

**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND ACCESS TASK FORCE
MEETING #9 – MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Wednesday, December 3, 2014

Time: 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Location: Basement Conference Room – Larcom City Hall

Attendees:

Task Force Members Present, 7: Vivienne Armentrout; Scott Campbell; Kenneth Clark; Neal Elyakin ; Linda Diane Feldt; Owen Jansson; Sarah Pressprich Gryniewicz; Jim Rees;

Task Force Members Absent, 1: Anthony Pinnell;

Public Present, 2: Sabra Briere; Kathy Griswold; refer to Attachment B for sign-in sheet
City Staff Present, 3: Deb Gosselin, Nick Hutchinson, Connie Pulcifer;

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. Kathy Griswold – Now is the time to get money set aside in the budget. Recommending \$2 million dollars a year put towards pedestrian infrastructure the next few years to catch up. Buses parked at crosswalks are an issue. Existing law does not apply if buses are loading or unloading within 20' of crosswalks and within crosswalks. If we want to be an exemplary pedestrian friendly community in the country we need to do everything possible to improve sight distance at corners. Plymouth Road, west of Nixon is confusing. The rectangular rapid flash beacons are too close together, there are lots of driveways and too many flashing lights.
4. Approval of Meeting 8 Discussion/Minutes – minutes approved.
5. Round 1 Public Engagement Update.
6. Subcommittee Updates.
 1. Prioritization of winter maintenance enforcement – (K. Clark, LD Feldt) approved as listed
 2. Snow clearing ordinance – Staff proposed changes were considered friendly (J. Rees, K. Clark) and approved by the Task Force.
 3. Crosswalk Education/Outreach/Enforcement/Law Subcommittee – minutes presented, but no discussion.
7. Correspondence regarding postponed City Council Resolutions –
 1. Moved (by S. Pressprich Gryniewicz, seconded by K. Clark), the Task Force

- approved the motion: "The Task Force requests that City Council does not revise the pedestrian ordinance as suggested. The Task Force is considering a broad review of pedestrian safety recommendations which will be completed in August 2015."
2. V Armentrout moved , O. Jansson seconded that L.D. Feldt should convey to City Council that we don't have a recommendation at this time on vegetation ordinance proposed changes.

 8. Sidewalk Prioritization Overview – Presentation by Nick Hutchinson, Deb Gosselin of city staff on an initial proposed sidewalk gap rating criteria.

 9. Discussion and Action items
 1. Sidewalk gap prioritization
 2. Shared-use paths
 3. Connector Sidewalks
 4. Vegetation
 5. Funding and policies

 10. Next Steps – Update on the next meeting, January 7th, 2015 City Hall basement meeting room.

 11. Public Commentary - none at this part of the meeting

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm. Minutes taken by Sec. Clark

[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]

Attachment A: Meeting #9 Discussion Summary

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 # 7 Minutes and Discussion Summary:
 - Unanimous approval.
- Round 1 Public Engagement Update:
 - In regards to the top ten issues identified in the survey, how many of these issues are actually observed and how many are estimated or perceived?
 - Would a distracted driving law for cell phones and texting be a state or city issues? Does the City have a higher standard than the state? City Council member S. Briere noted that in the past, when a piece of legislation addressing texting was on the City Council agenda, City Council was advised that the City could not do anything. *Distracted driving is one of the biggest issues for Federal Highway for safety*
 - Pedestrian's texting is an issue as well. *That was included in the survey; however it did not make the top ten list of issues.*
 - Some people were inaccurate on where they placed their comment on the map.
 - It is important for the public to understand the difference between the Pedestrian Safety Access Task Force (PSATF) Map and A2 Fix It. *The PSATF Map is a planning tool and A2 Fix It is for non-emergency service requests.*
 - One comment had a lot of dislikes where there was a request for a new sidewalk. Maybe the people who lived there did not want a sidewalk. How is this data gauged and interpreted? *We are looking for patterns where the same type of comment is showing up for similar scenarios. A summary of a type of situation will be provided versus a specific situation. This data collected from this map will be a great resource for the City down the road as they look at specific projects.*
 - *Voting on the PSATF map should be used as a relative barometer based on the percentage of likes and dislikes. Participants were only allowed to vote once per comment per session. However, if they came back for numerous sessions they may have voted on the same comment twice. Also, comments that were posted earlier in the process had an opportunity for more people to vote on them than ones that were posted right before the commenting session was closed.*
 - *The PSATF map and survey are not scientific random samples.*
 - *The PSATF map and survey are just one of many ways we are getting input from the public.*

