

**MINUTES
BLOOMINGTON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2018 4:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 EAST OLIVE STREET
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Angela Ballantini, Ms. Jill Blair, Ms. Maureen (Reenie) Bradley, Ms. Katherine Browne, Mr. Michael Gorman, Ms. Elizabeth Kooba

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Kelly Rumley

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. George Boyle, City Attorney; Mr. Kevin Kothe, City Engineer; Mr. Philip Allyn, City Traffic Engineer; Ms. Jennifer Sicks, McLean County Regional Planning Commission; Ms. Teresa Anderson, McLean County Regional Planning Commission; Mr. Martin Glaze, Connect Transit; and several members of the public.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Gorman called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm.

2. ROLL CALL: Mr. Allyn called the roll. With six members in attendance, a quorum was established.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no public comments.

4. MINUTES: Reviewed and approved the minutes of the November 20, 2018 regular meeting of the Bloomington Transportation Commission. Ms. Browne motioned to approve the minutes with the correction of two typos on the spelling of Ms. Browne's name. Ms. Blair seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the Transportation Commission unanimously via voice vote.

5. REGULAR AGENDA:

- A. TC-2018-08:** Review of Preliminary DRAFT McLean County Complete Streets Implementation Study being completed by the McLean County Regional Planning Commission

Mr. Gorman noted that he currently serves on the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) through the end of 2018. However, since they have held their last meeting of the year, he has no further business with the Planning Commission at this time.

Mr. Allyn gave a brief introduction of this item. The City received the attached report a week or two ago from MCRPC as a guide to implementing Complete Streets Policies across the community as a whole. The version attached is the initial draft that was provided with a request for comment. It is brought to the Commission as the City's Complete Streets oversight body for the opportunity for comment. Any comments of the Commission will be provided back to the MCRPC. Mr. Allyn acknowledged that Ms. Jennifer Sicks with MCRPC was present and was available for questions if needed.

Ms. Blair noted that in the City's Complete Streets Ordinance there is a reference to including in the annual report a count of the ADA compliant ramps in the City. Would a percentage be more appropriate if the total number of ramps is not provided? Mr. Allyn indicated that this page in the packet was showing our current code with regard to existing Complete Streets Policy for the City rather than a part of the study and was provided as reference to aid in the reviewing of the as the MCRPC study. However, if a change is desired, we could address that at a later meeting. Mr. Gorman indicated that as the report is completed each year, the total number would be useful to illustrate the annual increase. Mr. Allyn indicated that we could check the report that was recently completed and look into modifying this in the future if data on the total number of ramp locations (and thus a percentage) is available.

Ms. Bradley indicated that the City and the Town both have Complete Streets Policies. Why do we also need a County plan? Mr. Allyn indicated that the intent of this plan is to focus on the community as a whole. This is important with shared corridors such as Main Street. In addition, since this study is somewhat transit focused, and the transit is a single, area-wide system serving both communities, it makes sense to look at the area as a whole. Another goal of the study is to provide a plan indicating desired projects that would support future grant requests. Ms. Bradley asked if the County does anything similar for the other communities in the County? Mr. Allyn indicated that the County does not and that it would be up to each other community to pass an ordinance similar to what the City and Town have done. He did not believe the other smaller communities have anything in place currently. Ms. Bradley asked if this implementation plan would benefit the City, the Town and the County as a whole for grant purposes. Mr. Allyn indicated that it should help the City and Town, and since we are the largest communities in the County, the County as a whole.

Mr. Gorman asked about the recommendation to remove IAA Drive and inquired about the work being done this year. The packet mentions IAA being converted to a three-lane section with the completion of sidewalk along its length. However, the study refers to a side path, which is different from a sidewalk. Mr. Allyn indicated that the work done on IAA was part of our resurfacing and sidewalk work planned last winter for completion this past summer. The study was not started until later. This probably comes down to a timing issue, as there was a period where the study consultant was not aware of this project or the Front Street Project. Ms. Sicks, Transportation Planner for the MCRPC confirmed that it was brought to their attention during the initial review of the study that there were several projects that were under construction or nearing construction currently listed as priority projects. They have subsequently returned to the consultant to have them look at the criteria and see what other projects could be added to the study in their place. This is still very much a draft undergoing revision and a final version will be provided to the Commission once it is complete.

Mr. Allyn followed up with regard to IAA Drive specifically. With the resurfacing, the road was converted from two extra wide lanes to three narrower lanes: one in each direction with a center turn lane. A significant number of sidewalk ramps were upgraded and a large sidewalk gap will be completed, partially with the project, and partially with a development currently in final design and approval. Mr. Kothe indicated that the side path referenced in the study is actually referring to the recommendation from the City Bicycle Master Plan that a path be constructed along Veteran's Parkway, which currently has no bike or pedestrian accommodations. This suggested path actually would extend further north and south than just IAA Drive. As a state route, the City would not construct this path along Veteran's Parkway as part of an IAA Drive project.

