PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND ACCESS TASK FORCE
MEETING #10 – MEETING MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, January 8, 2015
Time: 5:00 - 7:00 pm
Location: Basement Conference Room – Larcom City Hall
Attendees:

Task Force Members Present, 7: Vivienne Armentrout; Scott Campbell; Neal Elyakin ; Linda Diane Feldt; Anthony Pinnell; Sarah Pressprich Gryniewicz; Jim Rees;
Task Force Members Absent, 2: Kenneth Clark; Owen Jansson
Public Present, 4: Richard Hausman; Kathy Griswold; Barbara Lucas; Eric Lipson; refer to Attachment B for sign-in sheet
City Staff Present, 3: Eli Cooper, Cynthia Redinger, Connie Pulcipher;
Consultant Present (The Greenway Collaborative), 2: Norman Cox and Carolyn Prudhomme

Re: Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force Meeting

Meeting Called to Order: 5:00 pm

1. Introductions.

2. Changes to agenda: No changes to the agenda.

3. Public Commentary:
    1. Richard Hausman – Would like to get more feedback on how and if an issue is addressed when posting a complaint to A2 Fix It, otherwise it is difficult to tell if it is effective.

4. Approval of Meeting 8 Discussion/Minutes – minutes approved.

5. Discussion and Action items
    1. Traffic Management
    2. Work-zone Related
    3. Bicycle Related

6. Update on the Proposed Sidewalk Snow & Ice Ordinance – C. Pulcipher gave an update on the status of the proposed sidewalk snow and ice ordinance which first reading was postponed due to concerns of enforceable procedures for noticing and ticketing that require additional discussion and editing.

7. Snowbuddy Update – V. Armentrout moves that the Task Force applauds the efforts of a private entity to undertake the evaluation of the Snowbuddy program and eagerly anticipates the results. Seconded by S. Pressprich Gryniewicz. Unanimous approval.

8. Subcommittee Updates.
    1. Crosswalk Budget/CIP Subcommittee – V. Armentrout gave an update on state funding actions for transportation, the capital improvement plan and Act 51.

9. Next Steps – Update on the next meeting, February 4th, 2015 City Hall basement meeting room.

10. Public Commentary:
    1. Barbara Lucas– There is a website called www.michiganspeedlimits.org with information on the 85th percentile. Outside of the City of Ann Arbor, there is a feeling that the 85th percentile is the right way. A lot of people outside of Ann Arbor feel that Ann Arbor is doing things illegally. You need to be aware and stay on top of what is going on at the State legislature; because there is concern that they might push something through. Some people at the Washtenaw County Road Commission support the 85th percentile as well. When speed studies are done, if a car is slowing for a bicycle or pedestrian they have to throw out that car speed.
    2. Kathy Griswold – Crosswalk improvements are needed at Pioneer High School and Edgewood. We need to have minimal standards met at all school crosswalks. There is a concern that City Staff is waiting to deal with some urgent issues, such as lighting and safety issues, until this Task Force is complete in August 2015. Don't let the City defer operation issues to the Task Force. The City of New York significantly reduced pedestrian death in 2014 because the Major changed legislation to make the default speed limit 25. The crosswalk at Huron High School near Gallup Park needs to be updated to current standards.
    3. Eric Lipson –The crosswalk at Edgewood and Stadium is a major concern; it needs improvements and is a death waiting to happen. This group needs to consider pedestrian lighting. In many cases trees block street light from reaching the sidewalk. Lights need to be aimed at the sidewalk. The lighting moratorium was done five years ago for financial reasons and should be abolished. Lighting has to be evaluated. Better crosswalk signage and consistency in crosswalk signs is needed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm. Minutes taken by Carolyn Prudhomme

[Secretary note: for all of these meetings there will be two records of the meeting. These minutes are a record of official actions taken and public commentary. Ann Arbor City staff and/or the consultant on this project, the Greenway Collaborative, will produce a second record of the discussion points of the meeting, with more detail. Both of these records will be available on the Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force Google Drive repository, available through the City of Ann Arbor website at www.a2gov.org/departments/systems-planning/Transportation/Pages/Pedestrian-Safety-and-Access-Task-Force.aspx]

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND ACCESS TASK FORCE
MEETING #9 - DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Note: This is not a direct transcription of the meeting discussion. The following summary has been developed from notes taken during the meeting; comments are paraphrased. Where staff and consultants provided information and responses they are shown in italics.