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- During the community wide meeting, did people use the term “sidewalk gaps” specifically? *A list of issues was provided based on stakeholder focus groups and the survey for participants to prioritize. The term “Gaps in the Sidewalk” is what people prioritized. Sidewalk gaps in neighborhoods, was also listed but did not come as a priority.*
- Prioritization of Winter Maintenance Enforcement:
 - Schools, safe routes to schools, shopping districts, health care facilities, doctor offices, bus routes, and areas with known people with disabilities, such as senior living centers, were identified as priorities by the subcommittee for winter maintenance enforcement.
 - The list is not absolutely comprehensive but the subcommittee would be comfortable sharing it with City Staff for feedback.
 - Will the list of priorities go to City Staff to write up? *The purpose for the subcommittee to look at priority snow enforcement areas is in reaction to community standards officers doing proactive enforcement this year. Community standards officers would find it helpful to have some priorities from this group to help determine where proactive enforcement should occur. City Staff will discuss this list with Community Standards and provide feedback to the subcommittee and let them know if any further clarification is needed.*
 - Is it possible to identify areas with known people with disabilities? *City Staff will be able to provide feedback on that when they review the prioritization list submitted by the subcommittee.*
 - The downtown districts have their own contracted service and mall owners are responsible for clearing their snow. *While malls and shopping centers may have services, those services may be to clear the parking lots and not the sidewalks. There are some places where it is ambiguous who is responsible.*
 - Will community standards officers only do proactive enforcement based on this list? *Neighborhoods are not included. Past practices have been purely complaint driven. This list is to help guide enforcement under a pro-active approach and would not eliminate neighborhoods.*
 - Unanimous approval to send the list onto City Staff for review.
- Snow Removal Ordinance:
 - *Since the last Task Force meeting City Staff has reviewed language proposed by the Winter Maintenance Subcommittee and drafted preliminary language based on the Task Force’s stated intent. A decision needs to be made to determine the approach for advancing this language to City Council if it is to be included in the January 5th and January 20th City Council Meetings.*
 - V. Armentrout approves the preliminary language.
 - L.D. Feldt is in favor of moving quickly. *It will important to include the cost of the fine on the notice that is handed out. A companion piece to the ordinance would be a notice that would explain that the violator has been given a warning and for the rest of the season they can be ticketed without further notice. A diagram*