Mr. Gorman asked about Ms. Sick's previous recommendation of a certain number of projects to be included in the study and what criteria were used to determine that number. Ms. Sicks stated that the desire was to provide some choices and give each agency a variety of options to start implementing changes as the opportunities arise. This will help take advantage of funding as it is available to provide a variety of modifications in a variety of locations. Since there are three City projects already underway, it makes sense to ask the consultant to look at their criteria and identify three new projects that could slide into those slots. In addition to the City and Town's individual plans, this study also takes into account the MCRPC long range regional metropolitan transportation plan. The study attempts to bring material from all of those plans together to create an overall picture of how the community policy of Complete Streets might be addressed. This was the charge given to the consultant, who looked at the data and identified the key areas based on their experience and the transit propensity model.

Ms. Sicks indicated that one of the reasons that the study may seem transit heavy in terms of the analysis is that adding accommodations for transit use or improved transit use tend to be infrastructure heavy and very expensive. Therefore it makes sense to focus on where the serious investments are needed, such as

on Front Street. In addition, there is a real need in both communities to accommodate transit use to make it available to the entire population.

Mr. Gorman stated that in the staff report, it indicated a concern that it would be difficult for projects not along transit corridors to be included in the study. Transit should be treated importantly. However, it is also important that people be able to get to the transit routes in order to use the transit. If we are not limited in the number of projects, could the study include additional projects that are not on transit corridors and have a ranking system of high, medium, and low priority? The transit corridor projects could be bumped to a higher priority category and supporting projects could be a lower priority. Parameters could be added such as a minimum distance to a bike lane/path to set a community policy for Complete Streets to help identify these additional projects that align with this policy. This would allow the transit criteria to be key to the plan but would also identify other projects as well. Ms. Sicks indicated that this should be possible for the consultant to do with the methodology used. With regard to the number of projects, if you included a secondary list without the transit component but instead looking at the other factors such as levels of density and types of access to certain facilities, it might identify what we are looking for. Mr. Gorman indicated he likes the transit propensity that is built into the model. If the number of projects included were increased, it would only help with securing funding, as there would be a great change of having a project that meeting a particular funding type or requirement. Ms. Sicks indicated that during this study they were able to verify that the transit propensity model functions well based on knowledge of how the transit system functions. The same type of process could be applied to other modes such as trail use, even though there is not the same quantity and quality of use and need data available. This could be applied moving forward as funding is available. The different criteria could be chosen if needed and it is shown to be cost effective. There are many different types of funding sources with different criteria. The better that we can meet the individual requirements, the better chance we will have of obtaining that funding from those sources. MCRPC is looking at how this type of analysis can be applied to other modes in the future. The focus right now on transit is due to its ability to assist people who are dependent on transit with few other transportation options.

Mr. Gorman asked the present representatives from Connect Transit if they would like to speak with regard to this topic. Mr. Martin Glaze, Interim Chief Operating Officer with Connect Transit shared the types and quality of data that they currently collect on ridership and their areas of focus. This data has been shared with MCRPC to use with this study. The data is used in the determining and adjusting of routes, as was recently done. It could be seen that these major routes needed infrastructure improvements. Connect has started an annual \$100,000 program of shelters, pads, and ADA-compliant curb cuts. The model helps focus this work in the areas with the greatest need. Connect is fully behind the data and the model and has seen it to be accurate.

Mr. Gorman agreed that the data that is available on transit use is greatly superior to that which is available for bikes and pedestrians. MCRPC has recently obtain counting equipment to be deployed on the various trails around the community, so while better data is coming, but it has been very point specific with a shortage of historical data to this point. From a data standpoint for building a model such as this, the transit data is clearly the best at this point for a data driven model. However, if we can add additional projects at a lower priority that are not so data driven, this would be beneficial.

Mr. Ally indicated that the Staff's concerns were not an attempt to minimize the impact of transit, but rather related to not wanting to see other beneficial projects get omitted simply because they were not on a transit route.

