

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
Thursday, June 4, 2009**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Charlie Hileman, Chair
Heidi Perry
Austin Brown
Seth LaJeunesse
Daniel Amoni

STAFF

Thelma Paylor, AA

Board of Aldermen Liaison

Dan Coleman

GUESTS

Michael Krasnov

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Katie Schwing

I. Call to Order: Charlie Hileman, Chair, called meeting to order at 7:35 PM. Michael Krasnov has applied for a seat on the TAB. Adena Messinger has concluded employment with the Town. Thelma Paylor is attending in lieu of Jeff Kleaveland as staff this evening.

II. Smith Level Road U-2803: Coleman reported that on June 2nd the Board of Aldermen had reaffirmed its commitment to previously adopted resolution for Smith Level Road (i.e. two travel lanes, bicycle lanes and sidewalks) rather than select one of the three options offered by NCDOT staff. In addition, the Mayor is to engage NCDOT officials in discussions on next steps. Perry echoed the Mayor's statement that TIP funding allocated for Smith Level Road improvements should be available for the project. Hileman and Perry provided a brief historical overview of the project. Questions/replies: Was there a bill passed that would grant more authority to Towns for transportation decisions/funding? (Could a citizen accompany /provide assistance to the Mayor when he engages the NCDOT? (Coleman will check if Hileman or another TAB member could accompany him). Is NCDOT opposed to bike lanes? (No. NCDOT anticipates increases in vehicle traffic as well. TAB is concerned that vehicle traffic will increase because of the lanes and that quality of life and safety for bicyclists and pedestrians will be diminished. The NCDOT preferred option is also not expected to advance healthy lifestyles. NCDOT desired four-lane sections on N. Greensboro Street and Main Street 20 years ago when the Town was seeking bike lanes and sidewalks. Who has the authority to decide/maintain? (Town can reject the plan.) What is the Town's leverage to achieve what it desires? (Town is working on this.)

Perry reported that she had received a response from NCDOT to her letter on Smith Level and that it referenced "context-sensitive solutions" and described how this had been incorporated into the current option for Smith Level Road. Perry will contact DeWayne Sykes (staff for this program, contact number is 250-4016) with questions about this program. Perry also reported on an article that revealed that signalized intersections are less safe than those without traffic controls, although motorists prefer signals. Other members indicated they would also call Mr. Sykes with questions about this program.

III. Monitoring pedestrian activity on N. Greensboro Street: Austin Brown has researched pedestrian counts from 1996 to the present from various cities, including Davis, CA, New York City, and Albuquerque, New Mexico, to determine the type of data collection that the Town should use to conduct counts here (will email copies of the counts and protocols to TAB members). The studies describe details about the methodology for people of different ages and travel issues (strollers, et cetera). Video footage

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could be used to help underscore the issues identified. Could rent a video camera (from Southeastern Camera) to record am/pm and mid-day peaks. One-week rental of camera and accessories is approximately \$160. Tapes are needed. Tripods are also available. Brown will synthesize the information to draft a protocol for the Town's use.

Comments/questions (replies, if appropriate): time to collect video, time to process. What is the main goal? (Observe pedestrian and driver behavior in corridor between Harris Teeter and Shelton Street to determine how and where people are crossing, what are the safety issues, et cetera.). There has been an ongoing discussion with NCDOT staff of relocating the crosswalks. Do we think that moving the crosswalk will solve the problem of vehicles not stopping? Would it be better to slow vehicles down? There are lots of ways to slow vehicles down. NCDOT does not support traffic calming on its streets. Option of adding the "stop in crosswalk" sign in the crosswalk is being explored, and okay with NCDOT as long as it is not in the middle of an intersection. May need to wait until Transportation Planner position is filled. Any interviews yet? (Advertisement posted on Friday, May 29th.) When are counts to be taken? (Some discussion of counts in summer and in fall, possibly Thursday evening and Saturday morning to capture peaks. Perhaps also capture a more 'normal' time, such as Thursday mid-day). What are some camera location options and are there concerns about the possible effect on pedestrian behavior? (On a ladder in r/w or on the roof of Fitch Lumber). Who is a contact for Fitch Lumber? (Contact James Harris or Fitch Lumber directly). Consider using two cameras to capture all angles? Walkabout with NCDOT took place during UNC-Chapel Hill Fall Break, saw no pedestrians. Could begin collecting data in summer.

