

**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND ACCESS TASK FORCE
MEETING #1 DISCUSSION SUMMARY**

Date: Friday, April 4, 2014

Time: 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Location: Larcom City Hall, basement conference room

Attendees: Task Force members present: 9; Vivienne Armentrout; Scott Campbell; Kenneth Clark; Neal Elyakin; Linda Diane Feldt; Owen Jansson; Anthony Pinnell; Sarah Pressprich Gryniewicz; Jim Rees

Public Present: 4; refer to Appendix A for sign-in sheet.

Council members present: 1; Sabra Briere (Ward 1)

City staff present: 2; Kayla Coleman, Connie Pulcipher

Re: Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force Meeting

Meeting Notes

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 responses were provided they are shown in italics.

- Clarification that the proposed work plan does not reflect the Task Force developing the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan. Is the intention that staff will prepare the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan? *Staff has envisioned that the task force would discuss issues and opportunities and help frame the issues. The task force actions will lead up to the preparation of a pedestrian safety action plan. It has not yet been determined who would prepare the Action Plan.*
- Why wouldn't the task force develop the Action Plan? *There is a lot of technical work to be done in developing a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan. We would like to clarify that we don't have to wait for the completion of the Action Plan before implementing ideas from the task force. If task force discussions lead to recommendations for the near term, then action should be taken, if possible.*
- Is it accurate that one task force expectation will be to evaluate the existing crosswalk ordinance, and to make forward thinking recommendations related to city policies and ordinances? *Yes, that is certainly part of what the task force may explore.*
- Which staff might be involved with the task force? *A number of staff will be involved with the task force as a resource, to provide input and to share alternate perspectives. Staff involved may include transportation planners, traffic engineers, etc. The task force can also reach out externally for additional perspectives beyond City staff.*
- Clarification on the task force schedule; are task force efforts still expected to be completed by February 2015? *We have prepared a revised timeline which shows completion by August 2015. The request for proposal process extends the timeline.*
- Concern was expressed that the work plan has already been laid out in such detail that all of the task force work is programmed. A preference was expressed for a looser organization.
- Is our creativity constrained by having a facilitator and a work plan already laid out?
- Alternate opinion was proposed that facilitator support and staff efforts to prepare a draft work plan should be viewed as helping not constraining.
- Discussion of consultant support to the task force for facilitation:
 - Will an outside consultant be hired? Has this decision already been made? *Staff does not have the availability to provide adequate support to the task force due to their need to fulfill obligations for other projects, and has made the recommendation that this group be supported by a consultant to facilitate meetings. At their March 3 meeting, City Council postponed action on a resolution to hire a consultant. Following the March 3 meeting staff has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant support to the task force and this has been added as a memo to the March 3 resolution.*
 - *The March 3 item that was postponed will be revisited at the April 7 meeting. Council will have to go through the process of voting on this item, but Council now has the*

additional information that an RFP for additional consultant proposals has been released. Action to hire a consultant to support the task force would be considered by City Council at their June 16 meeting. Alternative ideas of consultant role: (1) As a subject matter expert to provide additional detail on topics being discussed, prepare information from the staff resource group. Share “case study” information from approaches used in other municipalities. To be a resource and provide material, not to lead meeting discussion. (A “substance” person). (2) As a meeting facilitator to “corral the conversation,” keep meetings on track. (A “process” person)

- *Staff had envisioned that the facilitator would serve a role of organizing meetings and meeting materials, summarizing meetings, coordinating with the staff project manager to plan for the appropriate staff resources to work with the task force. Work with the task force to plan public engagement and ensure that public meetings are well facilitated. Not to control the group but to provide the needed support to increase efficiency and functionality.*
- The facilitator should be heavily engaged with the task force not just another arm of staff.
- It does not seem that there is enough money in the budget to have the consultant provide full facilitation services. A chair and a secretary working with the consultant facilitator could help the resources go further.
- It will be important to very clearly define consultant vs. staff responsibility.
- Task force members are invited to participate in the review of scope to refine the facilitator responsibilities.
- Concern that the facilitator will follow a consensus approach where some people might not voice their perspective on all issues, as opposed to a chair-led “Robert’s Rules of Order” approach that will allow a different flow to the conversation.
- The facilitator should handle note taking (rather than a member of the task force as a secretary) so that task force members can remain engaged in the discussion; task force members should review the notes/minutes prepared by the facilitator.
- Discussion of the need for a chair of the task force:
 - Opinions in favor of and against electing a chair were discussed.
 - *A chair could be selected initially, or an alternate approach is to let a natural leader emerge once a facilitator is selected.*
 - Potential chair roles and responsibilities: work with the facilitator to develop agendas, schedule meetings and organize schedule; coordinate with the task force to ensure they have information needed; lead meeting discussion; review feedback and ideas from the task force and the public and suggest next steps- how to address the issues? Organize the information for future action; as an advocate for the task force to represent their views in discussions with the meeting facilitator/consultant and staff; to ensure that all members of the task force are engaged in the discussion (including the secretary). *These roles and responsibilities are consistent with the request for proposal.*
 - Could the chair do some of the secretarial work; rather than designating these as two separate roles? Alternate option was expressed that the chair will have enough to do and that secretary needs to be a separate role to record the conversation.
 - It will be very important to very clearly define consultant vs. chair responsibility. Need clear channels for information and questions.
 - Task force decided that they will nominate a chair from among their members. (Initiated by Ken Clark and seconded by Vivienne Armentrout; unanimous support).
- Discussion of a secretary for the task force:
 - Potential secretary roles and responsibilities: meeting documentation (notes/minutes), working with the chair to schedule meeting locations.
 - Opinion was expressed that if the facilitation team could have a note taker than that would allow all task force members to stay focused on the task at hand, and remain engaged in the conversation without being distracted due to note taking.

