

Cleveland Heights Transportation Advisory Committee
July 27, 2021
Minutes

Attendance

Sam Bell
Kathy Petrey
Howard Maier
Laura Marks
Charlie Mosbrook
Dave Speece
Eric Zamft
Karen Knittel

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Laura Marks moved to approve the June 30, 2021 TAC Meeting Minutes. Charlie Mosbrook seconded and the motion carried.

TAC members introduced themselves to the new Police Department Representative Sgt. David Speece.

Sam Bell announced that the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library Director Nancy Levin was not able to be with the Committee. Sam Bell said that the plans are in the early phases but that they bought Noble Presbyterian Church and that the church will be demolished to allow for the Noble Road Library to be expanded. Sam Bell said that for a long time it has been discussed that it would be nice to have a land bridge for the Noble Elementary students to cross Montevista Road without having to deal with traffic when going to the library. The library hopes to be even more attractive than it is today to those students. One of the difficulties is that no one knows the future of Noble Elementary School. Sam Bell reported that Nancy Levin would like to attend the September TAC meeting to provide an update.

The Committee discussed the concept of creating a land bridge across Montevista Road connecting the elementary school property to the library property. This would result in Montevista Road not connecting to Noble Road. Laura Marks mentioned that at the previous TAC meeting four members mentioned that they use Montevista Road to get to or from Noble Road but acknowledged that vision zero is a good goal. The question was raised as to whether or not there have been any accidents at this intersection, particularly involving pedestrians crossing Montevista. Sgt. Speece said he was not aware of any fatalities but that he would have to look up the data to see if there had been any accidents. It was noted that this concept would be a dramatic change and that there is a traffic light at this intersection. "No turn on red" signs could be installed at the intersection. Kathy Petrey reported that she had attended a Board of Education meeting where partnerships between schools and organizations in the city were reported and that it was discussed that Noble Elementary School was going to be made into a community school because Noble has the most partnerships with community organizations. This lends itself to the wrap-around services that is desirable for a community school.

Sam Bell said that the library is thinking that they would be adding parking off Kirkwood Road. He said that on the church property, there would be some building of the library extension, parking, and presumably some outdoor amenities.

Sam concluded that there is nothing before TAC and that the library is talking with the school and would be holding community meetings.

Eric Zamft gave an update on the Cuyahoga County E-Scooters project. He said that since the last meeting he had met with Chief Mecklenburg and that her main concern was that somebody besides the City is responsible if the scooters are left in the right-of-way or blocking a sidewalk. He said it was confirmed that the County Agreement with the companies is that it is their responsibility but that the City could do this if we choose to. So, there would be multiple avenues to complain and to make sure the scooters were not blocking the right-of-way. Chief Mecklenburg was comfortable moving forward. Eric Zamft said that he had a couple of calls with the County and a couple of the providers. He reported that Cleveland, Lakewood, and South Euclid were ready to participate and that Cleveland Heights and East Cleveland are very close and places like Shaker Heights are a little bit further out. The County will start deploying this in August and that it is first-come, first-served. So, this was an impetus to get this on Council's agenda next Monday night.

The Committee discussed the fact that the scooters can be geo-fenced so that they cannot go into a location that is not permitted. Eric said that the scooters can be precisely programmed to prohibit them from going onto a street during a block party.

Sam Bell asked if areas have been designated as drop zones where we want them to be. Eric Zamft said there was a lot of work done by the former Planning Director Richard Wong with the SIDs that identified parking areas. Eric Zamft said that Noble Road and some of the noncommercial areas were also considered. He said that recommendations were given to the County and that this will be in the Council packet. He said that the County is talking to the companies and it is not yet known how many docking stations are needed at the sites. He said that if there are further suggestions, they could be shared with the County.

The Committee decided to wait until Gayle Lewin was in attendance to review and discuss the complete and green street checklist. Eric Zamft reported that he and Karen Knittel had met with the Public Works staff, Collette Clinkscale and Joe Kickle, to review the checklist. He said they had some thoughts and wanted to review it closer. He said that they said it would be useful to somehow have the ability to distinguish between small projects and large projects because some of the questions may not come into play for smaller projects. They said that they have projects that have followed this however this may not be communicated properly. It was felt that the checklist would assure that all were using the same terms and understanding of the Complete and Green Street ordinance

Karen Knittel reported that staff was working to update the Bike Friendly Community application which is due September 1, 2021. She said that if needed staff would be reaching out to TAC for information.

Sam Bell moved the discussion to expand TAC to include Environmental Sustainability which would involve increasing the membership on the committee. Charlie Mosbrook said that with this expansion there is a need to expand racial diversity on this committee. Sam Bell reviewed the draft legislation saying that this is an expansion of the committee and that the membership would be expanded from twelve to fifteen, noting that there are not twelve members now. He said that they need to recruit to get more areas of the city represented, more diversity and backgrounds. Kathy Petrey questioned the phrase "interest of environmental and sustainability community" asking if the intent is to promote this to the whole community whether or not the intent is to recruit knowledgeable people. Charlie Mosbrook suggested that there are Case or Cleveland State students in our community that have this background and perhaps could be recruited. Laura Marks said the point of environmental sustainability is health for all. All members present were in support of this expansion of the committee.

Sam Bell said that he had an update on street speed reduction. ODOT has new guidance. He explained that the old rule was the 85th percentile rule for speed changes: a traffic engineering study would have to demonstrate that on a road with the existing speed limit posted, at least 85% of the traffic was traveling at or below the proposed lower speed. This never happens. The new rule changes this to require 50% of the traffic was traveling at or below the proposed lower speed. Kathy Petrey said that this is in addition to areas that are not a through highway. The committee discussed that they would like to the speed limit on most of the streets in Cleveland Heights to be 25 m.p.h. except for where otherwise posted. Sam Bell said otherwise posted would be alleys, courts, and lanes that would be 15 m.p.h. There was discussion that some east-west roads may need to be 35 m.p.h. The committee discussed walkability and how the speed of traffic impacts the ability of pedestrians to crossroads.

Sam Bell reported that the Vision Zero Resolution was introduced by Council.

Laura Marks said she has been traveling on Compton Road and that she wanted to know if she could plant trees on vacant lots that will be maintained as green spaces along Compton Road during the fall tree planting season. Eric Zamft said that staff hoped to get an engineering study done. Laura Marks said she would like to be able to develop tree planting plans for the lots that would remain as green spaces for the City to consider. TAC discussed that it would be good to create the connection from Compton through the vacant lot to Berkeley. Eric Zamft said that the Boulevard Neighbors will be holding a block party in the fall.

Sam Bell said that the traffic light on Rydalmount at Mayfield Road does not detect bicycles and asked if something could be done to enable this. Sgt. Speece said that he should Joe Kickel who could make this adjustment to the light. Sam Bell said he would talk to Joe Kickel.

Kathy Petrey said asked if City could pay for the watering of new trees in areas low in the tree canopy and in areas with low and moderate-income houses. Laura Marks said she has volunteered to do this if the city would provide her a pickup truck. Charlie Mosbrook asked if volunteers, scouts, or people in the neighborhoods could be recruited to water trees.

The next meeting date will be Wednesday, August 25, 2021. The committee said they would prefer to go back to virtual meetings until the COVID situation is better under control.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



Sam Bell, Transportation Advisory Committee Chair

