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MINUTES
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN ADVISORY GROUP
Remote Participation
March 16, 2022 – 3:00 p.m.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Advisory Group meeting was held remotely on Tuesday, March 16, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m. by Chairman Craig Niedermaier.

Members Present:

Chairman Craig Niedermaier
Stephen Sander
Ticia Doughty-Ashcroft
Brian Lee
Peggy Reins

Staff Present:

Nathan Bruemmer, Staff Liaison
Tom Powers, Village Engineer
Nick Zakula, Police
Andrew Vitale, GIS Coordinator

Also Present

Cody McChane, Epstein
Hannah Perl, Epstein

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Craig Niedermaier, seconded by Group Member Stephen Sanders, moved to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2022, meeting; on voice vote all concurred.

New Business

I. Police Accidents Report

Nick Zakula of the Niles Police Department presented a report of all pedestrian-involved crashes since the beginning of January 2022. They were as follows:

- January 15th at 8203 Golf Rd, where a driver hit two pedestrians in the Fresh Farms parking lot. Nobody was taken to a hospital.
- January 19th at Touhy and Central, which is an intersection that historically has many accidents noted Mr. Zakula. A vehicle going westbound on Touhy turning right on Central hit a pedestrian in a crosswalk. The driver said she had a green light.

- January 21st at Waukegan and Oakton, a vehicle going southbound on Waukegan turning right onto Oakton hit a pedestrian in the right turn only lane. The vehicle was cited for failing to yield the right of way.
- February 19th at 8901 Milwaukee, a vehicle driving through a parking aisle in a private parking lot hit a pedestrian who had stepped out in front of them, the driver said they were blinded by the sun.
- March 4th at 8203 Golf Rd, a car backing out of a parking spot hit a pedestrian in the Fresh Farms parking lot. The pedestrian was taken to a hospital with minor injuries.
- March 9th at Touhy and Central, a person walking north across Touhy was hit by a vehicle traveling west on Touhy.

Chairman Neidermaier asked if these all take place in the day. The accidents spanned from morning to evening. There was consensus that it will be helpful to receive these reports at every meeting.

II. Epstein Bike Plan Update

Cody McChane, Epstein, gave a status update on the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update. Epstein has submitted an updated version of the Existing Conditions Report back to the Village, and will put it on the website as soon as they receive final approval. They've also developed an internal first draft of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update, with recommendations for the bicycle and pedestrian network and intersection improvements. They are refining some of the aspects of the plan, but expect to have it submitted to Village staff by the end of the month. Mr. McChane also announced that Epstein and Village Staff will be tabling for the bike plan at the Park District's Breakfast with Bunny event on Saturday April 2. There will be some excerpts from the draft plan for the public to review.

Chairman Niedermaier mentioned that at one point the BPAG had asked if we could create something unique, would something exciting that gets people exploring the trails be included in the plan? Like a meandering path or something unique to the area, something more ownable for the Village. Mr. McChane said we're limited in the amount of right-of-way for side paths, so something that is meandering is difficult to implement in that situation. He felt that something meandering might be more appropriate for a Planned Unit Development like the Golf Mill Redevelopment. At the December in-person meeting, Mr. McChane recalled that the topic of indoor sporting facilities had been brought up, and that some sort of indoor bicycling facility like a pump track could be called for in the plan. The first draft of the plan does actually make a recommendation for something like that. Chairman Niedermaier talked more about opportunities for outdoor spaces at the Golf Mill redevelopment. Even making the paths that front buildings at a mall more interesting would be a good start, like on the Skokie side of Village Crossing.

Chairman Niedermaier also questioned why so many trees were being cut down for the new spur path off of the North Branch Trail, and thought the trees could have been incorporated into the route of the path. Group Member Reins asked to what extent marketing recommendations promoting biking would be part of the plan. Mr. McChane said that one of the things they want to encourage is additional programming methods through the Village, but also through partnering with the schools and the Park District. A bike and walk to school/work day would be a good

example of fostering a bike culture in the Village. Tom Powers, Village Engineer, said that Public Works is not responsible for the trees being cut down in the Forest Preserve, but they could be non-native species. IDOT is also doing work on the signal at Caldwell and Touhy.

