

Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting minutes

Wednesday, August 4, 2021

Online

Present: Neal Baxter, Abigail Johnson, Austin Holik, Raina Urton, Julia Curran, Barbara Olson, Harmony Anderson, Peter Vader, Donna Hemp, Christopher Hoffer, Matthew Steinrueck, Chris Ross; Matthew Dyr Dahl, Millicent Flowers, Chris Kartheiser, Suzanne Murphy, Sonja Burseth, Tom Thao

Resolutions:

Resolution for the Bryant Ave Reconstruction

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee fully supports the Bryant Ave Reconstruction design that will create a two-lane one-way convergent street on Bryant Ave South, we also support the transfer of transit to Lyndale Avenue which will accommodate the creation of a safe and protected bikeway on Bryant Ave.

We are happy to see city policies enacted in this project and expect to see new projects from Public Works align with policies as this one does.

Resolution for the Cedar Lake Road Bridge reconstruction

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee supports a two-way bike lane across the Cedar Lake Road Bridge to tie in with the Luce Lane Trail. We would also like to see the bike lanes and sidewalks, with a tactile division between them, at the same grade to offer more protection for Pedestrians. We would also like to see seating of some sort on this bridge, benches, or railings with seating.

Resolution for the Phillips Traffic Safety Project

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee expressed many concerns regarding these high Injury Streets, we hope they will be heeded during the design/ engineering of this project. We request converting both 26th and 28th into two-way streets to discourage speeding, one lane in each direction.

We also have grave concerns for 24th, 26th and 28th streets as they cross Portland and Park Aves, these are very dangerous intersections, bump-outs and or medians all traffic calming strategies need to be included here, hopefully in collaboration with Hennepin County

Finally, we would like all legs of the intersection at the 35W exit onto 28th Street to have pedestrian marked zebra striped crosswalks.

Signalization

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee calls on the City to make automatic pedestrian recall at all traffic signals the default condition. By doing so the City will be acting in accordance with the Transportation Action Plan, Complete Streets policy, and the spirit of the ADA.

Since enabling automatic pedestrian recall across 90% of city traffic signals last year, the city has returned 25 intersections to actuated operation, where unless a person is able to reach and press a button, no walk signal accompanies the green light cycle.

While we share the City's goals of transit-priority, no rationale for removing automated recall justifies reducing accessibility and reliability for more vulnerable users. Automatic recall is critical, basic non-motorized transportation infrastructure where 1) there is no actuation system in place to detect people biking, and 2) timely and thorough snow and ice clearance at said buttons is lacking.

When traffic signals are programmed to be actuated rather than automatic, the costs of these choices are borne almost entirely by those who are already most marginalized and most at risk in our current transportation systems. A transportation system lacking allowances for people who bike and use wheelchairs to easily and safely cross a street regardless of season and weather is not a complete system.

The PAC remains eager to fulfill its charter by advising Public Works on choices that determine walkability, including reviewing traffic signal recall programming on an intersection-by-intersection basis.

Micro-mobility resolution

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee enthusiastically supports Minneapolis scooter and bike share programming and the leadership of Mobility Manager Danielle Elkins.

We recognize this support is shared consistently among Minneapolis biking, walking, and ADA communities. Bike and scooter share naturally complement pedestrian, public transit and other modes people choose (or need) to replace driving for one-way trips, errands, and last mile transit connectivity.

We see the success of micro mobility service in Minneapolis even in partial-year riding "seasons" and within a new and quick-shifting industry. Data-driven studies show that complaints and injuries are few in number — less than 1/1000th of a percent in hundreds of thousands of rides. Micro mobility defies a minuscule set (if aggressively loud and mean) of opponents by proving itself safe, wildly popular, and fun.

We urge the City to expand the coverage to all seasons, and all hours of the day and night.

We further appreciate and support the goals of the coming micro mobility RFP to expand Mobility Hub services and capacity, and see particular promise in the use of in-person "ambassadors" to help people realize maximum benefit and use of available modes, as well as the provision of benches, restrooms, water fountains, and lockers.

