

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Webex Meeting
January 27, 2021

Members Present

Sam Bell, Co-Chair
Charlie Mosbrook, Co-Chair
Gayle Lewin
Kathy Petrey
Howard Maier
Laura Marks
Joe Kickel
Sgt. Matt Lasker
Eric Zamft
Karen Knittel
Mary Dunbar, Councilperson

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. New Director of Planning Eric Zamft introduced himself to the Committee. Co-Chair Charlie Mosbrook said due to many volunteer commitments, he would resign his position as TAC Co-Chair.

Minutes

The Minutes of the December 16, 2020 TAC Meeting were approved as distributed.

New Business and Announcements

Capital Projects Manager Joe Kickel reported that all crosswalks were taken off of being programmed to have an automatic cross walk activation.

Capital Projects Manager Joe Kickel reported that the traffic light at Fairmount Blvd. and Lee Rd. was changed so that it will flash red to all streets when in flash mode. He explained that typically at intersections the light would be programmed to flash yellow on the main corridor and red on the lower volume street.

Sam Bell reported that he had been sent an email about a paving and waterline project scheduled for Shannon Road. He asked if it is possible to always schedule the replacement of waterlines and resurfacing of the street at the same time.

Joe Kickel responded that whenever possible, this was the practice. Joe reported that about ½ of Shannon Road qualified as a low-and moderate-income and that an application was made to use Community Development Block Grant funds to assist with the resurfacing of the road. Joe Kickel stated that they try to budget and request funds for waterlines, but that they don't always know if they will be awarded. He explained that there is a 5-year paving plan but that sometimes they have to move the order of when streets are paved to make the budget work. He stated that CDBG funds also are used for the ADA curb replacement program which is in its 3rd year.

Discussion began about the sewer line replacement project on Cedar Road and that there were two manholes located in the street which necessitated the closing of the traffic lane. Joe Kickel reported that this was a NEORS D project that was supposed to happen last August, was delayed, and that all

were surprised when work started this month. Joe Kickel reported that there is also a sewer project that will begin on Delamere and that this project should eliminate basement flooding that occurs there. He stated that a street resurfacing project is planned with this project. Joe Kickel reported that the city does own and operate the sewer system in the City. He said that a sewer evaluation study has been underway for about two years that is televising and determining the capacity of the sewers in the city. The purpose is to come up with a capital plan when the study is complete. He stated that Collette Clinkscale is the staff person most involved with this project. Joe Kickel stated that as they move forward with sewer work they will try to coordinate sewer work with waterline replacement and repaving projects moving as much as possible. It was asked if the city was still under the consent decree for the sewers; Joe replied that we were.

A question was asked about gas lines. Joe Kickel reported that about 90% of the gas lines are under the treelawns. He explained that as much as possible the new lines are 'pushed' through the existing lines and so they are not dug up. He explained that occasionally when the lines cross an intersection which requires a trench to be dug and this would need repair and that occasionally the same is true of sidewalks. He explained that gas lines are the responsibility of Dominion East Ohio Gas and not the City. Joe reported that approximately 50 to 60% of the city has had their gas lines replaced. He reported that Dominion East Ohio provides a 5-year plan to the city each year.

The discussion moved onto broadband and 5-G networks. Joe Kickel stated that there has been some local discussions about broadband for the city and in particular whether a city-owned broadband network should be studied. Joe stated that the 5-G equipment installation is going to happen nationwide. He stated that he thought Verizon was going to install 5-G in the city. He stated that the 5-G network needs to be near the ground and that there are some 5-G antennae in Cleveland Heights. He stated that there has been some streamlining and that the technology advancement is resulting in the equipment being smaller. Sam Bell stated that some communities are seeing the wireless system being combined with street lighting.

Joe Kickel stated that Cleveland Heights has a small cell ordinance recently passed that gives the city a little review of these systems. He stated that the city is fortunate that our Law Director is an authority on public utilities in the right-of-way and 5-G and small cell technologies.