III. Engineering Updates

Group Member Reins asked if there was an updating for the multi-jurisdictional path on Oakton heading to Niles West. Tom Powers said there are a couple things to talk about for the engineering updates portion of the agenda, but that the Oakton project is still targeting a June letting, and there have been some tweaks made to those plans. Chairman Niedermaier asked if we landed on a sidewalk or a multi-modal path for that project? Mr. Powers said it's called a sidewalk but they tried to make it as wide as possible. When a path is considered multi-modal there are some other requirements. The sidewalk will be about 8 feet wide. Group Member Reins asked if we need to apply pressure to the park district to include a sidewalk connecting the new path on Caldwell to the proposed Oakton path. Mr. Powers said that connection would be part of the project, and he showed some updating drawings to the group. It's a two-phase project, where the first phase will go to Lehigh, and then after working out things with the railroads, the second phase will continue from there. The building at 7901 Oakton is asking to be compensated for the easement, which will take about a year to get approved. Mr. Powers pointed out one new addition to the drawings, which is a crossing at River Drive, and a sidewalk on the north side of Oakton allowing people to head back west to the entrance of the St. Paul Woods. Chairman Niedermaier asked if the railroads owned the entire ROW along Lehigh. He asked about the possibility of asking the railroads to allow us to pave some of their land for a walking path. Mr. Powers said possibly but that the railroads are notoriously difficult to work with.

Next Mr. Powers shared a presentation about the impact of the Howard Street bike path on the corridor. When the project was in its initial stages, residents along the corridor had complained about truck traffic and speeding. A consultant looked at peak hour totals, intersectional level of service, pedestrian and bike activity, and vehicle speeds, doing counts before and after completion of the project. There had been an average reduction in vehicle traffic of 21%, and a reduction of 47% of truck traffic in the road diet section of the project, and an average reduction of 8% east of the river. Every intersection is operating at the same level of service as it had before the project, with one intersection at Howard and Waukegan improving. Queue lengths were also significantly reduced. The new crossing at the North Branch trail is very heavily used. Chairman Niedermaier asked about the possibility of getting automatic lights going for that crosswalk. Mr. Powers said that's basically cutting edge technology that isn't used anywhere in Illinois yet. Chairman Niedermaier asked about an update at Waukegan and Caldwell, and Mr. Powers said he didn't have anything new to share. Back to the Howard St report, pedestrian counts are up at intersections, and the average vehicle speeds aren't terrible. There were some recommendations from the report, one being to get a speed control sign on the street. Another was testing a Leading Pedestrian Interval signal at Howard and Waukegan.

Hanna Perl from Epstein shared a conceptual design treatment for the installation of bike lanes on Shermer Rd, starting at Waukegan and ending at Dempster. Ms. Perl showed a couple design concepts, and then unveiled their preferred alternative, which

would widen the street from 42' to 44', maintaining parking on both sides, with 5' bike lanes and 10' through lanes. This will be submitted as part of the STP grant application. At Madison they are proposing an off-street connection along the sidewalk to connect bikers to Cleveland St. Chairman Niedermaier asked what the bike facilities in Glenview look like. Nathan Bruemmer, Planner, said they are bike lanes with no parking. The angled parking near Chesterfield Gardens would be maintained. Chairman Niedermaier noted that the widening of the street would make the parkway between the sidewalk and the curb pretty narrow, and wondered if we could move all bike traffic to off-street. Ms. Perl said that a lot of mature trees would be impacted if we were to touch the sidewalk, and there is a cemetery on the corridor as well. The application will be submitted on Friday.

Other Discussion

There was some housekeeping discussion about whether the meetings will continue to be held virtually or if the group wanted to return to in-person meetings. The consensus was it is easier to keep doing it virtually, for now.

Comments from the Public

None.

Next Meeting

April 27, 2022

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Group Member Reins, seconded by Group Member Lee; all concurred and the meeting adjourned at 4:22 PM.

Nathan Bruemmer
Staff Liaison