MINUTES
BLOOMINGTON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2019 4:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 EAST OLIVE STREET
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Angela Ballantini, Mr. Rob Ballantini, Ms. Jill Blair, Ms. Katherine Browne, Mr. Michael Gorman, Ms. Elizabeth Kooba

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Maureen (Reenie) Bradley

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. George Boyle, City Attorney; Assistant Chief Greg Scott, Police Department; Mr. Jim Karch, Director of Public Works; Mr. Philip Allyn, City Traffic Engineer; and a member of the media.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Gorman called the meeting to order at 4:02 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 February 19, 2019 regular meeting of the Bloomington Transportation Commission. Ms. Blair motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Rob Ballantini seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the Transportation Commission unanimously via voice vote.

5. REGULAR AGENDA:

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

Mr. Allyn indicated that the policy document was revised based on previous conversations. The intent is to finalize the policy this month. It will then be distributed to the other City Staff for comment. It will be brought back for discussion of any comments received and final approval at a subsequent meeting. The application form and any necessary ordinance changes will be part of that formal approval.

Ms. Blair asked for a clarification on the statement that the policy does not apply to rural areas even if they are within the City limits. Mr. Allyn indicated that this generally pertains to streets without curb and gutter and a lower density of homes along the road. Examples include Bloomington Heights Road, Lutz Road, or W. Oakland Ave west of Alexander which look and feel more like rural township roads rather than urban residential streets. The lack of curb and gutter alone will not disqualify a street if it is within a developed subdivision with typical urban land use density.

Ms. Blair indicated that there are several sections where the tense changes between future and present. Mr. Allyn indicated that he will review and update to the same tense throughout.

Mr. Gorman lead a discussion about the voting section under the campus land use and the inclusion of parking pass holders and pedestrians. There was general agreement to include parking permit holders issued by the campus entity if this information is made available by the entity. The discussion led to sending ballots to all residents within the area as can be best determined. In the case of an educational institution residence halls or similar housing, staff will attempt to gain as much information from the educational institution, or other parties such as the post office, as is possible with regard to the dwelling

units. This, combined with the other residents in private residences in the area, should cover the pedestrians walking/biking in the area. It was agreed to leave the language the same as currently shown.

B. Information: March 2019 Citizen Comments/Complaints Summary

Ms. Kooba asked about item 47 (stop sign at Winterberry and Sugarberry) and suggested using a yield sign instead of the requested stop sign. Mr. Allyn indicated that we previously use yield signs. However, our current policy to use stop signs rather than yield signs because as subdivisions age and landscaping matures, intersection sight distances are reduced. This leads to the need to switch out the yield signs with stop signs. For efficiency, we now go straight to a stop sign.

C. Information: Proposed 2019 Construction Season Resurfacing Program

Mr. Allyn indicated the resurfacing map for this year was included in the packet. The list may change slightly once bids are received. If bids are lower than expected, additional streets may be added, and if bids are higher than expected, some streets may be cut. Also in the packet is a summary of the general criteria and methodology used to determine the street list each year. One change from what is provided is that we no longer maintain the list of streets in a spreadsheet, but rather we incorporate a priority level to each street in need of resurfacing in our internal GIS. Each year, the priority is adjusted based on any conditions that have changed during the year.

Mr. Gorman indicated that he noticed in the list that there are some streets that are scheduled to be resurfaced that don't seem to be high priority. For example, Sunset Road is rated as a 4, is not listed as an arterial or collector and has a low volume. There are several arterials and collectors that have a comparable rating and higher ADT that would appear to be higher priority. Mr. Allyn indicated that while the type of street is a factor, there are other various reasons as well. Mr. Allyn was not part of determining the list and cannot speak directly to why a particular street was chosen. Mr. Karch indicated that Sunset was chosen due to the need for significant underground sewer work that will not be able to be completed in the near future. Sunset needs to be resurfaced. By doing this work now, it times the next resurfacing with the future sewer work so that the current resurfacing can last its useful service life rather than being torn up only 5-10 years after being completed.

Mr. Gorman responded that there are so many streets in the community in need of work that he feels are higher priority based on serving the population today. He wants to see a higher level of transparency on why any particular street gets priority over another particular street. For example, severe rutting is listed as one criteria, but there is no public information available on the rutting measurements for each of the streets in the City. The public should be able to compare the various criteria across all streets to validate the decisions. Mr. Allyn indicated that staff does not have the ability to rank all the streets in town based on all of the criteria. Way too much data would need to be collected in order to provide the level of analysis being requested. Mr. Gorman asked that whatever data is gathered, needs to be shared. There is no public data on the rutting so that a resident can provide an informed perspective on the rutting on their street to help staff make an informed decision. He would like to see whatever data is gathered be published for the public to see. Mr. Allyn indicated that this already is shared on the website. As discussed in previous meetings, the streets are all evaluated visually and assigned a rating between 1 and 10. The amount of observed distresses in used to determine the rating. There are not specific measurements taken or recorded. This rating is then shown on the website. Staff then starts with the worst ratings and begins to narrow the list based on the many other factors that are discussed. For example, if the water main on a given block has several leaks that require repairs and pavement replacement in a given year, that block probably goes up in priority. Because there are many streets at similar ratings, it is not practical to rank all the streets. Staff will work to put together information on each of the streets on the list indicating why they were chosen.

Mr. Gorman reiterated that his desire is that all of the information that is currently being collected and analyzed by staff to be made public so that citizens can see how the decision is being made so that they can be confident that their tax dollars are being spent wisely. Citizens are critical of raising the sales tax to fund their number one priority of getting the streets in better shape because they don't trust the City to spend the money to make that happen.

