



## **WORTHINGTON BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD**

### **Minutes of the Monday, October 26, 2015 Meeting**

**Members Present:** The members present were Michael Bates, Amy Cooper, Lawrence Creed, Ann Horton, Emma Lindholm, John Rist, and Jeannie Martin (Chair).

City Support Staff present were Celia Thornton (Project Supervisor) and Darren Hurley (Director of Parks & Recreation).

Additional city staff present included William Watterson, Director of Service & Engineering. Also present were Dan Bieberitz, Project Manager for DLZ, Chuck Gibson, Director of Worthington Libraries, Paul Dorothy and Mikel Coulter, members of the original Bike & Pedestrian Steering Committee and the following interested residents:

Kevin & Suellen Stotts, 39 W. Stafford Avenue

Geoff Barstow, 111 W. Stafford Avenue

Lee Spector, 55 W. Stafford Avenue

The minutes from the October 26 meeting were approved.

**Mobility Study, Phase 1 High & Stafford, Presentation:** City Engineer, Mr. Watterson, with assistance from Mr. Hurley, provided a brief overview of the process regarding the intersection of Stafford Avenue and High Street to date. He shared that the City had provided a list of follow up questions to Dan Bieberitz, the consultant from DLZ, to follow up on from the last meeting. He explained that DLZ had been asked to study and make a recommendation to the city regarding the intersection of Stafford and High as phase 1 of the study. Based on the feedback of the Board at their September meeting, DLZ was also asked to provide some initial information and recommendation on phase 2, which included the other intersections in the corridor.

The DLZ consultant, Mr. Dan Bieberitz, went through the questions documented from the September meeting.

1. Where have Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons been installed at four way intersections and what has the impact been in those locations?

*DLZ Response: Tucson, AZ is where the HAWK (now called Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon or PHB) was developed and tested. There are approximately 110 PHB's located at four legged/three legged intersections and about three located at mid-block crossings. They have had no*

problems with the PHB's at the intersections. The City provided the research results to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the National Committee of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD), requesting the PHB be allowed in the MUTCD as an acceptable traffic control device based on its safety record.

2. How does the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon work in relationship to traffic coming from Stafford onto High Street that may see the stopped High Street traffic as an opportunity to move quickly onto High Street?

DLZ Response: *The side streets are stop sign controlled. Drivers on the side streets can enter/cross the main street at any time yielding to vehicles, bicycles and/or pedestrians. With experience, drivers will utilize the activated PHB to assist them in entering the main street if it is activated when they are at the stop sign.*

3. What positive impact would be had by removing the north crosswalk at the intersection and only having one on the south side?

DLZ Response: *Even though pedestrians would have one crossing point at this intersection, it would be a considerably easier and safer crossing of a busy major street (the PHB can only be used for one crossing). DLZ recommends the removal of the north crosswalk.*

4. What information can be collected regarding the other phases of the Old Worthington Study because uniformity is something worth considering as a recommendation is made on Stafford and High Street?

DLZ Response: *Phase 2 of the study evaluates the costs, advantages and disadvantages of utilizing PHB's vs. upgrading the existing sign devices. Uniformity is a major advantage to driver and pedestrian expectations, which enhances safety. Our field observations also captured the fact that drivers do not always stop/yield to pedestrians at the Village Green and Short Street crossings. This may be due to the fact that the signs have some maintenance issues, are hard to see, and that they do not use flashing yellow indications that are prevalent for most pedestrian crossing warning signs.*

5. What exactly is included in the \$55,000 cost estimate for the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon?

DLZ Response: *We have developed a breakdown of costs which will be included in the report.*

6. Some clarification on some of the standards as they relate to the Ohio Manual.

DLZ Response: *The Ohio MUTCD is patterned after the National MUTCD, which is where considerable professional input and research is considered in the development of the Manual. There are Standards (SHALL conditions) which are not to be modified or changed. The Guidance (SHOULD conditions) allow for some variation in the application of traffic control devices based on engineering judgment.*

*The National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD) has proposed a revision to the wording for the next MUTCD that removes the guidance of a PHB 100 feet away from an adjacent side street. The NCUTCD assists in the development of standards, guidelines and warrants for traffic control devices and practices used to regulate, warn and guide traffic on streets and highways, and makes recommendations to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and to other appropriate agencies regarding proposed revisions and interpretations to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and other accepted national standards.*

Mr. Rist asked if Mr. Bieberitz had specific data on the use of Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon's (PHB'S) and right turns. Mr. Bates raised questions regarding funding of the proposed changes, including removing the north walkway and recurbing. Mr. Watterson replied that the cost of these improvements would be included in and paid for using annual street program funding.