Ms. Bradley mentioned that there seems to be a disconnect with regard to the IAA Drive and Front Street projects. Is the MCRPC coming to the City to be more up to date? Mr. Allyn indicated that we were not aware of what all was being down early in the process to be able to share our plans, but that they have come to us now. He reminded that while there had been little communication while the study work was getting started, this is just the initial draft that they have provided us for comment. We received a draft

preliminary copy and had a meeting with the MCRPC, Town, McLean County, IDOT, and Connect Transit a week ago where the study was initially presented with a request for comment. Ms. Bradley mentioned that they could also follow our discussions to help keep up to date with what we are doing as a City. Ms. Bradley asked who was responsible for the decision to use a transit heavy model for the analysis? Is someone trying to meet the requirements of a specific grant that is currently being applied for? The City policy takes into account all modes: walking, biking, school buses, cars, heavy trucks, etc. whereas this is really laser focused on transit, which appears to conflict with what the City is doing. Ms. Sicks reiterated that transit has the most and best data available to use for the analysis. We do have some crash data that can help identify potential areas where Complete Streets principles can increase safety, but that level of analysis was beyond what could be done with this study. This should be refined as we get further into the study. The study alludes to all the various City and Town plans. This is all part of a larger whole that needs to be coalesced. This application will be beneficial to all of the community by providing better connectivity. Some of this is based on access to the transit system, but that is predicated on transit trying to serve major public functions like access to government services, schools, and healthcare. It is not a perfect indicator, but it is a good starting point for further analysis.

Mr. Gorman reminded that this is the first iteration of this type of study. When the bicycle master plan was first created, it was planned to be updated in five years once implementation was started and operational experience was gained. This could be viewed the same way where this is a starting point of an ongoing process to be refined in the future with additional data for the other modes and criteria. Ms. Sicks confirmed that this would continue to be updated and grown moving forward, not only as we gain better data and operation experience, but also as projects are completed and the infrastructure evolves.

Ms. Bradley asked if a transit model such as this will be detrimental to any current or future City plans for grant applications. Mr. Allyn indicated his understanding is that this study will help us accomplish the projects it contains. It will not dictate to us that we can only do those projects. We will continue to move forward with other projects as opportunities present themselves. For example, if we are resurfacing a street because the pavement is failing, we will still look at it with a Complete Streets eye if possible regardless of whether it is listed in the study. This study should help gain access to outside funds for those projects that are listed.

Responses are due back to MCRPC by January 20. After a short discussion on next steps, Mr. Allyn will prepare a draft response letter for approval at the next meeting. If any Commissioners have supplemental comments as they read the study deeper, they can be emailed to Mr. Allyn who will present them for discussion at the January meeting.

B. Information: December Citizen Comments/Complaints Summary

Ms. Blair asked about the items such as Item 1 that are indicated to be closed. Can they be removed from the list? Mr. Allyn indicated that generally as items are closed they have been removed from the list. However, for those items requiring a code update, such as Item 1, they are remaining until the code update is completed for tracking purposes.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. TC-2018-06: Recommendations to USPS Regarding Post Office Relocation.

Mr. Allyn provided a short update. The USPS representatives did reach out to us to request a meeting. Mr. Karch and Mr. Kothe met with them and they appeared to be generally receptive to the idea of the cul-de-sac. They were going to discuss it further with others involved. We have not yet seen any details on what they are planning for traffic circulation or a proposed site plan.

B. TC-2018-07: Approval of Proposed Policy on Establishing Reduced Speed Limit Areas.

Ms. Kooba brought back for discussion this item. With regard to voting, we agreed that each owner should receive a vote but we did not discuss tenants. In a household of five – two parents and three children – do they get one vote or five? Or one for each adult? Mr. Allyn indicated that one vote per dwelling unit would be far easier to administer. It would be very difficult to know how many residents are in each dwelling unit, whether it is members of a family unit or a number of college students sharing a rental unit. We do not have a source for gathering this information. Another option could be using driver's license lists, but this information may not be available to us and would exclude those without a driver's license. Voter's registration lists could be used; similarly however, it is unknown if we can to obtain this information, and even if we can, it would exclude those not registered to vote as well as non-citizen residents.

Ms. Bradley asked if it would be easier to have a town hall style meeting located in the area under consideration or do door to door canvassing rather than doing balloting. Mr. Allyn indicated that we have has success with this system on other initiatives such as traffic calming and parking restriction changes. The effort for each of these options is roughly the same and that the balloting should make it the easiest for the most people to provide input. With a town hall style meeting, there is a greater chance of a smaller vocal minority determining an outcome for the area. As discussed before, if only a small number in the area is supportive, then only a small portion will be respectful of the reduced speed, overall speeds will not decrease, and safety may actually decrease as the speed differential increases.

There was consensus to limit resident voting to one per dwelling unit, as they can best be determined.

C. TC-2018-02: Funding Mechanisms for Transportation Projects

Mr. Gorman asked for an update on the funding discussion. Mr. Allyn indicated that our paving technician who over sees the historical data just recently finish this year's paving and is back in the office. The plan is to work through updated life cycles for the various street classifications the first week in January. We should be able to present the next round of data at the January meeting.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

A. None

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 4:56 pm unanimously by voice vote; motioned by Ms. Blair and seconded by Ms. Browne.

Respectfully,

Philip Allyn
City Traffic Engineer