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- could be included in the notice as well to let people know what they are responsible for.*
- It would be nice to have two column education pamphlets that lets the public know what has changed from the old ordinance to the new one. *The other companion piece would be communications rollout.*
 - *The winter maintenance subcommittees could provide input on the companion pieces.*
 - People need to understand what the definition of a “sidewalk” is that needs to be shoveled. According to this document it is the constructed width.
 - J. Rees finds the language friendly and would be inclined to skip the subcommittee and send the revised ordinance straight to City Council. *Skipping the subcommittee would not make the process any faster.*
 - Based on the originally language, how is it enforceable that the ice must be treated immediately?
 - From a pedestrian perspective, the language regarding ice is worded perfectly, anyone who has ice on their sidewalk should feel like they are breaking the law right then and there whether it is enforced or not.
 - K. Clark feels the language is friendly. Staff covered all the bases and there is no reason to send back to subcommittee.
 - V. Armentrout would like to skip subcommittee approval as well.
 - Concerns that the recent language does not reflect what was discussed at the last subcommittee meeting. Particularly the time certain issues. The subcommittee talked about it but nothing was passed on to the Task Force.
 - O. Jansson feels uncomfortable pushing the ordinance through too fast.
 - The Winter Maintenance Subcommittee needs to figure out how to proceed with their other thoughts and discussion points that are not addressed by this ordinance, such as the plow ridge issue.
 - How are bus stops considered in this preliminary draft language?
 - Providing piecemeal recommendations is not efficient and a poor use of time. *The Task Force is not here to write ordinances as we go along. This is an exception. Based on the original discussion a few meeting ago, there were some near term items, such as closing the 24 hour loop hole issues, that the Task Force wanted addressed for the upcoming snow season. Other recommendations would be provided as part of the August 2015 recommendations.*
 - *The preliminary draft language removes the ambiguity of the original ordinance rather than a radical departure.*
 - What is the earliest this ordinance can go into effect?
 - *The earliest an ordinance can go into effect is 10 days after approval; however City Council has the authority to make it effective at some future date. It is not certain that if this goes on the agenda in January it will be in effect this winter.*
 - These are important changes. In order to have results this winter, we need to act today and move to City Council.

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- “Owner/occupant” may need a closer look. It is not clear who is responsible. Can some clarifications about the language be handled offline? *This is City staffs’ best reworking of the language based on the Task Forces’ intent. There was a discussion about “owner/occupant” and it was kept in the language to be consistent with other language in the ordinance.*
- Some lease agreements say that it is the responsibility of the occupant. In the ordinance it is very clear that any fines or clearing costs go to the owner and added to property taxes if necessary.
- *This ordinance is preliminary draft language and following this meeting there will be additional staff review before it goes to Legistar.*
- S. Pressprich Gryniewicz can be supportive of this language, and would like to talk about how bus stops can be interpreted into this process.
- Council Member S. Briere noted that City Council members can put something on the agenda without any conflict up to the Friday at 5 pm prior to the next City Council meeting. *In this instance, staff feel that they need to review internally and can meet the deadline for the January 5th meeting. City Staff would like to take it forward through the legislative process, as they do with other ordinances.*
- Unanimous approval to move the preliminary draft language from City Staff forward for the January 5th (first reading) and January 20th (public hearing and action) City Council Meetings.
- *City staff will prepare the proposed ordinance amendments for City Council consideration on behalf of the Task Force.*
- Correspondence regarding a postponed City Council Resolution on Crosswalks
 - *The Task Force has an opportunity to respond to the postponed resolution from the October 6th City Council meeting. There was no clear direction from City Council.*
 - L.D. Feldt calls for a motion that the Task Force state its opposition to the proposed crosswalk ordinance change from October 6th and the Task Force would direct the chair to communicate that to City Council via letter. S. Pressprich Gryniewicz made the motion.
 - J. Rees uncomfortable with giving L.D. Feldt blanket authority to write whatever she wants in a letter and send it to City Council.
 - K. Clark would like the language to say that the Task Force is opposed to making this change at this time. List of reasons should not be included.
 - The proposed ordinance language is unnecessary and premature given that this Task Force exists to holistically review materials.
 - Unanimous approval to convey the following language to City Council in a letter from the Chair on behalf of the Task Force: “The Task Force requests that the City Council does not revise the pedestrian ordinance as suggested. The Task Force is considering a broad review of pedestrian safety recommendations which will be completed in August 2015.”
- Correspondence regarding a postponed City Council Resolution on Vegetation

