



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

### **Minutes of the Monday, June 17, 2019 Meeting**

**Location Note:** *This meeting was held at City Hall in the upstairs Training Room.*

**Members Present:** The members present were Mike Bates, Katie Burkley, Ann Horton, Emma Lindholm, Jordan Schweller, and Kelly Whalen.

City Support staff Darren Hurley (Parks & Recreation Director) and Dan Whited (Service and Engineering Director) were also present, along with DLZ Consultant Cynthia Peck and City Council Member Rachael Dorothy. Also in attendance were Tony and Corinne Konecny, David Roseman, and Carrie Troester.

Minutes from the May 20, 2019 meeting were approved by all in attendance.

#### **Visitor Comments:**

David Roseman introduced himself as a Columbus resident and long-time bike and pedestrian advocate including being a part of Consider Biking, Yay Bikes, MORPC committees, and more. He came to distribute Bicycling Street Smarts booklets for everyone in attendance. The books are funded through vanity license plate sales and provide valuable information to bikers. Mr. Roseman added that he is also happy to be a resource and answer any questions on local or regional bike and pedestrian issues. He suggested those in attendance "like" Bike Commuting in Columbus on Facebook for more information on things going on around the region. Mr. Bates asked where we can get more booklets. Mr. Roseman replied he brought 40 extra and will provide them to Mr. Hurley. They are tough to come by but he can try to get more if we contact him.

There were no other visitor comments on items not on the agenda.

*Note: Due to some technical difficulties with the presentation by DLZ Consultant Cynthia Peck, the meeting started with update number one from the agenda.*

## Update:

1. Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan Status – Mr. Hurley explained the outcome of the May 20, 2019, Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan presentation to City Council. He explained that in general Council Members seemed positive about the plan and the Complete Streets Policy but they had a lengthy discussion about what it means and what it commits them to moving forward and ended up tabling them so they would have an opportunity to review further and provide additional input before final adoption. Since then, Council Member Scott Myers had provided revised Resolutions which softened some of the language around how the plans would be used, essentially noting they are more of a resource for future decisions than a directive. Council Member David Robinson had provided some recommended changes to the text of the master plan and complete streets policy for consideration as well. Both the master plan and complete streets policy are back on the City Council Agenda for tonight and Council is expected to discuss the proposed changes and either decide to move forward with no or some changes or perhaps table again and request further action by the board or staff. Mr. Hurley apologized that he was only able to get the agenda information and proposed changes out to the board earlier today, but he was off on Friday and didn't have a chance to send it out. He invited members to attend the Council meeting if possible but wasn't sure how the discussion would go or if there would be an opportunity for comment.

Ms. Horton commented she was concerned about the proposed watering down of the Complete Streets Policy. Ms. Lindholm thinks the proposed changes are too much and she hates to see the tone of the plans changed dramatically after all the process that went into them. Mr. Hurley said that had been the theme of the discussion at the May 20 Council Meeting in terms of Council concerns about what are they committed to versus just having something that informs decisions. Mr. Roseman shared that if you don't have a Complete Streets Policy in place it could impact your ability to obtain funding through MORPC and other funding providers. He also said some communities have significantly changed and softened Complete Streets Policy language at adoption and it has impacted their funding status as grantors did not feel it was a legitimate policy. Ms. Dorothy shared she intended to push for the plans to obtain approval with no or only minor changes.

Prior to returning to the first agenda item, Mr. Hurley introduced a new member to the board, Mr. Jordan Schweller. Mr. Schweller is replacing Gary Schmidt who resigned his position before moving away. There is now one more vacancy with Larry Creed not seeking reappointment at the end of his term. City Council will be working to fill Mr. Creed's vacant seat as well.

- 1. Crossing Improvements at S.R. 161/Pingree Drive – Consultant Recommendations:**  
Mr. Hurley reviewed discussions from recent meetings about the crossing project at S.R. 161 and Pingree Drive and the board's request to have the intersection studied for the best crossing treatment. Mr. Hurley introduced City Engineer Dan Whited and DLZ Consultant Cynthia Peck. Mr. Hurley explained that Ms. Peck and her team had been studying the intersection and she was here tonight to share their findings and recommendation for the intersection. Ms. Peck reviewed the attached Technical Memorandum which had been provided to members earlier in the day. She walked everyone through the sight distance study, pedestrian and traffic counts that had been completed, and what they mean as they do their evaluation. Finally, she went through each of the three alternatives listed in the

memo and the supplementary option they recommend for any of the three alternatives which is a refuge island which would go in the current turn lane to provide a safe refuge for those crossing all three lanes.

Ms. Peck explained that while each option has its advantages and disadvantages, her recommendation given all the data collected was the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB). She would also recommend a refuge island. She feels the RRFB is the most appropriate based on the data and study they performed. She explained the Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) option had some advantages but she believed it would be too much for the lower volumes at this intersection compared to Old Worthington and that it would have a negative impact on traffic by forcing vehicles to stop unnecessarily and that it could lead to a dangerous situation as vehicles could begin to perceive there is no reason to stop as they might not see a pedestrian and start running through them on red there and, in addition, in Old Worthington. She feels the RRFB is more appropriate and more cost effective.

Ms. Horton stated that the corner on the north east side of the intersection is very cluttered with poles and other utility items, is there anything that can be done? Ms. Peck responded it can be looked at in design and perhaps some changes can be made. Ms. Horton also asked if the refuge island could have landscaping or some other treatment to make it more visually appealing. Mr. Whited responded that landscaping would not be an option as maintenance and snow removal would make it very difficult to maintain and honestly it would not end up looking nice due to constraints on city resources. He suggested doing the middle in pavers which would be consistent with other treatments around town and would soften the look from solid concrete.