- Task force decided that they will have a secretary from among their members. (Initiated by Ken Clark and seconded by Vivienne Armentrout; 8 support)
- Information sharing
 - Preference was expressed that all task force materials be accessible in one location, not shared via email.
 - Preference was expressed that all documents shared with the task force be publically available.
- Next steps/ future meeting topics:
 - Election of a chair and secretary.
 - Define chair and secretary roles and responsibilities.
 - Set future meeting dates.
 - Work plan review and refinement.
 - Discussion of file storage and retrieval options.
 - RFP process: Task force members will receive an invitation to participate in the process of reviewing applications and short listing consultants and also to be involved in the process of interviewing consultants.
- Other:
 - Clarification request: is it accurate that the substantive work of this group is not going to happen for awhile? *Yes, not until there is a facilitator on board.*
 - One task force member expressed that he found out that he was on the task force by someone else calling to say they had seen his name in the press. Did not receive any previous contact by the City until the letter arrived in January (after names had been publically released).
 - It will be important that we are aware of the appropriate time to bring information from this task force to the public. We have already been contacted by outside groups interested in being involved in this discussion; we need to make sure that we engage them at the appropriate time.
 - Perhaps a future task force meeting may include some walking outside so that we can explore the challenges on site and then reconvene at a meeting to discuss these observations.
- Public comment:
 - Donna Estabrook: has given up her car and found that a car is not really needed in Ann Arbor. Has a daughter in a wheelchair and is pleased to see that Neal Elyakin on the task force has expressed disability accommodations as one of his priority interests. She uses the buses frequently and recently had complications due to the snow banks. There are a lot of instances where if you aren't able to walk around then there are issues. Curb cuts and snow removal needs to be addressed as part of the plan to improve accessibility for all.
 - Lou Case: Would like to know where written comments can be submitted. Has had trouble in the past getting responses from some Council members. If you do take a tour on site then this should be done in the summer and the winter, and hopefully in a really bad winter like this has been. Do a walking tour and a bus tour. There are significant violations in the City of Ann Arbor related to the snow removal policy, even in the downtown area. The curb cuts are a big deal because when the plow goes around it, it is impassible with a wheelchair. *[Written comments may be submitted to cpulcipher@a2gov.org. Task force members requested that written comments be provided to them in advance of the meeting.]*
 - Kathy Griswold: An advocate for pedestrian safety, has received training in Safe Routes to School, and currently sits on State of Michigan crosswalks board. Has been an advocate for pedestrian safety since her 25 year old child was entering kindergarten. Requests that someone from the task force serve on that State of Michigan crosswalks board. Expressed concern that this task force will be used as an excuse to do nothing and spend no money. "I hope that you prove me wrong." Would like to see a better

relationship with Ann Arbor Public School System. Would like to see immediate changes to ordinance enforcement regarding sidewalks; ice and snow covered sidewalks cannot be tolerated. Be proactive, send a message in November, send a message that we won't tolerate weeds growing over sidewalks and weeds blocking views around corner. Should be able to walk off the road and not meet a bush, shrub, hedge, etc; should be flat land. Need more funding for infrastructure, need lights, so that we don't have crosswalks that are not lit. Need more signage. Need to address sidewalk gaps. In a city as wealthy as Ann Arbor there is no excuse for people to be walking in the street to get to school. Thank you to council member Briere because she has been working on these issues.

Appendix A: Public Sign-in Sheet

DAVE ASKINS

Kitty Griswold

Donna Estabrook

Lou Case