Next steps: Brown and other members will scope out siting a bit more. Brown will email possible dates for data collection, and ask other members to weigh in on when they could assist. TAB/Town can check with NCDOT to see if the information is consistent/acceptable with the way they would collect this kind of behavior data. TAB will discuss scheduling further when reviewing information on siting of cameras.

IV. Alternatives to the speed table: TAB members and guests participated in a general discussion of traffic calming measures. Perry was looking for information on speed ruts, has heard of their use in eastern Russia, but did not locate. Photos of speed cushions from Washington were shared. Receiving several requests for speed tables each year, concern about proliferation throughout Town. Origin of chicanes, Scandinavia where families placed furniture in the street to slow down traffic. Woonerf seems to work where there is high pedestrian activity. Lorraine Street, where there are no sidewalks or curb/gutter, has requested speed tables. The Board of Aldermen approved installation of two speed tables on June 2nd, as well as follow-up monitoring to see whether another table would be needed to slow vehicles down mid-block. Particular concern about Lorraine Street because it is included in the Carolina North traffic analysis. Emphasis on speed tables at present largely due to budgetary considerations. Discussion of on-street parking as a possible way of slowing down vehicles. Mention of need to discuss traffic calming with NCDOT because of speeding along streets such as North Greensboro. Reduction of speed limits was mentioned. If DOT could be engaged in discussion of traffic calming, perhaps widening of bike lanes on N. Greensboro might be considered. Downside of widening bike lane can make it look like another travel lane – already folks use the lanes for turning movements. Use of chicanes was tested on Stratford Drive, but residents did not like them, no one wanted them in front of their homes. There seems to be a disconnect between what people want and what they'll accept. Sidewalk was recommended on Oak Avenue, but residents complained at the public hearing and are now asking for street to be made one-way. This issue really requires assistance from staff. Rumble strips? Neighbors don't want because of noise. Reminders (flashing lights) of speed limit. There is evidence on benefits of speed feedback signs. There was one that was shared by Chapel Hill and Carrboro but its whereabouts are unknown at present.

Coleman suggested and TAB agreed that transportation planner with traffic calming skills, who could assist with recommending site planning features/elements, might be helpful.

V. Bicycle Advocacy Group: Hileman has obtained BikeCarrboro.com, but website has not yet been established. See the website as location for links to resources, (e.g. clubs, bike stores) Town info (e.g. maps), link to walkcarrboro.com, and specific advocacy info, basically all aspects of the bicycling community, and all cycling issues. Part of the site would be a Google Group. The desire would be for this to be action-, rather than meeting-related, with email/distribution lists, so that folks could connect on particular issues. Could also be a discussion group, though the idea would not be too intrusive. In the beginning, when folks signed up initially, they could opt out, but find the website. Since so many features, should be mindful of the maintenance requirements, since all TAB members are otherwise employed/busy. When Friends of Bolin Creek re: pitfalls to avoid learned that there is a need for a core group of folks who will keep things going (champions who will decide on the rules, mission). This seems really important since there is a potential for divisiveness on some issues (bike lanes vs. shared use of facilities). Highest ridership in the world is European cities that have dedicated bicycling facilities. Would need to have a moderator to keep all communication respectful, though discussion group is not needed right away. Could/should set the rules of expected behavior at the beginning. In the interest of creating broadest, most open communication, would start off with rules, understanding that some folks may need to be removed from the group if the rules are not followed. Strategies for start-up: TAB members interested in serving on core group? Initial email could be used to seek folks who would like to serve on core group? Engage key folks in a conversation; consult with them about their experience with cyclists and things they have heard? Perry will compile statements of purpose from other bicycle advocacy groups. Reminder that the purpose is not just for advocacy, but also for commuters, people trying to coordinate rides. Next steps: Still exploring funding for website, software, design. Hileman will keep the TAB updated.

