crosswalk issue. Staff will provide requested information at the April 10 meeting.

Lane Avenue Speed Study

Jessica Kendrick reviewed the results of the speed limit study conducted by staff on Lane Avenue from High Street to Summit Street. Staff recommends lowering the speed limit from 35 mph to 25 mph due to high pedestrian and bicycle activity, roadway characteristics, and the high number of crashes.

Discussion.

Motion to accept staff's recommendation to pursue the reduction of the speed limit on Lane Avenue, from North High Street to Summit, from 35 mph to 25 mph: Simmons; 2nd, Wood. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Informational Items:

Planning Studies

Gary Wilfong gave updates on planning studies as follows:

Creative Campus and Short North

The Short North kickoff meeting was held today. The Creative Campus kickoff meeting is scheduled for March 15. The next step is to collect data, then, staff will look at alternatives. The first stakeholder meetings will probably occur in one month at the earliest. Commissioner Wood and Chairman Stephens will be advised of the meeting dates.

Hamilton Road

This study is still in the data-collection phase. A public open house will probably take place in mid to late summer.

Traffic Standards Code Update

Gary Wilfong indicated a goal of the Public Service Department for 2012 is to update the Traffic Standards Code. The Traffic Standards Code was originally adopted by the City in 1997. It is the Code that details what is required of developers when they are developing a parcel, and what the City's expectations are going to be with regard to traffic. It defines when a full traffic study is required, and it states what the study is to include. The Code is out of date and needs to be updated. Staff hopes to present a draft document to the Commission this fall and present recommended changes to City Council this December. The Commissioners will be provided with a schedule of events.

Downtown Action Plan

Jessica Kendrick reported that since the last Commission meeting, COTA has performed a study and determined that moving bus lines from High Street to Front Street is not a possible short-term solution. So, in order to implement parking this year on High Street, the Plan will focus on the possibility of consolidating bus stops on High Street and filling in parking where possible. The Advisory Panel has also finalized the evaluation criteria that will be used to measure the future scenarios. The Advisory Panel has also provided locations critical for parking on High Street that Burgess and Niple and COTA used to develop alternatives for the parking on High Street. The next Advisory Panel meeting is scheduled for March 27. During this time, the City's consultant will run some alternatives through a traffic model. At the next meeting, they will be prepared to show these concepts. There are a total of six concepts that will be shown in simulation. Each concept will know the number of parking spaces that will be provided by each concept, and then each one will have operational pros and cons. Staff may also see some results for the two-way conversion of Front and Marconi streets.

Discussion.

Tricia Kovacs asked if right turns off of High Street will be considered. Ms Kendrick indicated one of the concepts is to remove all of the turn restrictions, or as many as possible.

Near East and South Area Traffic Control Modification Update

Jessica Kendrick reported that on March 15 a meeting will be held with the neighborhood liaisons. The next step will be to meet with the area commission chairs, and then on to a public meeting. Staff hopes to place the signals on flash in May for a six-month study.

Tricia Kovacs addressed the Commission. She expressed concern about the possible removal of six signals on Bryden. If all being considered are removed, there will be no signals on Bryden between Parsons and Nelson. She said it is easier for blind pedestrians to cross with a signal. Also, at the southeast corner of Kelton and Bryden, there is an apartment complex where a lot of people who are elderly and disabled live. Ms Kovacs indicated she brought this information to the committee on accessible issues. She recommended leaving the signal at Kelton and maybe leaving another signal at Champion or Ohio. She also suggested leaving the crosswalks at locations where signals are removed.

Bicycle Subcommittee

Nick Popa reported as follows on issues discussed at the February 22, Bicycle Subcommittee meeting:

Henderson Road Shared-use Path

The City is planning to construct a shared-use-path facility on Henderson from Olentangy River Road to Reed Road. This will be a quick-to-construct method. The section from Olentangy River Road to Kenny Road will be designed by a consultant firm. The section from Kenny Road to Reed Road will be designed in house. Staff discussed design details with the Subcommittee. Staff will take the Subcommittee's comments to the design consultant, especially those concerning the area by Olentangy River Road as it is more complex. Also, east of Lauraland Drive, the path is proposed to go on the north side of Henderson. Unfortunately, as you get down toward Olentangy River Road, the space is limited, so the path will be about six feet wide east of Lauraland. West of Lauraland, staff is looking at putting in an eight-foot path. This will all be concrete construction. The Subcommittee discussed providing an alternate route for bicycles to cross the street at Lauraland, and then utilizing some residential streets in the neighborhood to access Olentangy River Road. This project is in the preliminary engineering phase, so all of those options will be looked at. The design should be completed by summer, with construction to begin later this fall. The other project that goes from Kenny to Reed will have a similar construction schedule.

Discussion.

Green Lane Project

Columbus was recently invited, as one of 32 cities, to apply for inclusion in the green lanes project being conducted by the Bikes Belong Foundation. Out of those 32 cities, six will be selected to participate in the project. This is a new effort that will work closely with the six cities to help them build world-class cycling networks on city streets. These will be cities that are poised to make significant progress in the next two years in installing cycle tracks and/or related improvements, which Bikes Belong is calling green lanes. The project will facilitate a partnership between the cities and provide them with resources and technical assistance while expanding the knowledge base and sharing it widely. Highlights of this project include trips for City staff to go to Chicago and New York City, and then a trip to the Netherlands or Denmark to observe those cities bike facilities. Bikes Belong will also provide technical evaluation assistance to selected cities. This will be a two-year project. The City submitted an application for this on March 9. The selection will be made April 2, 2012.

Discussion.