Ms. Browne mentioned that she thinks this speaks to a more fundamental problem of who is going to do this data collection and analysis. Similar to the lack of police resources to enforce speeding, there are not resources to do a high-level data gathering and analysis. Mr. Gorman clarified that he is not just interested in the streets that are on the list. He is also interested in why the other streets are not on the list. Ms. Browne agreed that most people will question why their street is not on the list. Mr. Boyle indicated that from staff's point of view, and he believes the public would share this point of view, it is not possible for staff to rank 1,000 streets. Nor should the decision on streets be a purely democratic process because people do not have the expertise that staff has. Mr. Boyle understands the need for transparency, but staff does not have the resources to explain why each of the other 360 miles of streets in the City weren't chosen. Mr. Gorman believes that there are undoubtedly a lot of streets that staff wants to resurface. They consider the criteria in the packet, and decide which ones not to resurface. Surely, there is some documentation of this decision. Mr. Allyn reiterated that streets are assigned a priority (tracked in the internal GIS) starting with zero for the next streets to be resurfaced, 1 for streets the next year, 2 for streets anticipated to be 2 years out, etc., to 5 years out. The list starts with the streets at priority zero. Each of the streets on the priority list are evaluated each year by The City Manager, Public Works Director, City Engineer, Assistant City Engineer, and the Paving Technician and the priorities are adjusted as needed. Upcoming work is reviewed, current pavement condition is reviewed, and efficiency of work is reviewed along with other factors. Mr. Gorman asked if these priority rankings are published. Mr. Allyn indicated he was not sure, but did not believe so. He would need to see if this could be shared along with the ratings.

Ms. Blair asked if the starting point could be providing the information on the streets that are being included as a way of opening up the process to the public. Mr. Allyn stressed that staff is not trying to be nontransparent. If anyone has a question on why a particular street was chosen or why a specific street was not chosen, they are more than welcome to ask us and we would be happy to discuss the reasoning. Staff has no problem sharing information, but we do not have the resources to gather and provide a large quantity of information that no one has specifically asked for just so that it is readily available. As discussed by the City Manager at the recent Council Meeting, we are working to compile information on a new website that provides information on each street to be completed along with before and after photos to show citizens the actual pavement conditions.

Ms. Browne suggested that a lot of the citizen comments about specific streets, there is often personal bias. People tend to think the streets they frequent are the worst because those are the ones that they see and the potholes that they experience. Not everyone has the firsthand knowledge to understand the full decision making process. If citizens are going to critique the process, we need to think about what information should be made available so that they are informed at the level at which they want to be informed. It might be as simple as before and after photos.

Mr. Gorman asked about resurfacing a large number of streets in the same area, such as an entire neighborhood rather than spreading work out around the city. By doing an entire neighborhood, there is a really strong sense of impact. Mr. Allyn indicated that in some cases this makes sense. For example, we have been focusing on Downtown, which many residents will see. However, if you focus just on one neighborhood, the 95% of the City that doesn't travel in that neighborhood won't feel that any progress is being made.

Mr. Gorman indicated he believes that doing arterials and collectors with heavier traffic volumes will provide a greater impact for people than doing residential local streets with comparable ratings. Why are

there residential streets being done over arterial streets with similar ratings? For example, Hersey has a rating of 3 or 4 depending on the section, but there are residential streets being resurfaced that also have ratings of 3 or 4. Mr. Allyn reminded everyone that since he wasn't part of the detailed process, he couldn't speak to any specific streets. However, in general, one consideration is that since arterials are often wider and require thicker resurfacings, the same amount of funding may not be able to cover an entire section of an arterial, whereas it will get a whole section of a residential street.

Mr. Gorman asked about the paving done on N. Clinton a while ago with different materials and one part has lasted better than the other. Mr. Allyn indicated that resurfacing was completed by IDOT. They used their typical polymer hot-mix asphalt mix on one side and the stone-matrix hot-mix asphalt mix the City uses on the other. The polymer mix that IDOT has been using for the past 20 years gets brittle at low temperatures and cracks more severely. This is the section that is noticeably worse. The stone-matrix hot-mix asphalt section has held up much better. This illustrates perfectly why we are seeing longer lifecycles now than we did 10-15 years ago. Mr. Gorman asked why the failing half of Clinton, a collector, wasn't being redone since it would be inline cost-wise with some of the residential streets and has a comparable rating. Mr. Allyn indicated again that he couldn't speak to why that section specifically wasn't included. Mr. Gorman indicated this is example of the questions residents have. Mr. Allyn reiterated that if residents have questions about specific locations, they should ask and we would be happy to explain. It's very difficult to provide information in advance for every question that could be asked and we are not aware of all the discussions taking place and questions being asked online or in person if they don't get directed to us.

Ms. Blair indicated she appreciated the maps showing our past resurfacing that shows we really are doing a lot of work. It was suggested that better colors and/or patterns be used to more easily reflect the different years as well as the pavement rating information.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. None

7. NEW BUSINESS:

A. None

8. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Mr. Allyn mentioned that everyone should have received an email from the County about completing a Statement of Economic Interest form. Please let him know if you have not received this email. It needs to be completed to identify potential conflicts of interest. There is a $15/day penalty if forms are not submitted by May 1st, a $100/day penalty if forms are not submitted by May 15th, and you are removed from the Commission if not submitted by May 31st. If you are on more than one public body, you only need to submit one form, but should list all positions on that form. If anyone has questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the City Legal Department for assistance.

9. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 5:14 pm unanimously by voice vote; motioned by Ms. Blair and seconded by Ms. Browne.

Respectfully,

Philip Allyn
City Traffic Engineer