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- What is being proposed in this ordinance change is a lot broader than just pedestrian issues. There is a lot of controversy and history involved. The Task Force has not evaluated the content
- *City Staff will be developing a pamphlet that would have some education components regarding vegetation.*
- Unanimous approval to convey the following language to City Council in a letter from the Chair on behalf of the Task Force: “The Task Force does not have a recommendation at this time on vegetation ordinance proposed changes.”
- *Both letters to City Council need to include reference to the resolutions. Sidewalk Prioritization:*
 - *Prior to the Task Force being formed, City staff completed preliminary work on sidewalk prioritization and developed criteria. The City of Ann Arbor already has a prioritization system that is used for the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and could be used for sidewalk prioritization. The Austin, Texas sidewalk prioritization system was referenced to help develop preliminary criteria. The preliminary list of criteria was chosen based on the ability to mine data from existing resources, such as GIS. (See Attachment D for the list of proposed sidewalk gap rating criteria)*
 - *What about commercial services as pedestrian attractors? Austin has Grocery Stores. Did you think about retail? We don't want to have too many categories to rate or the prioritization will get confusing. We need to figure out how to group them, such as calling them all commercial centers. We would like some feedback.*
 - *On the Austin matrix, what is pedestrian health status? Not sure, it may have to do with a significant number of people in an area who are overweight based on census data.*
 - *Austin uses the health score to address environmental justice. Finding reliable data is a concern.*
 - *Proximity to senior housing could be added. That could be included with public housing depending on the number of them in Ann Arbor.*
 - *Current sources of funding includes:*
 - *General funding - not a typical funding source*
 - *Special assessments – not all sidewalks that need to be put in are assessable (parcels not subject to tax, backyards)*
 - *State and Federal funds – surface transportation funds*
 - *Safety funds*
 - *Currently a “gap” is defined as anywhere along a public right-of-way where there is no sidewalk. It is recognized that there are different kinds of gaps.*
 - *There are city owned lands that do not have sidewalks, such as Hunt Park.*
 - *It appears that sidewalks, and a connection to and adjacent neighborhood, are not included in a large development on Ann Arbor – Saline Road. Are these factored into site plan review? Any new developments are required to incorporate public sidewalks. Site plan approval will be addressed in an upcoming Task Force meeting and we can provide more information at that time.*

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- *The weighting of the criteria is not going to be done today. It has to go through a vetting process including public input, such as through the stakeholder focus groups or surveys.*
- What will be challenging is that this is a heterogeneous set of issues and it is going to be imperfect for most people. Most important is what is going to be done with the ratings. Knowing how many of the gaps are going to get filled will affect how they are rated. The low number of pedestrian/auto crashes that align with sidewalk gaps will be an issue. The lack of pedestrians does not always mean that pedestrians are not going to walk there. Some pedestrians may avoid a corridor because it is too dangerous to walk down without a sidewalk.
- Criteria could include whether there is an existing sidewalk on side of the street.
- Do you fill gaps equally across the city, or make one neighborhood work well? There will be pressure for both approaches.
- It would be useful to know what land cannot be assessed.
- Neighborhoods that were built in the 60's and 70's with no sidewalk have a lot of trees and landscaping in their place. How do we assess those criteria? It would be unfortunate, if neighbors successfully used the presence of mature vegetation as an argument against filling sidewalk gaps. *In this plan we are not going to be parsing down to that level. We could acknowledge that through natural features impact.*
- In neighborhoods where there are no sidewalks, are there easements? *In most cases there is right-of-way sufficient to include a sidewalk.*
- Mature trees need to be figured in, in some way. There is a very strong emotional component. It is an issue that needs to be addressed. *Many times we can work around the major vegetation; the sidewalk doesn't always have to be straight.*
- When it comes to fiscal availability, will the rating include instances when extra funding is available? Yes.
- What happens when a neighborhood promises to donate towards filling a sidewalk gap? *That would part of the fiscal availability and petition request criteria depending on the situation.*
- Mature trees are important but I don't want to see something fall down the list because of mature trees.
- Evidence of use, such as "cow-paths", could be helpful criteria.
- Helpful to identify non-priorities as well, for example dead end streets. Defining low priorities helps to heighten high priorities.
- Funding that relieves homeowners from paying for sidewalks should have a higher priority. *As far as weighting prioritization criteria, it will be difficult to identify funding for every gap in the system and whether there would or would not be funding available.*
- Could you create multiple lists so one funding areas is not competing with another? For example, have a separate priority list for sidewalks in parks.
- Would we be using distance measurements from attractors like Austin? *Yes that would be part of the rating scale itself.*

