



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

### **Minutes of the Monday, August 28, 2017 Meeting**

**Members Present:** The members present were Mike Bates, Lawrence Creed, Ann Horton, Emma Lindholm, Jeannie Martin, Gary Schmidt, John Stephan and Kelly Whalen.

City Support Staff Robyn Stewart (Assistant City Manager), Darren Hurley (Director Parks & Recreation), Celia Thornton (Project Supervisor), Dan Whited (Director Service & Engineering) and City Council Member Rachael Dorothy were present. Also present were Brian Davidson with Ohio Department of Transportation and Susan Daniels of Lawhon & Associates. Resident and Bike Worthington representative Paul Dorothy (179 Kenbrook Dr.) and John Gallagher of Carpenter Marty Transportation also attended the meeting.

Minutes from the August 28, 2017 meeting were approved.

**161 Corridor Study Presentation:** Mr. Davidson reviewed for the board the study done by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and an overview of the public comments received. Ms. Daniels then shared with the board all of the jurisdictions involved, spoke about the advisory committee and presented various concept designs. After consulting with technical advisors and taking into consideration public comments, the design concept for S.R. 161 moving forward will most likely include 3 lanes of traffic with a shared use path on the south side, sidewalks on the north side, and no addition of bike lanes. Next steps include the project team preparing a report, the study made available to the public (once the report is approved) and then the partners implementing the plan pursuing funding options. Mr. Schmidt asked a question regarding straight faced curb options. Mr. Bates asked about speed limit impacts. Mr. Davidson answered that based on a speed study, the 35 mph speed limit currently in effect would stay the same. Mr. Creed asked if consideration for a shared use path (SUP) on both sides of the road, rather than just sidewalks on the north, had been considered. Ms. Daniels answered that north side residents were very opposed to the SUP on the north side of 161, and even objected to sidewalks. She also indicated that other complications included safety concerns when crossing the road to the south side further west. Mr. Creed then asked how users would safely cross the railroad tracks. Mr. Davidson stated that at this time they were recommending carrying the path across the tracks, but that plan could be modified at a later date. Mr. Creed asked if gates and lights would be added and Mr. Davidson responded that yes, current safety standards would be followed. Mr. Stephan

asked if additional signals would be needed for crossing from the north side to the south side. Mr. Davidson said that they are still figuring out the best places for signalized crossings. Ms. Daniels stated that there were requests for crossings, especially at Thomas Worthington High School (TWHS), but nothing has been firmly decided yet. Mrs. Horton asked if ODOT would only need to use right of way (ROW) land, or if private property would be impacted. Mr. Davidson said they were trying to shift the roadway to avoid taking as much property as possible, which creates other issues when you try to shift it back at the high school, so it's likely ODOT might need some property and at this point it mostly seems to be affecting screening vegetation. Mr. Whalen asked about the width of the green space separating the SUP from the road (is it 3 ½ feet?). Mr. Davidson said that the exact width hasn't been settled yet and may vary. He's recommending 8 feet (for a possible tree lawn) but it should be at least 3 ½ feet wide. Ms. Martin asked how the board could best help move this project forward and when their next chance to participate would be. Ms. Stewart said that if the board had a recommendation or feedback it can give to the presenters (and which can be passed on to City Council) that this would be most helpful. Ms. Daniels asked for general input at this time and reassured the board that they would be included again later for input on actual technical design (rather than just concept). Mr. Davidson and Ms. Stewart assured the board that there will be future opportunities for board comments as well as more public feedback sessions. Mr. Schmidt asked if the ROW information would be more specific at that time and Mr. Davidson answered in the affirmative. Mr. Schmidt then referenced Dublin's future plans and wondered if they were taken into consideration. Mr. Davidson said he wasn't sure about specific plans, but that the project partners agreed that they wanted good continuity and consistency throughout the corridor. Ms. Daniels also stated that in big projects like these you don't want perfection being the enemy of good. Ms. Martin then asked if there were any further board comments. Mrs. Lindholm asked if the intersection at S.R. 161 and Olentangy River Road was evaluated. Mr. Davidson said that it was not. Ms. Martin then asked the best way for the board to give feedback. Mr. Hurley said that their comments would be captured in the minutes, which he would make sure went to City Council at the appropriate time. He also said that the board could make a motion tonight that would also go to City Council prior to their adopting the study. Mr. Davidson thought that the final draft would be completed around mid-November. Ms. Martin then asked if there were any visitor comments and recognized Mr. Dorothy. Mr. Dorothy reminded the board that this is the one chance in our lifetime to get it right in this corridor. He's concerned about what he has heard and is not sure the designers have a complete grasp of bike and pedestrian design (citing several examples such as wide lanes, rather than narrow lanes with straight faced curbs, that frustrate drivers and endanger cyclists). He is concerned about the discussion that implied there may be no sidewalks in front of the Lumber Company. Sidewalks give pedestrians an understood right to be there by drivers. He's concerned about how many driveways will cut into the SUP putting drivers and cyclists in conflict and that SUP design standards in the U.S. aren't sufficient to create safe crossings at intersections (Dutch and Danish have better standards). Mr. Dorothy was also concerned that ODOT would follow their rules rather than others that permit lane width changes when it makes sense. Mr. Creed agreed with many of these comments but also understands that this is a tough project and appreciates that the presentation is just an overview of where they are conceptually and what the public input has been. Ms. Daniels said that no firm stance on lane width has been taken and that this could wait for more detailed designs. Mr. Stephan suggested the board should move for the feasibility study to proceed and that we agree this is a good idea for the City of Worthington, with the caveat that the board's feedback is recognized. Mr. Whalen expressed concern that the recommendations might change between now and when the presentation was given to Council. Mr. Creed was more concerned about how the design might change in the five years between the first section being

