

# Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting

## Minutes—Wednesday, October 4, 2017

Present: Phillip Ailiff, Neal Baxter, Shaina Brassard, Tamir Ali Mohamud, Donna Hemp, Julia Curran, Olivia Hovland, Barbara Olson, Christopher Hoffer, Christian Huelsman, Peter Vader, Aaron Berger, Julia Tabbut; Sarah Stewart, Rattana Sengsoulichanh, Suzanne Murphy, Mike Mechtenberg, Carrie Christensen, Millicent Flowers, Kelsey Fogt, Luís Dax, pedestrian; Victoria Dan, Matt Lupini, Jake Shepp, Humphrey School, University of Minnesota; Kathleen Mayell, Public Works; Phil Longenecker, Green Corps

### Resolutions passed by the PAC, October 4, 2017

#### #1 Bottineau LRT Project

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee supports the in-progress design of the Blue Line Extension (Bottineau) LRT as presented by the Met Council team. We appreciate the addition of trees, widened paths, and the choice of pavement materials and their arrangement to assist way-finding. We support the full-red pedestrian crossing signals and narrowing and curving of traffic lanes to calm motorized traffic.

We ask that when signal timings are considered that pedestrians crossing Olson Memorial Highway, frequently in cold weather and with children in tow or using crutches or wheelchairs, be minimally delayed.

#### #2 Highway Safety Improvement Project

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee supports the 2018 projects proposed under the Highway Safety Improvement Program. In particular, we are pleased to see that the project will include bump-outs at every corner where feasible in compliance with Minneapolis' Complete Streets policy. We support the inclusion of ADA accessible ramps, signal countdowns, and APS. Additionally, we request the City

- 1) Pay extra attention to the intersections surrounding freeway entrance and exit ramps, in accordance with the PAC's Freeway On and Off Ramp and Approaches resolution. Lower pedestrian volumes here likely reflect a particularly unpleasant walking environment as drivers shift their driving behavior between freeway and city driving.
- 2) Explore the possibility of crosswalk markings at unsignalized intersections in particular.

#### #3 North Loop Pedestrian Project

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee supports the North Loop Pedestrian project with the following recommendations:

- The proposed midblock crossing on N. 2nd St., at what would be 7th Ave. N., should have lighting and both tactile and visual features that aid users connecting to the private walking path to the north.
- Visual cues should be added at regular block intervals along N. 2nd St., in order to break up the lengthy corridor for better user orientation.
- Bumpouts should be added to "T" intersections opposite connecting streets.

#### #4 North Loop Paving Project

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee supports the North Loop Paving project with the following recommendations:

- Traffic calming features should be considered for 5th Ave. N., between N. Washington Ave. & N. 5th St., in response to the removal of brick pavers.
- In accordance with the Heritage Street Plan, using best practices from other cities, wood pavers on 8th Ave. N., between N. Washington Ave. & N. 3rd St., should be replaced with like materials.
- Wayfinding, signage, and improved lighting should be installed in coordination with MnDOT to facilitate a better walking connection at N. 4th St. & 5th Ave. N. to the pedestrian bridge leading to Downtown West.

Chair Julia Tabbut called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM, and asked all present to introduce themselves.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Phil moved the minutes; Aaron seconded. Approved.

#### Winter Maintenance Discussion—Kathleen Mayell, Public Works

The Winter Maintenance Study, which was originally due for release in June, will be published in December. Once the Study is available, the data will inform the new draft of the Access Minneapolis Plan, scheduled for 2018. New procedures for sidewalk clearance will be proposed by the City Council, with the help of the PAC and interested citizens.

#### Infrastructure & Engineering Subcommittee—Julia Curran & Peter Vader

We have 4 resolutions to present from our last meeting. The first concerns the Bottineau Blue Line LRT. Many of the ideas for improvement that PAC members suggested were added to this plan, but the committee is still of two minds about how Olson Highway will look. Peter read the resolution (#1 above); Aaron seconded. Approved.

Next, the Highway Safety Improvement Program, which is a federal program, will upgrade access around downtown and along Como Avenue. Julia read resolution #2; Neal seconded. Approved.