Traffic Signal Detection of Two-wheeled Vehicles

There have been a lot of inquiries about this on the City's 3-1-1 system. The City now has a new option on the system where one can choose bicycle detection at a signalized intersection. Division of Mobility Options staff is working with the signals section personnel of the Division of Planning and Operations on this issue.

Downtown Action Plan

There was discussion at the meeting regarding this issue.

MORPC's Regional Bikeways

This is part of MORPC's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MMTP). They are now calling this the proposed regional potential bikeway utilization methodology. It is a methodology to categorize future bikeways in a way that can be applied throughout the entire region. A representative from MORPC gave a presentation at the Subcommittee meeting. Key dates for the overall MMTP are:

February 29 - draft document out for review
March 20 - open house at MORPC from 4:00 to 7:00
April 13 - comment period closes for the plan
April 27 - final document completed
May 10 - plan adoption by MORPC.

Dublin/Urlin Watermark Spot Improvement

This intersection improvement was discussed. The project is being done in conjunction with an ODOT urban resurfacing project that will take place on Dublin Road. It will improve bike access through the intersection from Urlin and then across a short stretch of Dublin Road where shared-use path will be provided along the south side of the road that will connect to Watermark. Bike lanes will be provided on Watermark all the way to Grandview Avenue. The project will connect the neighborhood to the north of Dublin Road with the Scioto Trail. This year, an ODOT project will extend the Scioto Trail all the way down to the Dublin Road Water Plant, and that will connect a key piece of the trail.

Bike Parking Shelters

Eighteen shelters will be installed by the Department of Public Service. The first phase has ten shelters - - eight have been installed. The final two shelters will be installed this spring. Phase two has eight shelters that will be installed by Christmas 2012. The Downtown Special Improvement District is also going to install about six shelters beginning this spring.

Community Mobility Traffic Management Plans

Nick Popa gave updates on plans as follows:

Spring Sandusky Overall Traffic Management Plan

Medians will be installed on Fifth Avenue east of the Olentangy River and west of Perry Street. A median and bump-out will be installed on Third Avenue east of the Olentangy River. Construction should be completed this summer.

Linden Area Traffic Management Plan

Some traffic calming features were removed on Maize Road and Norris Road. Temporary replacement markings were installed on Maize Road.

Franklinton Community Mobility

Staff has the design for the Town Street curb extensions and some sidewalks near some of the railroad bridges. That design is underway and will be completed this summer. Staff is also looking at the Rich Street and Town Street two-way conversion. Staff has a preliminary engineering proposal in for that. A notice to proceed will be issued within the next two weeks.

Olde North Columbus Traffic Management Plan

Work orders have been drawn to install angle parking on North Street. Work will be completed as weather permits.

Weinland Park Community Mobility Plan

Staff has a proposal for preliminary engineering at seven locations and three additional (if authorized) locations. Along Indianola Avenue south of Eleventh, curb extensions and traffic circles will be installed. On Sixth Avenue between Fifth and Sixth, sidewalk will be installed. Curb extensions at the intersection of Sixth Avenue and Fifth Street may be incorporated. A notice to proceed for this design is expected within the next two weeks. Preliminary engineering should be completed in June and the design work soon after. A public meeting to review the project with the Weinland Park Community Civic Association will be held sometime in May or June.

Staff will advise Vice Chairman Simmons when meeting arrangements are finalized.

Fourth Street and Summit Street.

A traffic study incorporating bike lanes and additional parking has been completed. The City is asking ODOT to review the study. Any work that would occur on Fourth and/or Summit would be in conjunction with an ODOT urban paving project scheduled for state fiscal year 2015.

Discussion.

Hilltop Traffic Management Plan

Some features will be designed in the Hilltop. Staff will develop a request for proposal later this year.

NEW BUSINESS

2012 to 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Nancy Reger from the Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), gave a PowerPoint presentation on this issue. This is a four-year plan, with a horizon year of 2035. It includes a lot of long-range transportation elements, but it really covers 2012 through 2016. The projects identified on this transportation plan are those transportation related projects that local communities want to make sure they are working on in the next four years or more, so that they are eligible to receive 80% federal funding through MORPC. The draft Plan is available online at MORPC's website. The comment period ends April 13. The Plan will be adopted May 10, 2012.

OTHER BUSINESS

Governor Kasich's Faith-based Initiative for Student Safety

Vice Chairman Simmons informed the Commission that Governor Kasich's office has a faith-based initiative for student safety. The first area selected for this initiative was Highland Elementary in the Hilltop. A group called the Shalom Zone is participating in the creation of the student safety area. The first effort in the safety program will be "corner dots." The Columbus School District will provide a safety cone and vest for an adult to stand on a corner to help children cross the streets at the safest location. Vice Chairman Simmons indicated he met a gentleman at the first meeting at Highland Elementary, who remembered favorably the Transportation and Pedestrian Commission's participation in the neighborhood walk. The Commission's efforts in the Hilltop area seemed to have made a long-lasting, positive impression.

Discussion.

The Commission would like updates on this initiative as it progresses.

Sidewalk and Curb Ramp Improvements

Commissioner Simonds indicated there is a need to include more sidewalks and curb ramp improvements in the City's budget. There are over 300 curb ramps on the list right now that are not being funded. He has spoken to Mayor Coleman about this issue and will also discuss with Councilperson Paley. Councilperson Paley will attend the next meeting of the Advisory Committee on Disability Issues.

Discussion.

Commissioner Simonds will bring a map of the unfunded curb ramps to the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia R. Grove
Recording Secretary

Jeff Stephens
Chairman

Patricia A. Austin
Executive Secretary

THIS MEETING WAS RECORDED; RECORDING IS ON FILE
AT 109 NORTH FRONT STREET