

Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 26, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

1. Introduction / Roll Call

Chair Bryant Ficek called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. and at his request, Public Works Director Marc Culver called the roll.

Present: Chair Bryant Ficek; Vice Chair Michael Joyce; and Members Jarrod Cicha, Nancy Misra, Shane Spencer, and Edwin Hodder.

Absent: Member Mike Collins (Excused)

Staff Present: Public Works Director Marc Culver; City Engineer/Assistant Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer; Civil Engineer Stephanie Smith, and Environmental Specialist Ryan Johnson

2. Public Comments

Chair Ficek indicated the Board received a couple of emails about some events coming up. One email was also received from the Roseville Area Progressives Club.

3. Swearing in of New Commissioner Edwin Hodder

Chair Ficek administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Hodder.

Chair Ficek thanked outgoing Chair Joe Wozniak for his service on the Commission. He also mentioned the Roseville Area High School did a walk out on March 25th to bring attention to climate change. He explained he did attend and thought it was a good event and appreciated the activism of the students.

4. Approval of March 22, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Comments and corrections to draft minutes had been submitted by PWETC commissioners prior to tonight's meeting and those revisions incorporated into the draft presented in meeting materials.

Chair Ficek indicated on line 36 his name is misspelled.

Motion

Member Joyce moved, Member Cicha seconded, approval of the March 22, 2022 meeting minutes as amended.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

5. Communication Items

City Engineer Jesse Freihammer provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated April 26, 2022.

Public Works Director Marc Culver updated the Commission on shredding day on May 21st. He noted the City is finding it difficult to get contractors that are willing to do this event at the scale the City needs it to be done for the demand that is out there. He was not sure how much longer the City will be able to do this event with costs increasing and the difficulty of getting contractors. He explained this is a nice free event but there are many private market options for this service as well.

Mr. Culver explained staff had a really good meeting with the City Council on the Civic Campus predesign project and a couple of residents attended and provided some good and honest input from their perspective. The City continues to be aware of the impact this proposal may bring to the neighboring residents and the community as a whole.

Member Spencer inquired about the clean up day and how much was recycled.

Mr. Freihammer indicated he would report that information at the May meeting. All of the data has not been tabulated yet.

Member Spencer asked about the cable median on Snelling and inquired about the reasoning for it.

Mr. Freihammer explained similar to other locations in the Metro, it is more of a safety improvement so there are not any crossovers between the lanes. Some of it was to prevent the illegal U-turns that are present. As part of that, there are a couple of minor improvements in that area as well. He reported the improvements to the Commission.

Chair Ficek indicated regarding the Lexington Water Main if the turn lane will be removed to make it one way each direction, he wondered how that will affect access.

Mr. Freihammer explained traffic will be shifted to the east and southbound traffic will use the old center left turn lane. The City is working with Ramsey County for

both signal lights at Woodhill and County Road C. This will probably be under split phasing. Left Turns will still be able to work even though the signal will not be as efficient but it still should work. The only access will be into The Point or Amara. The apartment building across the street will still have full access other.

Mr. Freihammer addressed Commission questions regarding construction issues.

Mr. Culver indicated at the end of April the Mayor's Emergency Declaration for virtual meetings is going to expire. He indicated starting with the May meeting all Commissioners will be required to attend the meetings in person, in a public space. He believed the hybrid meetings will continue to allow the public to view and respond remotely.

6. Regional Bike Plan Review and Discussion

Mr. Culver introduced Jesse Thorsen, Senior Pedestrian, Bicycle, ADA Planner for the Minnesota Department of Transportation who made a presentation on the Pathway Master Plan. The Commission is asked to consider and recommend future action for the City.

Chair Ficek asked Mr. Thorsen to expand on how MnDOT can work with Roseville if the City were to move forward with some sort of bike plan. He wondered what MnDOT's role would be in that.

Mr. Thorsen reviewed the steps that would be taken to coordinate highway crossings, alignment of upcoming work as well as coordination along roadways.

Chair Ficek asked if it is a benefit to MnDOT if the City has a bike path plan.

Mr. Thorsen indicated there would be a benefit.