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- Have pedestrian island crosswalk gaps been considered? *That would be a separate, but related, topic.*
 - Have bus stop gaps been considered, such as pads at the bus stop? *There is access to transit criteria. The actual pads that go from the sidewalk to the curb are funded by AAATA. That would be a separate issue from a sidewalk gap issues.*
 - When bus stop pads go in, there needs to be coordination so there are sidewalks to get to those pads.
 - Road speed and walkability scores should be considered. *Road speeds may fall under road classifications.*
 - At some point the winter maintenance subcommittee could be expanded to be just sidewalk maintenance.
 - The Task Force is comfortable with City Staff proceeding forward with sidewalk prioritization based on input given today. The Task Force will revisit during the recommendation phases.
 - *Subcommittee meeting coordination will be handled through emails. There is a benefit to scheduling all meetings through August 2015, that way they are available if you need them and it is easier to cancel a meeting along the way.*
- **The next meeting will focus on bicycle-related issues, work-zone related issues and traffic management. A reminder will be sent out to the Task Force to provide any specific questions they have regarding bicycle-related issues, work-zone related issues and traffic management for the next issues and resources brief. The Task Force will have until the EOB on December 10th to email their questions to C. Prudhomme via Google Group.**

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

Web: www.a2gov.org/pedsafety

APPROVED AGENDA - PEDESTRIAN SAFETY & ACCESS TASK FORCE
TASK FORCE MEETING #9

Date: Wednesday, December 3, 2014

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 #8 Discussion Summary 5:20 – 5:25 pm
5. Round 1 Public Engagement Update 5:25 – 5:30 pm
6. Subcommittee Updates 5:30 – 5:45 pm
 - a) Prioritization of winter maintenance enforcement (5 minutes)
 - b) Sidewalk maintenance ordinance (5 minutes)
 - c) Crosswalk Education/Outreach/Enforcement/Law Subcommittee (5 minutes)
7. Approve Correspondence regarding postponed City Council resolutions related to pedestrian safety and access 5:45 – 5:55 pm
 - a) Crosswalk Law (5 minutes)
 - b) Vegetation (5 minutes)
8. Sidewalk Prioritization Overview by Deb Gosselin and Nick Hutchinson 5:55 – 6:05 pm
9. Discussion and Action Items 6:05 – 6:55 pm
 - a) Sidewalks Gaps Prioritization (30 minutes)
 - b) Shared Use Paths (5 minutes)
 - c) Connector Sidewalks (5 minutes)
 - d) Vegetation – encroachment and sight lines (5 minutes)
 - e) Funding & Policies (5 minutes)
10. Next Steps 6:55 – 7:00 pm
 - a) Next Round of Issues and Resources Brief
11. Public Commentary (3 minutes/speaker)

Attachment D: Proposed Sidewalk Gap Rating Criteria

Note: This document was provided as a handout during the Task Force Meeting.

Proposed Sidewalk Gap Rating Criteria
Access Subgroup
Access to Schools
Access to Transit
Access to Parks, Libraries, and Government Offices
Access to Public Housing
Access to Religious Institutions
Residential Population Served
Safety Subgroup
Street Classification of Adjacent Road
Pedestrian/Automobile Incidents
Request and Special Identification Subgroup
Petition Request
Gap Specifically identified in Non-Motorized Plan Fig 5.1E
Fiscal Consideration
Fiscal Availability
Other
Network Connectivity
City Owned Lands