- Approval of Agenda:
    - Unanimous approval (Attachment C).

- Approval of Meeting # 9 Minutes and Discussion Summary:
    - Unanimous approval.

- Discussion on Traffic Management:
    - What's the reality in regards to the 85th percentile? It is the absolute law or do you have to take into account what the community wants and consider that bicyclists and pedestrians are present? *Engineering studies are completed when Speed limits are set and a large component of the study is the 85th percentile to see what speeds the traffic is currently traveling at. Beyond that, we also consider the road users, geometry of the road and the context. US Limits (a program developed and maintained by the Federal Highway Administration) is used to confirm recommendation that come out of the engineering studies. US Limits is expert-based decision software and takes bicycle and pedestrians into consideration.*
    - *The 85th percentile is part of the entire package, but not the only factor. The 85th percentile is objective. City staff is sensitive to trying to get the right balance. The City's speed limits are usually context sensitive and we have used provisions, such as roadways that are adjacent to public parks, to post speeds at 25 mph.*
    - *The Michigan Department of Transportation tends to rely more on the 85th percentile on its roads.*
    - How much say does the City have on setting speed limits on roads under their jurisdiction? *As long as the engineering study supports the lower limit it can be posted. If you post a speed that is dramatically lower on an auto oriented roadway it could be argued against in court that you are creating a speed trap.*
    - *If you want a road to function differently, you usually have to make changes to the design elements to influence speeds.*
    - How much control does the City have over the design of the street? *We have a fair amount of control. For example, a lower design speed has been selected for Geddes Avenue (near back entrance to Gallup Park) to help tame the traffic on that roadway. Even though Geddes has the service of getting people in and out of downtown, to be sensitive to the context of the road the lower speed was chosen. All of the elements in that corridor will be developed to that design speed.*

- What design speed has been chosen for Geddes Avenue (south of Huron River near the rear entrance to Gallup Park)? *Staff Follow-up: The design speed for Geddes Avenue is 30 mph. The current speed is posted at 30 mph except around the curve where it is posted 25 mph*
- Do road diets slow speeds? *Road diets provide more consistent and uniform speeds. They also prevent motorists from weaving through the corridor, making it much safer.*
- *In the City, road diets are primarily implemented for safety and bike lanes are an added benefit. Adding bike lanes improves both the pedestrian and bicycle realm; they get bicycles off the sidewalk and provide an extra 5 foot buffer between the sidewalk and motor vehicles.*
- If we wanted to make all of the roadways under the City's jurisdiction 25 mph, we would have to undertake a series of design changes that would be a capitol cost. *Yes, and some of the larger arterial roads will always have more of a vehicular focus and it will be hard to bring them down to 25 mph.*
- The roundabouts near Skyline High School work really well and traffic flows slowlyand smoothly. The biggest concern is that it is difficult to see pedestrians, who are usually students, crossing the street. *From an engineering standpoint, roundabouts are designed in way that if used properly, safety is a shared responsibly between the motorists and the pedestrian. When driving the roundabout properly, the driver should have ample time to see the pedestrian and stop. In reality, as part of this Task Force, you can determine what type of education and enforcement is needed and if this is truly an issue.*
- Traffic flows smoothly on Jackson Road now that there are three lanes; however there are no midblock crosswalks for pedestrians. *Staff follow-up: MDOT is testing out the 4 to 3 lane conversion and plans to install midblock crosswalks in a year or so once the project is permanent.*
- Crosswalks are inconsistent in signage and markings making it difficult to identify them when driving. *The City uses two style of marked crosswalk; parallel markings on lower speed/volume roadways and high visibility continental crosswalks on high speed/volume roadways. Engineering judgment and cost effectiveness are considered when implementation crosswalks. There are some signs that were put in place over 15 years ago and do not follow current standards so they are different. Later generations are intended to be clearer.*
- *In Ann Arbor, pedestrians have the right to cross the road anywhereas long as they do not impede the path of a motor vehicle.*
- Lighting is a major concern when in regards to crosswalk, especially at night and in the morning in the winter months when it is dark. *It is challenging in Ann Arbor as we would like more lights for safety we also have a lighting moratorium that was put in effect about five years ago which limits the addition of new lighting. The moratorium focuses on energy efficiency, cost and maintenance of lighting.*
- Are there rules/laws that limit how many crosswalks you can have in a particular area? *No, there are engineering guidelines that are followed.*