V. Pedestrian Signal timing: Hileman noted that this is the continuation of discussion for May 21st meeting and, as with other topics, will require replacement Transportation Planner/staff assistance to move forward. Broader issue is interest in setting standard with NCDOT to give priorities to pedestrians at signals (Lloyd Street intersection). There is an interest in speeding up all the signals; Chapel Hill is interested in Kumar Neppali has said that it would be okay. Hence the need for a Town standard to compare/engage with NCDOT policy. Topic has been discussed and NCDOT has stated why they are not interested in removing particular signals from loop because of affect on traffic flow. Similar situation at Weaver Street and Roberson, also a problem at Main and N/S Greensboro. Recommendation for lead time for pedestrians, rather than turning signal for vehicles; this is a standard treatment. Bicycle loop detectors are also needed. Intersection of Rosemary and Hillsborough Streets in Chapel Hill works really well, changes fast in response to presence of vehicles or pedestrians. Suggest that the TAB formally map out all the ideas and issues with particular intersections. Have former lists/comments been prioritized? Call this 'pedestrian hot spots?' Include videos? John O'Leary, former TAB member, had good information on this since he walked a lot. Update of traffic signalization project was requested. Perhaps could routinely include this as a standing topic for all future meetings. Each member is to bring top three hot spots for the next meeting. From that, the TAB could create a list. Information should include: where it is and why it is dangerous and how you think it might be improved.

VI. New TAB applicant: Michael Krasnov became aware of opening on TAB. Initial involvement in town activities related to connector road between Wexford and Claremont II, since he is a resident of Wexford. Krasnov is a Chiropractor, but researched transportation issues related to Claremont. Interest in transportation is connector road policy (a particular concern which he expects to continue in other areas of town), bike lanes. Lived in Boulder, Co. after college, upon moving here, was surprised that Carrboro does not have a system of interconnected bike lanes. Has concerns about some of the issues that come

before the TAB. Vacant seat used to be assigned to the extra-territorial jurisdiction, but not any longer. Krasnov feels that views of residents in more recently annexed/northern neighborhoods areas may be different. Krasnov stated that in relation to connector roads policy, need to consider goals and see if they are being achieved by making connections (e.g. dispersing traffic, changing modes). Also need to consider impacts to neighbors and wider community. Krasnov does not think cul-de-sacs are a bad thing. Has read on this subject and it seems that deep cul-de-sacs are not very progressive planning. Short cul-de-sacs to collectors or gridded street networks seem to be a feature of new urbanist developments. These neighborhoods also seem to be pedestrian friendly with destinations in fairly close proximity. Krasnov stated that he is open minded on this topic, referenced a book he had shared with Alderman Coleman entitled Streets and Urban Design (history of urban design from middle Ages through the present), and stated that he would like to learn more. Krasnov noted the lack of such diverse land uses and even connectivity between Phases IV and Phase V of Claremont as examples of need for planning, including for destinations. Would like to be able to walk to some destinations from his home.

TAB members stated interest in different perspectives, need to carefully consider the impacts to particular neighborhoods of all decisions, need for differentiation of land use in northern area (some destinations), noted that there are plans for more diversity of land uses in the area; rezoning will be needed and Town is working on this.

Board of Aldermen has scheduled to discuss connector roads policy; likely will not take place until the winter or next spring.

Meeting was extended to 10:00 p.m.

It was clarified that there is one applicant for vacancy. TAB will prepare a summary of the applicants for the Board of Aldermen, but does not vote on the candidate. It was noted that there is value in members who have a broader perspective/interest in transportation and are willing and able to participate in extra-curricular work on projects.

VIII. Summer Schedule: TAB will meet on June 18th, will not meet in July, and will resume meeting on August 20th. Paylor stated that she had spoken with zoning staff and it is not known at the present time whether there will be a need for Joint Review in August.

IX. Approval of Minutes – May 21, 2009: Heidi moved and LeJeunesse seconded that the minutes from May 21, 2009 be approved as amended. Ayes: (5 –Amoni, Perry, Hileman, Brown, LaJeunesse); Noes (0)

X. Other business: Perry Morgan, from Chapel Hill, has invited TAB members to a meeting on Monday, June 8 at 7:00 to discuss the need for a pedestrian connection between UNC main campus and Carolina North. If majority of TAB attends, is some other action need, since it would be a formal meeting? Is the meeting open to the public? Hileman will forward the email to all.

XI. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm.