

Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Online

Present: Abigail Johnson, Neal Baxter, Julia Curran, Peter Vader, Aaron Berger, Paul St. Martin, Donna Hemp, Christopher Hoffer, Barbara Olson, Matthew Steinrueck; Matthew Dyr Dahl, Chris Kartheiser, Julie Danzl, Emily Kettell, Sonja Burseth, Rattana Sengsoulichanh, Suzanne Murphy, Heidi Schallberg, Emma Pachuta, Millicent Flowers, Mackenzie Turner Bargaen

Resolutions

Near North Safe Routes to School: The Pedestrian Advisory Committee supports efforts to reduce vehicular speed and increase comfort for pedestrians in the Near North Safe Routes to School project. We favor the installation of the best available traffic calming devices for accomplishing these goals.

LaSalle & 14th St.: The Pedestrian Advisory Committee supports efforts to reduce crossing distances at LaSalle Ave and W 14th St. We ask that parking be taken further than 30' from the intersection. In order to open sightlines vital to the safety of all mode users at this intersection. We ask the city to explore a curb-protected intersection for the bike lane to further narrow crossing distance.

Chair Abigail called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM and read the official notice about on-line meetings.

Millicent called the roll. Ten citizen members and eleven agency members were present at this meeting.

Adoption of the Agenda and the Minutes

Donna moved to adopt the meeting agenda, and the minutes from the February meeting; Peter seconded. Approved.

Infrastructure & Engineering Subcommittee Report—Barb Olson & Aaron Berger

We saw 2 projects at our February meeting. The first was the Safe Routes to School project in North Minneapolis. The work is scheduled for 2022 and will make pedestrian safety improvements along 16th Avenue North, from Queen to Aldrich. The goal of the project is to improve this corridor for pedestrians, especially schoolchildren. Speed bumps, chicanes and other improvements are planned; access to 3 parks and 3 schools lies along the route. Residents advised the City that 16th Avenue sees a large volume of high-speed traffic.

Julie Danzl noted that students from North High told City staff that personal safety was an issue for them on this street; they don't like to walk or bike on 16th Avenue.

Aaron read a resolution (Near North SRTS above); Neal seconded. Approved.

We also heard from staff about the pedestrian improvements planned for the intersection of 14th St. & LaSalle Avenue. This project is scheduled for late summer or fall of 2021. This corner is a very busy pedestrian crossing, and 3 pedestrians have been hurt here in three years. Upgrades will include shorter pedestrian crossings through curb extensions.

Aaron read a resolution (LaSalle & 14th above); Neal seconded. Approved.

Programs & Policies Subcommittee Report—Peter Vader & Julia Curran

At the last P&P meeting, we discussed the newly published Street Design Guide, with Ethan Fawley & Luke Hanson. This is a “living document”, which will be updated when needed. Public Works invites the PAC to propose edits. Look for the document and the Street Design Guide website at: sdg.minneapolismn.gov

We also had a long discussion about the next proposals for the Capital Improvement Projects list. We began crafting a resolution to send to Public Works, which will be similar to our resolution from 2020.

CK: I think our work on the 2020 resolution set us up well for this discussion.

Discussion of the PAC's Annual Report to the City Council—Abigail Johnson

Each year, the PAC and the Bicycle Advisory Committee report to the City Council's Transportation and Public Works Committee. This report is a chance for the chairs of the committees to address the City Council directly about our accomplishments and about our concerns. This year's report will take place on-line, on March 31. The TPW meeting is scheduled to begin at 1:30 PM.

Abigail gave us a preview of what she and Elissa Schufman, the chair of the BAC, will tell the City Council Members.

Abigail: This year, instead of a back patting, we will stress the need for solid, substantial work in order to meet the City's stated goals and policies.

MD: I'll start by talking about how the committees adapted to on-line meetings, and comment on personnel changes.

Abigail: Elissa and I will push for transformative change, focusing on the City's policy's. We'll repeat that the status quo is not neutral. We need a mandate for change. I will point this out with details from one of the PAC's favorite projects from 2020, to illustrate what we want, and what didn't happen, even in a project we liked.

What's at stake is 1) racial justice, and the City Council has declared racism a public health problem; and 2) climate change, since every year we fail to address the problem we make it even harder to make change the next year.

The change has to be just, and not leave the usual people behind. The City's mandated policies are good, but they aren't causing a radical drop in emissions, for instance.

Abigail will highlight how the PAC has called for adherence to policy in our resolutions. The case she will use to argue for radical change is the project to build a bike lane on Blaisdell. The PAC greatly approved of this project. But Blaisdell & Lake is still a very dangerous corner for pedestrians.

A final item we'll address in this presentation is the importance of hiring a new Director of Public Works who will push radical change in thinking and performance.

The PAC liked this preview of Abigail's comments to the Council.

Year-End Review—Chris Kartheiser

Chris presented the PAC with highlights of our work in 2020. We passed 20+ resolutions and worked very hard on the Transportation Action Plan. The Pedestrian Priority Network is an especially big accomplishment.

He cited these projects as the most significant:

18th Avenue NE reconstruction

the Hennepin Avenue NE President's Bike Boulevard

the Grant & 1st Avenue S. bikeway

Oak Grove & 15th Street

Rawlins St. SE protected bikeway

Quick Chat about the Engineering Subcommittees—Matthew Dyr Dahl

During the Executive Committee call, we agreed to remind members that, to promote participation by everyone, please prioritize the discussion to the scale of the project at hand, save the policy questions for the full PAC meeting, and give others a chance to ask questions.

Announcements

Curran: Today is the last day for public comment on Hennepin County's Climate Action Plan.

Emma Pachuta: Public comments on the Parks for All Comprehensive Plan will be accepted through July 18.

Adjournment

Neal moved to adjourn; Donna seconded. Adjourned at 5:14 PM.