  - Are there rules/laws limits to how frequently speed humps can be placed along a corridor? By putting in speed humps does it automatically change the speed limit? *The City follows best practice guidelines for the design and placement of speed humps that have been established by the Institute of Transportation Engineers. Speed humps are designed to be driven over at 25 mph. In reality, as they are installed with hot mix asphalt, there is some variability and the actual driving speed may come out at 20 mph. When done properly there is compliance. Based on analysis completed by the Washtenaw Road Commission, speed humps were found to be very effective and led to a reduction in speeds.*
  - There is desire by the public for a total redesign of the intersection at Washtenaw Road and Stadium Blvd; it is difficult to access the bus stop. *The City has been working with MDOT and AAATA to install a crosswalk at this location and provide access to the bus stop; it comes down to funding at this point.*
  - Many people are interested in eliminating right turn on red in the Downtown area. *The Downtown Street Design Manual is focusing on this issue and, based on significant community input, is hearing support for eliminating right turn on red in the DDA district. The Task Force may consider also weighing in on that recommendation. An engineering study would need to be done to determine the feasibility of such a recommendation.*
  - Right turn on green, when the driver actually has the right of way, can be very dangerous for pedestrians as well.
  - How does someone put in a request for new lighting to be put in? *A request could be made through an email to City Staff or A2 Fix It. Systems Planning would evaluate and prioritize the request.*

- Discussion on Work Zone Related Issues:
  - Historically, there were always sidewalk sheds at construction sites. For example, Construction photos from the 1960's all show those sheds. What changed (policy, fees, etc.) between then and now that we rarely provide construction sheds at construction sites now? *It is not clear what triggered the change. One reason may be the building code and a lack in the ability to inspect the integrity of the shed before they go up. There are also different types of construction projects that have different time frames which may impact whether a sidewalk shed or closing is used. The Downtown Street Design Manual project team is also focusing on this issue and looking at best practices from other communities.*
  - We may have some policies in place that make it cheaper for a construction company to close a sidewalk than provide a sidewalk shed. For example, at First and Washington the sidewalk was closed during a large construction project and it should have been kept open. It should be more expensive to close the sidewalk then put up a shed. In terms of priority, pedestrians only get a small portion of the right-of-way and they should not be the first to go when there is a construction project; pedestrian sidewalks should be the last to go.

  - What permission is needed to close a sidewalk, how long can it be closed and when are sheds an option? Potentially, fees for closing a sidewalk could be funneled into other pedestrian improvements.