built and the next section. Ms. Daniels said that a consistent, wide recommendation across the whole corridor would drive the project, even if the battle has to be re-fought section by section. Mr. Schmidt seconded Mr. Stephan's motion. The motion was approved by all, with the exception of Mrs. Horton. She felt that there were still too many questions and not enough details for her to vote to approve the plan- for example, how many feet will the tree lawn end up being, 3 or 8 feet? Mr. Bates asked what would happen to a home if a septic system ended up in the construction zone. Mr. Davidson said that if any construction makes a house uninhabitable, then ODOT would purchase the house. Giving home owners a "cost to cure" would also be feasible in some cases. Ms. Martin agreed with Mrs. Horton that the board should approve at a high level with specific concerns listed. Mr. Hurley suggested the board amend the motion to something similar to- the Bike & Pedestrian Advisory Board recommends adoption of the study with consideration being given to the following concerns:

- Width of the tree lawn/buffer zone
- Lane width
- Intersection crossings/crosswalks (from north to south)
- Width of the shared use path and sidewalk
- Gutter configuration
- Continuous sidewalks (without gaps)
- Concerns of high speed cyclists sharing the path with recreational cyclists and pedestrians
- Proper railroad crossings
- Property impacts

Mr. Schmidt suggested modifying the wording of the concerns. For example, a minimum 3 ½ foot tree lawn, 11 foot maximum lane width, etc. Mr. Bates doesn't want to be overly prescriptive. Mr. Creed agreed that if it's important to the board, we do need to be specific on lane width. Mr. Stephan brought the new motion up for a vote. Mrs. Horton seconded it as amended. All were in favor with none opposed or abstaining. Ms. Stewart asked if they wanted these concerns addressed during the design phase of the project, to which Ms. Martin said yes. Mr. Bates also wanted to make sure that City Council is aware of the listed concerns. Mr. Hurley said he will make sure the minutes are part of the Council packet for that meeting.

#### **Updates:**

1. Complete Streets MORPC Assistance Program Award – Mr. Hurley shared with the board that the Service & Engineering Department had applied for, and received, a Complete Streets technical assistance award from MORPC. Ms. Thornton will forward the award letter in a future email.
2. Bike & Pedestrian Master Planning – The board needs to chart out what it believes needs to be included in a Master Plan and get this project moving. Mr. Creed has taken a stab at it and Ms. Thornton will share his document with the board along with a variety of other RFP documents from other cities across the country to use as a starting point. Mr. Schmidt said that the scope included in an RFP will be key. Mr. Hurley and Ms. Martin said this will be the priority at the September meeting.
3. September Meeting Scheduling – Due to scheduling conflicts for both Ms. Thornton and Mr. Hurley, they need to ask the board to pick an alternative date for the September meeting. Ms. Thornton will email alternative dates to the board.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.