The North Loop Pedestrian project will also address ADA upgrades and pedestrian concerns between Hennepin and Plymouth Avenues. Crosswalks are planned in the middle of long blocks, bumpouts & countdown timers at signalized stops will be added, and more. The design phase will draw to a close in March 2018; implementation will proceed for another 18 months thereafter. Christian read the resolution (#3 above); Phil seconded. Approved.

The North Loop Paving project will address non-compliance with the ADA in the industrial area of the neighborhood. This project has the difficult assignment of leaving historical elements in place, while bringing the area up to the standards of the ADA. Pavement made of wood and brick, and loading docks, have been particular concerns here.

Christian read the resolution (#4 above); Tamir seconded. Approved.

#### **Discussion included the following:**

Mike: how long is the wood paver portion of the street?

CH: 100-200 feet. It's classified as a "failed roadway" due to condition.

Mike: what will replace it?

CH: the neighborhood and the Heritage Preservation people will work that out.

Mike: I ask because the Park Board replaced wood planks with new ones some years ago, along the river. A few years later they pulled all the planks out, deteriorated.

CH: Pittsburgh has had great luck replacing wood pavers.

Mike: Metro Transit has been asked to consider changing bus routes through the North Loop. Specifically, running both the #7 and the #14 lines on Washington Avenue (#7 uses 1st St. N. from Hennepin to 8th Ave. N.). Yea or nay?

Phil: No good!

JT: separate routes serve the neighborhood better, as the cross streets don't connect some small pockets. Even though it's convenient to have 2 routes on 1 street.

#### **Programs & Policies Subcommittee—Shaina Brassard & Christian Huelsman**

Our last meeting was an assessment of the recent Walking Summit, and was hosted by Sarah Stewart. We had a big crowd with many pedestrian advocates, and Sarah's department paid for a delicious dinner!

We decided that Vision Zero and equity concerns were well covered at the Summit, but we felt that senior issues, snow removal and climate change were conspicuously absent. The discussions identified goals to put forward, and will discuss these and write resolutions to bring before the PAC in the coming months.

#### **Comprehensive Plan Discussion—Shaina Brassard & Julia Curran**

Rattana: the priorities around which to rework the Plan are: reducing racial inequities, fostering more complete communities, and developing a climate change action plan. At Open Streets this summer we gathered ideas from residents, and we will resume systematic resident engagement in the coming months.

Shaina: Curran & I met with Joe Bernard (former PAC member for CPED) and asked him how PAC can maximize its political capital. Recall, too, that CM Bender asked PAC in September for suggestions not limited by our pedestrian focus.

Curran: Comp Plan drafting is going to speed up soon, and PAC will want to prepare a list of proposals, for our January 2018 meeting.

Rattana: CPED is going before the Planning Commission Thursday. We will send around a draft of the Comp Plan for review in early 2018, and present the Plan to the Met Council in December 2018. PAC should propose any ideas members have until the draft appears. Today, let's talk about Growth, Affordability, Transit, Access and Walking.

Chair Julia broke the meeting into 6 small groups, which discussed assigned parts of the Plan. When the meeting resumed, the following ideas were put forward from the groups:

city support for novel commercial ideas

what amenities do communities need?

removing barriers to street art

promoting diversity

awnings, trees, and children's play areas

how to make new construction affordable

seasonal effects on bus shelters and along foot paths

stream-lining event permits for transit-rich neighborhoods

litter and animal waste pick up

analyzing what makes a neighborhood unique

are "micro-units" a suitable answer for residential housing?

renters' rights

#### **Announcements**

Curran: Our Streets is looking for board members. Please apply by October 13.

Sarah: the Mpls Health Dept. is hiring 4 positions. Applications are due October 15.

Kelsey: Safe Routes to School is looking for a PAC volunteer to assist Northrop Urban Environmental planning.

Huelsman: my new endeavor is called the Mpls Alley Initiative. On Oct. 14 we will host a scavenger hunt at One on One Bike Studio, from 1-3 PM. Also, Preserve Mpls will host a panel discussion about alleys at 10:30 AM on Oct. 21.

Rattana: CPED's meeting with the Planning Commission is scheduled for Oct. 5, Room 317, City Hall. Come listen.

Neal moved to adjourn; Christian seconded. Approved, and adjourned at 6:01 PM.