- Discussion on Bicycle Related Issues:
  - Why are the "Please Walk Bike" signs used in the downtown? What is the logic to these signs? *As part of the recommendation in the Non-motorized Transportation Plan, sidewalks are available to both bicycles and pedestrians. The signs are oriented to the sidewalk to inform and remind bicyclists to yield to pedestrians and to please walk their bicycle as a courtesy.*
  - *Similar signs were also put up in the State Street area due to the narrow walkways. In reality, bicycles still ride on the sidewalk.*
  - *Generally, if you want bicycles off the sidewalk, you need to provide a safe and comfortable separated facility where they feel comfortable away from traffic.*
  - *The Downtown Street Design Manual project team is looking into bicycle priority streets.*
  - In Ann Arbor, are you legally required to have a bell on your bike? *Based on State Law a bell is not required if you give an audible warning when overtaking a pedestrian. You are required to have a light in front and a reflector in back.*
  - What is a traffic control device? *It can be pavement markings, signs or signals.*
  - Are sharrows (a.k.a. shared lane markings) effective; do bicyclists feel safer and do drivers behave differently in the presence of a sharrow? *When sharrows were installed in the Downtown, we noticed an increase in the number of bicyclists using the roadway and received lots of positive feedback from members of the Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition. The installation of sharrows and share the road signs made it clear that it is a shared space and there is less hostility.*
  - Bicyclists are drawn to separate bicycle facilities, which get them off the sidewalk. Increased physical separation is the best thing for bicycles, pedestrians and vehicles. Although expensive, there are many best practice models. Bicycle facilities should be safe for a family with children to feel comfortable riding their bike on. *Politically, there may come a point in time where the demand for such facilities is such that the City will make a choice to invest in separate facilities and reallocate physical and financial resources to make that happen. The Downtown Street Design Manual project team is considering additional bicycle facilities in the downtown.*
  - There is potential for conflict between bicycles and pedestrians on shared use paths. *A lot of the existing shared use paths were implemented decades ago with different standards. Many are 8 feet or less wide. New paths will be up a minimum of 10' wide and maybe 12' – 14' where there are high volumes of pedestrians and bicycles.*
  - What are the rules for bicycles when sharing a pathway for pedestrians? *Bicyclists must yield to pedestrians, give an audible warning and pass on the left.*
  - The new pathway along Washtenaw works well for bicycles and pedestrians.

- *Road diets are not feasible on all roadways; traffic volumes must be considered*.
- Has there been any feedback on the Jackson Road 4 to 3 lane conversion? *Feedback from has been very positive and they feel speeds have gone down. After the final coat of asphalt has been installed, the center turn lane will continue to the intersection so it is easier to turn onto side streets.*
- Can the task force have a map that identifies street jurisdiction? *That map exists as part of the Non-motorized Plan. Post meeting follow-up: N. Cox sent the map and the road functional classification map to the Task Force.*
- Can private roads be addressed by the City? *Private roads would be addressed by the homeowners association. Safety has no bounds, so there are some things that the City could communicate to the homeowners associations and bring to their attention.*

- Update on the Proposed Sidewalk Snow and Ice Ordinance:
  - *Since the last Task Force meeting, after further discussion internally, City Staff determined that the language was not ready to be taken to first reading of City Council at their January 5 meeting. The proposed ordinance amendment did not anticipatepotential added costs to the city for snow removal if a ticket is dismissed in court. Last year the judges dismissed a lot of tickets. The City does not wait 10 days to clear the snow, as they want it accessible to pedestrians. We are working on clearer language that minimizes financial risk to the City by making it clear that any charges incurred by the City to remove snow will be charged to the homeowner regardless of the outcome of a court decision.*
  - How many tickets were dismissed last year? *We do not have that information.*
  - What was the reasoning for the tickets being dismissed? *Hardship and the amount of snow last year.*
  - Many people do not want to have a wasted warning; they feel you should be ticketed immediately. As example, if a car is blocking a driveway, it is towed away, there is no warning period. The same should apply to a sidewalk, as you are blocking a pedestrian's route on the sidewalk.
  - The language "snow or ice of 1 inch" was removed in the December 2014 proposed amendment language and it now refers to any amount of snow or ice. Based on personal observation, it seems that people only shovel after a significant snow event. It will be important to educate everyone, so they know they need to shovel after every snow event, whether large or small. *The intent, as understood by the Task Force, is that sidewalks should be cleared regardless of the depth.*
  - *Additionally, City staff is going to be suggesting a May 1, 2015 effective date if City Council approves the amended language. This is give staff time to develop and effective outreach and education campaign.*
  - *We anticipate that a first and second reading would be in March. An update will be provided at the February Task Force meeting.*
  - Do we want clearer language about bus stops included? *At the last meeting, a decision was made that we don't be explicit about bus stops. "Walk or ramp that*

leads to a street" has been added to the language to capture all bus stops and other areas that may not have been anticipated. The winter maintenance subcommittee should discuss this issue at their next meeting and provide a clear direction to City Staff as soon as possible.