Laura Marks commented that Shannon Road and the neighborhood south of Severance and east of Taylor have been hit hard with tree loss and that the trees have not been replaced. She suggested that City Forestry should follow the waterline/street replacement project to replenish the missing tree lawn trees. Joe Kickel stated that typically tree lawn trees are not damaged or removed during waterline or street resurfacing projects. He said he could ask Forestry to take a look at the area after construction is completed. He said that last year the City did receive a County Healthy Urban Tree Canopy grant. He said this involved removing ash trees and replacing them with new native species trees.

Laura Marks asked how the Heights Tree people can work with the Shannon Road residents to get more trees planted. She explained that this group will plant a tree in a residents front yard for free

and she wanted assistance to reach out to the neighborhood. It was suggested she speak with the city's Communication Director Mary Tupo about getting information out to the neighborhood.

Discussion of whether mapped crash data would aid in the understanding of where street speed limits may need to be reduced. Sgt. Matt Lasker shared crash data from 2019 and 2020. Sgt. Matt Lasker explained that the data is categorized by type of accident that happened, the address and the number of accidents. He briefly reviewed the data. Howard Maier asked if the cause of the accident is given. Sgt. Matt Lakser responded that the police report number is given and the actual police report would need to be pulled to see the cause of the data. Howard Maier responded that he thought this information could be used to indicate the need for certain projects that potential could reduce accidents.

The committee discussed the recent Lee Road accident where a bicyclist died from head trauma, bicycle helmet was not worn. The cyclist swerved into following traffic, was hit from behind and hit his head on the pavement.

It was asked if this data would be useful in the consideration of speed limits on city streets. Sam Bell stated that the data was originally asked to presented in a map format so the committee to review and look for patterns of geographical distribution and also perhaps some severity.

Joe Kickel reminded all that ODOT compiles crash reports from across the date and that this could be plotted on a map to show crashes by type. Joe said that traffic is engineered for people who obey the law. He said that traffic engineers have told him that 95% of speed studies come back with a recommendation that the speed limits remain the same.

Mary Dunbar stated design elements that could signal to drivers that they should be going slower. She stated that on North Park lanes were reduced from 4 to 1 lane in each direction with a bike lane and asked if this has resulted in traffic speed being reduced. Sam Bell stated that from his experience traffic is slower. Joe Kickel added that form does factor into speed with narrower lanes resulting in speeds being slower.

Sam Bell stated that form factors and visual presentation can slow drivers and cause them to be more aware of what is going on and that just putting up a sign will not change behavior. Joe Kickel added that shared lane markings are placed on main roads to alert drivers but that these markings are not needed on the side streets.

Mary Dunbar stated asked if a more formal bikeway system should be developed, for example should Stratford, and Demington be labeled as bikeways? Joe Kickel said that was interesting it could be a Cleveland Heights safe bike route map. Mary Dunbar added that the Heights

Bicycle Coalition did a map that classified streets based on the skill/experience of the bicyclist. It was stated that a few years ago there had been discussions about wayfinding maps and that perhaps this needs to be revisited. Mary Dunbar said that this approach resulted in way too much signage and was expensive and while some signage may help, 4 signs at one intersection would be a distraction. Sam Bell suggested that starting a designated bike route with one green square with a white bike symbol on it is a good visual indicator. Mary Dunbar stated that a lot of bicyclist use Stratford. Sam Bell agreed that Stratford and Cottage Grove are well used by bicyclists.