Ms. Martin commented that she had been to Phoenix and more recently Indianapolis and had observed the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons in operation. She was concerned that pedestrians didn't consistently activate the light and that some of the cities in the west didn't have as high volume of pedestrian activity due to the heat. She added that it is important to her that driver expectations throughout the corridor are considered and that they need to be consistent.

Mrs. Suellyn Stotts asked how many of the Board members regularly use that intersection (one or two hands raised). She then commented that she had no idea why in a city like Worthington where taxes are so high it had taken so long to do anything and now why we need a process like this going through all these steps just to do something to improve safety for the residents and true users of the intersection. Ms. Martin explained the role of the Board was to consider things from a community wide perspective and make a recommendation to City Council that served the overall community the best that they could and to best utilize city resources. Mr. Creed asked Mrs. Stotts what her recommendation would be. She indicated it should be a stoplight like all of the other intersections in the corridor.

Mr. Kevin Stotts said he was in favor of it being a stoplight as well. He shared a handout with Board members which included a variety of points and thoughts regarding the intersection, items from the DLZ study that he had concerns with, and his suggestion for a crossing guard and police officer to be placed at the intersection until some permanent improvement was completed. Mr. Hurley shared that he would be sure his suggestion on a crossing guard and police support was passed on to the police.

Mr. Bieberitz shared some of the data and research involved in reaching their conclusions on phase two and their recommendations to remove the existing treatments and to add the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons, like the one recommended for Stafford and High, to the intersections at High and Short Street and High and Village Green Drive South.

Mr. Dorothy gave additional information regarding PHB's and cited that they are not a new technology, just new to our area. He also said that data collected from the Federal Highway Association showed a 69% reduction in pedestrian crashes and a 15% reduction in severe crashes and that they are now the recommended treatment to improve intersection safety. He shared his views that the recommended PHB's would be the best treatment for the intersections being discussed.

Mr. Hurley indicated that Mr. Whalen could not be at the meeting but had sent an email with his thoughts and questions. Mr. Hurley thought most of his questions had been addressed in the discussion but wanted to ask one that had not. If a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon is chosen for the corridor, a consideration should be made for the Farmers Market out of concern it will be lit red for three hours straight causing a gridlock of traffic. Mr. Bieberitz responded that the PHB would be programmed to only activate in synch with the stop light cycle so that would not be an issue. A pedestrian wouldn't get a signal immediately, it would pause until the traffic cycle was complete.

Ms. Martin asked the Board members to each share their thoughts after all of the presentations and comments in an effort to determine consensus for a motion. Each member spoke in favor of the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons at all three intersections with the exception of Ms. Martin, who did not favor them as necessary. All of the Board members indicated that as a part of their support of the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons, it would be critical for there to be significant education and enforcement initiatives to educate the public on a new traffic treatment in Worthington and to ensure enforcement efforts are present. Mr. Rist also suggested evaluation be done after implementation to measure effectiveness and to help guide expansion into other areas of town. Mr. Creed made a motion to recommend moving forward with the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons for phases one and two including a comprehensive education and enforcement campaign being developed along with data collection and evaluation of compliance prior to and upon installation of the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons. Mr. Rist seconded the motion and it passed 7-1 with Ms. Martin opposing.

**Other:** Mr. Rist asked if a date had been established for the January planning session. Ms. Martin said no and asked for Board member feedback. Mr. Hurley asked Board members to look at their calendars to confirm availability for the next two meetings because they fall near holidays, November 23 and December 28. He indicated Ms. Thornton will be sending out an email to confirm availability for those meetings to

ensure we have a quorum. Ms. Martin indicated she may not be available Dec. 28. Mr. Hurley indicated a decision could be made at the November meeting regarding how to handle the December 28 meeting and how members would like to proceed with the January planning session in regards to doing it during the normal meeting time or setting up a special planning session.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.