- When a homeowner buys a house, it needs to be clear to them what they are responsible for maintaining.

- Snowbuddy Update:
  - V. Armentrout moves that the Task Force applauds the efforts of a private entity to undertake the evaluation of the snowbuddy program and eagerly anticipates the results. Seconded by S. Pressprich Gryniewicz. Unanimous approval.

- Crosswalk Budget/CIP Subcommittee Update:
  - V. Armentrout gave an update on state funding actions for transportation, the capital improvement plan and Act 51. (See Appendix D for a detailed report)

- **The next meeting will focus on land use/site design, transit related issues and roundabouts. A reminder will be sent out to the Task Force to provide any specific questions they have regarding land use/site design, transit related issues and roundabouts for the next issues and resources brief. The Task Force will have until the EOB on Monday, January 12th to email their questions to C. Prudhomme via Google Group.**

Attachment B: Sign-in Sheet

CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN
Public Services Area/Systems Planning
301 E. Huron Street
P.O. Box 8647, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107

Web: www.a2gov.org/pedsafety

SIGN-IN SHEET - PEDESTRIAN SAFETY & ACCESS TASK FORCE
TASK FORCE MEETING #10
Date: Wednesday, January 7, 2015
Time: 5:00 - 7:00 pm
Location: Basement Conference Room - Larcom City Hall (301 E Huron Street)

NAME

Richard Hausman
Kathy Griswold
Barbara Lucas
Eric Lipson

Attachment C: Approved Agenda

CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN
Public Services Area/Systems Planning
301 E. Huron Street
P.O. Box 8647, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107

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APPROVED AGENDA - PEDESTRIAN SAFETY & ACCESS TASK FORCE
TASK FORCE MEETING #10
Date: Wednesday, January 7, 2015
Time: 5:00 - 7:00 pm
Location: Basement Conference Room – Larcom City Hall (301 E Huron Street)

Chair: Linda Diane Feldt
Secretary: Ken Clark

1.	Introductions	5 – 5:05 pm
2.	Approval of Agenda	5:05 – 5:10 pm
3.	Public Commentary (3 minutes/speaker, limit three speakers)	5:10 – 5:20 pm
4.	Approval of Meeting #9 Discussion Summary	5:20 – 5:25 pm
5.	Discussion and Action Items	5:25 – 6:25 pm
	a) Traffic Management (20 minutes)	
	b) Work-zone Related (20 minutes)	
	c) Bicycle-Related (20 minutes)	
6.	Update on the Proposed Sidewalk Snow & Ice Ordinance	6:25 – 6:35 pm
7.	Snowbuddy Update	6:35 – 6:40 pm
8.	Subcommittee Updates	6:40 – 6:50 pm
	a) Crosswalk Budget/CIP Subcommittee (10 minutes)	
9.	Next Steps	6:50 – 7:00 pm
	a) Next Round of Issues and Resources Brief	
10.	Public Commentary (3 minutes/speaker)	

Attachment D: Crosswalk CIP/Budget Subcommittee Report

Note: This report was provided as a supplement following the meeting and combines information from V.Armentrouts report and K.Clark's email.

Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force
Budget and CIP Subcommittee report: January 7, 2014
Vivienne Armentrout

State Funding Update:

In Michigan, we have experienced a shortfall in transportation funding since at least 2008. Our major state sources of transportation funding have been the motor fuel tax and vehicle registration fees. We also get substantial Federal funding but generally projects require a state matching amount in order to receive the Federal funding.