The committee discussed "bicycles may use full lane" signs and "3-foot passing" signs and whether these should be used around the city. Gayle Lewin joined the meeting and commented that there are new signs approved for use by ODOT. The sign stating bikes may use full lane has been around for a while and just approved is the sign stating 3 feet to pass including a placard that goes with it that says state law. She reported they are white signs which means they are regulatory signs which means they can be ticketed. She suggested that these signs be on every street, anywhere there is a speed limit sign these signs should be included. She stated that at the very least any road with a bikeway designated should have these signs. This includes the business districts. She said her immediate recommendation is that anytime a street is being repaved and signs are updated these be included as city policy. If budget allows it would be nice to have these installed by the end of 2021 on any designated bike route. It was added that when the road has a dedicated bike lane the bicyclist should not take a full lane and the sign stating that a bike may use the full lane should not be used. Gayle Lewin added that Monticello Blvd. is a designated bike route and that these signs should be installed and that the signs should be in the business districts and near schools. Mary Dunbar added that there are signs in the Cedar Lee district. Joe Kickel said that while he does not disagree with using these signs but also noted that the city also receives complaints about 'sign pollution' and folks ask why all of the signs are being put up. Joe Kickel stated that when the signals are updated on Monticello Blvd., signage will be included. He felt this would be a good road to add this signage. Gayle Lewin suggested that these signs could be installed so that every other sign states "3-feet to pass."

The committee discussed ways to educate the public about these rules. Joe Kickel suggested the committee develop educational material with local photos showing a car with the 3' distance passing a biker and a bicyclist taking the full lane. He suggested this could be shared with the city to publish in the Focus magazine and/or in other ways. Gayle Lewin stated that Bike Cleveland and the MetroParks may have campaign information.

Gayle suggested that the Overlook to Edgehill route from Little Italy is one of the highest used bike routes and that signs should be installed there and up to Euclid Heights Blvd. It was mentioned that there are often large piles of leaves that obstruct sharrows. Joe Kickel asked if they felt signs should be down Edgehill to Kenilworth or if the signs should be down Overlook to


Kenilworth. Gayle Lewin responded that her choice would be Edgehill at the very least. Joe Kickel stated that they could look at putting signage there.

The committee discussed the new Chipotle on Cedar Road. Joe Kickel stated that the city engineer was familiar with a Columbus Chipotle with the same business model including the restaurant with a pick-up window for meals already ordered and paid via a phone app. The city engineer reported that they don't have queueing issues. On Lennox Rd. the traffic sign at Cedar does not permit a left turn. Concern was expressed that traffic on eastbound Cedar could stack if a driver was attempting to turn left into Chipotle's. It was suggested that a rushhour restriction on left turns should be considered. It was suggested that Chipotle should communicate on their app to customers that they should travel up Cedar Glen and onto Euclid Heights Blvd. and then turn right onto Lennox and then turn right into the Chipotle lot. It was stated that much of the business will probably be foot traffic from the new apartments. Joe Kickel stated that the area will be watched and that if a problem arises it will be addressed.

The Committee discussed TAC purpose. The TAC mission and goals printed on page 2 of the December Minutes included what was shared in the chat box during the meeting. The Committee discussed what topics they should consider under the 'green' portion of the Complete and Green Street Policy. It was mentioned that Laura Marks was added to the committee to assist with discussions about trees. Mary Dunbar asked if the committee should include someone with knowledge of native species and habitats, especially since we have seen projects addressing these issues being installed in tree lawns. Laura Marks stated she could cover information on pollinators. Howard Maier pointed out that all committee members must be interested in all topics that are discussed by TAC. The committee discussed the need to diversify the committee so the members are more representative of the demographics of Cleveland Heights. They also felt that more representatives who use public transit are needed. The committee felt that TAC's mission is to focus on public lands, issues happening in the public right of way and not private property. All agreed that this includes sidewalk, the trees in the tree lawns, and could include rain gardens in the public right-of-way.

Public sidewalks were discussed. Howard Maier said that public sidewalks are public right-of-way but that the homeowner is responsible for maintenance. The issue of tree root impact on sidewalks was discussed. He also stated that there is concern that the street trees not be damaged by sidewalk repair. There was discussion whether efforts could be made to assist homeowners in hiring and managing the sidewalk repair/replacement or if the city could be more active in this and then assess the costs to the property owners. It was reported that Lyndhurst does this to replace sidewalks and then sends the bill to the homeowners; it was believed that it could be less expensive than individuals. It was suggested that perhaps this could be a special assessment and placed on the tax bill. Joe Kickel stated that approach would require a change in the city ordinance. It was decided to add this discussion to the February 24th agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.



Sam Bell, Transportation Advisory Committee Chair