We ask that in judging RFP responses, weight is given to vendors committed to serving all of Minneapolis, geographically and economically, and to serving a broader range of Minneapolitans, including the University of Minnesota, than local bikeshare has so far, including the provision of bikes that work for smaller bodies (disproportionately women of color), as well as adaptive or cargo bikes. Also, to favor vendors best able to see the value of the mobility hub concept and integrate themselves within it.

Hennepin County Speed Limit Authority

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee calls on Hennepin County to seek and secure general authority to design and post at the city-wide speed limit of not more than 25 miles per hour.

The PAC believes the county should have full control over speed limits on its streets. They should not be prevented, by state preemption, from conforming to Minneapolis speed limits giving people and motor vehicles slower speeds suited to greater safety and increased livability.

Chair Abigail called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM and read the official notice about on-line meetings.

Millicent called the roll; 10 voting members and 5 agency members were present as the meeting began.

Approval of the Agenda and the July Minutes

Donna moved the agenda, and the minutes for the July meeting; Neal seconded. Approved.

Infrastructure & Engineering Subcommittee Report—Barb Olson

We saw three presentations at our July meeting, and we responded to each with a resolution. We heard first about the Bryant Avenue reconstruction. This project will redesign Bryant between Lake Street and 50th Street as 2 one-way streets, which will meet at 46th Street. Buses will move to Lyndale, and more green space will be added to Bryant. We support this project because it aligns well with city policy.

The second project we saw was the Cedar Lake Road bridge replacement. This project is at 0% now, and the work is planned for 2023. The bridge here dates from 1941 and carries traffic over the railroad tracks. We asked for bike lanes on the side of the bridge nearest Luce Line Trail, and benches.

Last, we looked at the Phillips Traffic Safety project, also at 0%. The goal here is to reduce speeding and boost safety along 24th, 26th, and 28th Streets, from 35W to Hiawatha Avenue. Work is scheduled on this project for 2023. The intersections with Park and Portland were of particular concern. The traffic on these main traffic arteries is a hazard for the many children who walk and play in this neighborhood.

Barb read the three resolutions, and Neal seconded all three. Approved.

Programs and Policies Subcommittee Report—Peter Vader

At our July meeting, the committee discussed the change in traffic signals with Allan Klugman of Public Works, Most city traffic signals were programmed from push button to automatic pedestrian recall at the start of the COVID pandemic; a few have returned to push button operation. Allan explained why some signals were changed again. Peter read a resolution; Neal seconded. Approved.

Allan also discussed with us the problem of detour and other road work signs that interfere with pedestrian mobility on the sidewalks. He gave us an easy directive when these signs cause problems: contact the project manager.

We also heard a presentation from Danielle Elkins about mobility hubs. These multi-modal stations are in place throughout the city, especially in low income neighborhoods. The program has demonstrated the usefulness of providing services and a variety of mobility devices at convenient locations. The City will install more mobility hubs. Peter read a resolution; Neal seconded. Approved.

Next, Peter read a resolution on speed limits; Neal seconded. We amended this resolution in the discussion that followed. Approved as amended.

September Walking Meeting—Abigail Johnson & Matthew Dyr Dahl

On September 1, we will have a shorter meeting on-line. Those who can will meet on 5th Street, between City Hall and the Court House for the meeting, then after the meeting we will walk to see work sites to examine the work we've heard about.

Abigail asked the committee where members would like to walk. Ideas included 8th Street, 4th Street, the 10th Avenue bridge, and Hennepin Avenue. Abigail will send details about this meeting later this month.

Announcements

Donna: Are the on-line meetings going to continue for a while?

MD: Masks are required in City buildings now. We haven't heard yet about meetings in-person.

Donna: Then I am going to quit the PAC. These meetings have made the committee's business, especially the resolutions, hard to follow. I also get the paperwork in PDF format, which I can't read.

Members suggested solutions, and Donna agreed to stay on the committee.

Sonja: Metro Transit has published a user's guide. See it on-line, at:
www.metrotransit.org/Data/Sites/1/media/about/improvements/shelters/bus-stop-design-guidelines_final_07_23_21.pdf

Neal moved to adjourn; Peter seconded. Approved, and adjourned at 5:34 PM.