Starting in FY 2011-12, the Legislature has had to approve supplemental funding from the General Fund in order to match Federal funds, since the motor fuel tax yield has not been adequate.

But the Legislature has also gotten reluctant to address other transportation modes than roads. So last year's budget included a special "winter maintenance" supplement of $100,000 and then a "Priority Roads investment program" to selected projects. The only one in Washtenaw County was Prospect Road.

It has been clear that a new funding source has been needed. In the December lame-duck session, a complicated set of bills was passed that would change the motor fuel formula and a number of other tax structures. (Please see the House Fiscal Agency summary and analysis, separate document.) It depends on the voters approving a new 1% sales tax in a May referendum. If that passes, it looks as though $1.165 Billion in new funds would flow to the Act 51 mechanism (and thus to the MTF in part). Otherwise, local governments and the state will be faced with a continued transportation deficit. This will impact the amount that can be spent on nonmotorized projects as well.

CIP:

The Capital Improvement Plan is a planning device in which items for future construction or other capital costs are prioritized for scheduling purposes. It does not actually assign funds to those projects. Sources of funding can vary from City General Fund to restricted funds like the state Roads funds to special Federal and State grants. The CIP for 2016-2021 was approved by the Planning Commission on December 16, 2014.

The City Council will begin a series of work sessions to discuss budget priorities in February. In April the Administrator will present a draft budget that will include some of these prioritized projects, with the funding indicated. The Council will review this and will finally adopt the budget, probably on May 18 this year. Before that, there will be a public hearing and an opportunity to weigh in on the selection of projects.

The significance to the work of this committee is that we have an opportunity (February-May) to speak to priorities for the pedestrian-related items already listed. If we believe that additional projects are needed, we would have to ask that these be added for this budget year. However, since our task force is supposed to complete our work in August, it might be even more productive to propose that items be added and moved to high priority for next year.

Ken Clark's email on January 7, 2014:

Act 51

The two primary sources of road money in Michigan are Act 51 money (about $1 billion per year), and federal funding (also about $1 billion per year). The Act 51 money is revenue from weight taxes received at vehicle registration each year, and fuel taxes levied at the pump. Note that there is also sales tax on fuels, but that money goes to cities and schools, not to road funding. Collectively, the state funding is called the "Michigan Transportation Fund" (MTF).

The state money is then subdivided according to a set of formulas in Act 51 itself. After specific amounts are removed for various purposes (like special bridge funds), the remaining is split three ways: 39.1% to state trunklines, 39.1% to county road commissions, and 21.8% to cities and townships.

That 21.8% is divided among the cities and townships in the state according to two criteria, their population and their total lane mileage. That's important. It has nothing to do with vehicle miles traveled, gas bought or used in a jurisdiction, percentage of people driving, or anything else. It's strictly population and road lane miles. Ann Arbor received almost $9 million in the most recent budget from the state in Act 51 funding.

Next, Act 51 section 10k requires:
"(2) Of the funds allocated from the Michigan transportation fund to the state trunk line fund and to the counties, cities, and villages, a reasonable amount, but not less than 1% of those funds shall be expended for construction or improvement of nonmotorized transportation services and facilities."

So a *minimum* of 1% of that funding *must* be used for nonmotorized transportation services and facilities. The money doesn't have to be spent on a yearly basis, but every 10 year basis they have to have spent that much on nonmotorized transportation. Of course, most jurisdictions in the state either ignore that provision, or count things like paving rural roads as nonmotorized transportation projects.

For many years, Ann Arbor didn't set aside specific funding for nonmotorized transportation, but a decade or so ago the city decided to set aside 3% of our Act 51 money for non-motorized transportation. That amount has fluctuated recently because of Michigan's severe recession, but in the last budget there was an about 2.4% set aside, of almost $219,000 for "alternative transportation", with just under $200,000 going to public services.