Mr. Bates asked what is the cost estimate on the refuge island. Ms. Peck indicated she was not sure without more design work. Mr. Whited responded a very rough estimate could be around \$20,000 depending on which type of refuge island is chosen and what aesthetic treatments (pavers) are applied.

Ms. Horton asked about speeds along the street. What does it take to get speeds reduced? Ms. Peck replied she hates to drop speed limits without study and that she feels speed is dictated more by the characteristics of the street. Mr. Whited added that since this is a state route ODOT would have to be involved in any speed limit change discussion. Ms. Lindholm stated that pedestrian crossings tend to slow traffic so this should have a positive effect on speeds.

Ms. Burkley asked if warning signs would be placed ahead of the crossing to alert drivers prior to reaching the crossing. Ms. Peck responded we would look at that in design but those type of warning signs are more typically a consideration when sight distance is an issue which is not the case here.

Mr. Whalen asked what are the reasons for the refuge island. Ms. Peck replied it will improve the performance of any treatment chosen as it provides pedestrians an opportunity to pause and assess their safety for the second part of the crossing and it also serves as a

warning the drivers that something is going on here and they should slow down and be alert.

Ms. Konecny introduced herself as a resident living on the corner of Plymouth and 161. She stated she had concerns about where would emergency vehicles who frequent that road travel if a motorist pulled over adjacent to the refuge island. Ms. Peck replied that the refuge island would be a very short feature in the turn lane and it would be easy for drivers to pull forward before stopping leaving a clear path for emergency vehicles. Mr. Hurley indicated it was standard that Fire and Police Chiefs would be involved in design and have an opportunity for input. Ms. Konecny asked why cross at Pingree and not at Greenwich at the northeast corner of the park? Mr. Hurley replied that much discussion had centered around making the park to park connection since Pingree Park is right down the road and the idea that Pingree connects more directly to many streets to the north it seemed like the most direct route. Ms. Peck indicated moving further east to Greenwich also had a negative impact on sight distance as it moves the crossing closer to the rise in S.R. 161 coming from the east and would decrease sight distance for the crossing. Mr. Bates asked Ms. Konecny what was her objection to the project? Ms. Konecny replied she does not see the need for the improved crossing. She sees people cross safely on a regular basis and never sees anyone waiting to cross the road.

Mr. Konecny introduced himself as the same residence as Ms. Konecny. He stated vehicles like to turn left onto S.R. 161 from Pingree Drive and sit in the turn lane until it clears to merge into traffic going east. Will this take away that opportunity? Ms. Peck replied it likely would depending on the final placement of the refuge island.

Ms. Carrie Troester introduced herself as the neighbor living on the northeast corner of S.R. 161 and Pingree Drive where all of the clutter is already in existence in front of their house. She has small children and has not had any issues crossing 161 to go to the park or other places. She would prefer to see the money for this project moved to other crossing challenges in town such as along North High Street where more children may be required to cross due to recent school redistricting. She is also concerned about the added posts going in the right of way in front of their property as it is already cluttered. She said she was pleased to hear it was not going to be a PHB with mast arms, but could the City at least consider moving something out of her busy corner in front of her house if more poles would be added? In general, she just feels the improved crossing will only have a minimal impact on what she feels is currently a safe crossing.

Mr. Roseman asked if this would be considered a bike and pedestrian crossing or just a pedestrian crossing. Mr. Whalen replied he would think it would be both. Mr. Roseman responded if so please consider signage reflecting both bike and pedestrian crossing.

Mr. Whalen and Mr. Bates shared that given the very detailed report provided today by DLZ and the concerns shared by residents they would like to take some additional time and ask for more detailed visuals of what the treatment would look like with the refuge island, posts, etc. This would help in the discussion with neighbors and also help the board members to visualize the project before making a decision and recommendation. Mr. Hurley and Mr. Whited indicated that would not be hard to do and they would work with Ms. Peck to provide

that prior to the next meeting. Mr. Whited shared that if there was board approval tonight, the likely timeline for starting construction would be November. Any additional time would likely push that back. Mr. Hurley noted that the posts and signals could be done in various weather but any refuge island work with concrete would be more weather dependent and could be delayed in the winter months.

There was consensus on the board to gather more information and revisit at the July meeting. Mr. Hurley indicated he would keep neighbors informed.

### **Update:**

2. City Special Events – Mr. Hurley reminded the board that Ms. Thornton had put together a sign in sheet for volunteers to help spread awareness at select city events. He thanked those who had participated in the Memorial Day Parade and indicated there were two upcoming events with spaces. The goal had been for each member to volunteer for one event. He will circulate via email in hopes of filling the remaining slots for a July concert and the Summer in the 614 event.

Ms. Lindholm shared an incident on a street in her neighborhood. There is a need to look at sidewalks along Hartford and adjoining streets coming north from Park up to Riverglen. The incident was a car hit another car trying to avoid a pedestrian pushing a stroller. The incident occurred at the intersection of Hartford and Riverglen. Mr. Konecny indicated hedges have been an issue at that intersection before. Ms. Lindholm would like the board to have a discussion about the area. Ms. Dorothy drew a map on the dry erase board of the area and the sidewalk issues. Mr. Hurley suggested Mr. Whalen and Mr. Bates and he look for an opportunity on an upcoming agenda to add it.

Mr. Hurley indicated that new member Mr. Schweller had some suggestions regarding connections on the west side of Worthington when they met to do his orientation. He had suggested to Mr. Schweller that he bring them up at a future meeting when the agenda wasn't so full.

A motion was made and approved by all in attendance to adjourn the meeting.