

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
Thursday, January 7th, 2016**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Linda Haac, Chair
Rob Dow
Diana McDuffee
Kurt Štolka
John Nicopoulos
Colleen Barclay
Bethany Chaney

STAFF PRESENT

Bergen Watterson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

GUESTS

Terri Buckner

I. Call to order

Linda called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

II. Approval of Minutes (December 3rd)

Kurt moved to approve the minutes, John seconded. All in favor.

III. Finalize Pedestrian Safety Presentation

Linda introduced Terri Buckner, who initially brought up the need for a Town pedestrian task force in the fall of 2014. Colleen brought a draft presentation to show to the group and is looking for feedback. Rob let the group know that he is compiling a report of all of the comments that were received at the Open Streets event, since only the areas that received multiple comments are shown on the map. Diana suggested that the presenters mention the total number of comments for each quadrant of Town, even if the individual comments did not make the map because they were solo. Ms. Buckner mentioned that a large group of children from the Rogers Road area marched at the Chapel Hill elections to protest the lack of sidewalk along Rogers Road. She noted that this was an example of resident concerns and parts of Town that did not necessarily receive comments at our Pedestrian Safety Forum. Diana said that she thought it should be noted at the end of the presentation that data was collected at just one event, and that it is clear that more data collection is necessary. The group said that it is important for the Town to have regular and accessible way for residents to make comments or complaints on pedestrian issues. Bergen said that she would follow up again with Chapel Hill regarding inclusion in their WikiMap. Ms. Buckner suggested working with UNC students to work with existing apps that

are used for reporting potholes and other maintenance issues and see if they can adapt them to allow people to report pedestrian concerns.

Ms. Buckner noted that she will have a column in the newspaper that will come out next week, in which she mentions the TAB's presentation to the Board of Aldermen. She said that in the article she suggests painted crosswalks at every intersection and 'no turn on red' signs at high pedestrian intersections. The group briefly discussed snow and ice removal from sidewalks and how the Town is updating the Town Code on this specific topic. Ms. Buckner discussed sensors that can be installed at traffic lights that detect when there is a pedestrian waiting to cross, instead of requiring the pedestrian to push the button. She said that she thought that the infrastructure and technology may already be included in our signals and we just need the sensors to make it happen.

IV. Continued Discussion on Hilton Garden Inn

The group is concerned about the blocked out windows on the updated drawings of the rear-facing façade of the building. Rob said that he feels like the developers are not meeting Land Use Ordinance requirements like tree cover and stormwater and are not providing enough benefit to balance it out. He said he thinks the developers ought to have had the requirements met before coming forward with the project.

The group came up with the following recommendations:

1. Consider expanding the parking deck at the same time as the hotel construction. This would prevent a likely parking crunch during the time when the site is built out but the deck is not yet constructed. Additionally, without working out specific details, the Town could benefit from extra parking generated by the deck expansion before it is needed for the built out site traffic. Finally, construction impacts to the Town and the businesses would only occur once instead of two times in fairly rapid sequence.
2. The TAB would like to see the public parking available on the site for as long as possible. Please work with the Town on this when the current lease nears expiration.
3. The building façade facing the Libba Cotten bikeway should be welcoming to passersby. It and the connector path to the alley should serve as an alternate entryway to the rest of the development. The TAB thought of the back side of Harris Teeter in Carr Mill Mall as an example of what not to do.
4. Please work to keep the Libba Cotten bikeway open and free of debris during construction. If the bikeway must be closed for any length of time, please provide a viable detour.
5. If a portion of the bikeway must be closed during construction, please make all attempts to keep at least 10' width open.

6. The TAB encourages Town staff to work with developer on allowing and providing additional lighting along the Libba Cotten bikeway.
7. Thank you for redesigning the crosswalk in front of the hotel entryway. It is better than it was previously, but please consider making it a high visibility crosswalk instead of just two lines. Additionally, the TAB would like to see another crosswalk running diagonally from the northeast corner of the hotel/parking deck ‘intersection’ to the base of the existing crosswalk so pedestrians coming along that side of the street are not stranded.
8. Please consider putting in a roundabout in front of the hotel instead of the two islands. The group believes this would help control traffic flow and pedestrian safety. A low-rise roundabout that larger vehicles could drive over would be ideal. This may involve moving the entryway/drop-off area to the west.
9. Please consider making the connector path from the bikeway wider.
10. The alley behind Cat’s Cradle and Arts Center leading to the hotel entryway is too wide at 30’. Please narrow the width of the street and make sidewalks on both sides significantly wider. The group advises making the street a maximum of 22’ wide, which would allow for additional 8’ of sidewalk between the two sides. This would help achieve part of recommendation #3 by making the connector path and alley more inviting to guests arriving from that direction.
11. Please consider putting more shade trees along the bikeway to the north of the bioretention pond and along the sidewalks that border the alley behind Cat’s Cradle.

Diana moved to approve the recommendations and Rob seconded. All in favor.

V. Other Business

The group decided to meet briefly after the Aldermen presentation on 1/19 instead of on 1/21.

Linda asked if there is a plan to update the Comprehensive Bike Plan in the spring. Bergen said no, that Town staff consciously decided not to apply for the NCDOT grant to update/re-do the plan because there currently no staff capacity to manage such a project. Rather, staff would like to review the plan and assess our implementation progress so far and whether an official update/re-do is necessary. Colleen reminded the group that Aldermen Slade and Seils met with a group from the Carrboro Bike Coalition in early 2015 to discuss the bike plan. Members of the TAB expressed concern that this meeting took place and that the TAB was not invited or kept in the loop. Bethany assured the group that Aldermen Slade and Seils would not be able to give staff direction on the bike plan without bringing it to the whole Board of Aldermen and the TAB. Bethany asked if there is anything going on at the state level that would affect or inform any update to the bike plan. The group briefly brought up HB 232, which is a bill to “improve bicycle safety” by enacting new requirements for bicyclists on the roads. Bergen said that she will put

the bike plan update on an agenda sometime in the spring and the group can decide how and if they want to proceed.

VI. Staff Report

Bergen updated the group on the Homestead-Chapel Hill Multi Use Path. She said that Town staff will meet with the CEI firm and the construction contractor to discuss when to begin construction on the project. It will likely be in April. The parking study is underway and the consultants will be out doing data collection on 1/14 and the kick-off meeting will likely be in early February. Bergen told the group about the field trip with Colleen on 12/31/15 to look at possible crosswalk locations prior to meeting with District Engineer, Chuck Edwards, on 1/14/2016. Bergen and Colleen identified multiple locations that would benefit from having a crosswalk, some of which have existing infrastructure like curb ramps, and others that will likely be more difficult.

Kurt discussed the status of the North-South Corridor/Bus Rapid Transit study being done by Chapel Hill Transit and their consultant. Bergen will send out project information and details about upcoming public meetings.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25pm.