Member Misra indicated in the MnDOT prioritization maps it shows major corridors where the priority lies, the major traffic areas, but in the design graphics it is looking at lower speed, lower volume traffic areas. She wondered how are those two combined.

Mr. Thorsen indicated MnDOT is focusing on the trunk highway for the prioritization so part of having all of those different facilities within the design guide is to recognize that they want to make sure they are adequately planning for the safety of people crossing the trunk highway network. Understanding that there are minor streets that intersect with the trunk highways. Being able to plan for those adequately and also the design manual is not just for MnDOT to use, often times it can be a guide for other municipalities to look at if they are having questions about planning transportation needs. It is mostly a guide to be used.

Mr. Scott Merrick, Ramsey County Senior Transportation Planner, provided a presentation on the Ramsey County All Abilities 2050 Plan.

Chair Ficek asked regarding the County Hierarchy slide, will more money be allocated to people who walk then money will be allocated to people who bike and down the line. He asked for Mr. Merrick to expand on the information.

Mr. Merrick explained it is not necessarily more money because the physical infrastructure of roadways is quite a bit more than building a trail or sidewalk, it is more about how they look at designing a roadway. He gave the Commission an example and explained they first look at what the biking and walking needs are in the corridor and how can they best accommodate those needs. He noted this is for a full reconstruction of a roadway.

Chair Ficek indicated what he envisioned under that guideline is the County could induce some vehicle congestion in order to make the crossing safer for pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Merrick explained those are discussions that do take place and those decisions are made on a project-by-project basis that involve, often times, the City that the County is working with. They also look at balancing those vehicle needs with bicycle and walking needs.

Member Misra explained in Roseville there are so many major thoroughfares so the City does not have a lot of authority unilaterally to impose speed limits or change certain traffic parameters. It seems to her that with an increased emphasis on pedestrians and bikes going forward that maybe that is up for consideration on some of the existing and proposed projects.

Mr. Merrick explained the issue of speed does come up in a lot of the corridors. Speeds on County corridors are set by Minnesota Statute, which requires that MnDOT conducts a speed study and whatever the eighty-fifth percentile is of people driving in the corridor is what the posted speed is along the County road. He indicated the County Board is very interested in this topic and are having ongoing discussions about looking at some creative ways they could look at posting speeds in certain County corridors different than what he just described. The County is working with its traffic engineer and the County Board to do some pilot studies in the coming years.

Mr. Culver explained the PWETC will likely be talking about speed limits at the local level before the end of the year. City's do have the ability to set speed limits based on some engineering studies on its own. He explained it is a tough authority to have because the City has to make sure it is done in the right way and the biggest difficulty is the enforcement.

Mr. Culver indicated he wanted to find out what the Commission thinks as far as what Roseville should be looking at for further action on a bike network plan and if the Commissioners had any other input on Mr. Merrick's slides. Should the City

be extending the Pathway Master Plan to include some additional details for a bike network plan. Should the City put together a whole separate plan.

Chair Ficek explained if the City went down the road to a separate bike plan, what would Mr. Culver see as the goal and how would that be different from the Master Plan.

Mr. Culver indicated he was looking for some input from the Commission, if there is any input. He noted the City does not necessarily have a budget right now for a separate bike plan but some things could be shuffled around to hire a consultant to help with that. He thought the City needed to work towards a network where they are promoting the use of certain roadways for bike travel.

Member Hodder explained from his perspective when he was Finance Chair, one of the things that helped ground him, when he would make decisions was how would it be connected to the community vision for the process that the citizens laid out. How is this driven toward that end.

Mr. Culver explained whether this is a supplement to the existing Pathway Master Plan or a whole new plan, it is directly connected to the City's overall Transportation Plan, which is a chapter within the City's Comprehensive Plan, which is a very community driven document.

Member Misra explained to Commissioner Hodder's point, that is the kind of thinking that the City, County and even the State seem to be moving forward with its plans, a kind of aspirational vision towards the community.

Chair Ficek explained his opinion is what he is hearing from the County and State is that it would be a benefit if the City had this and it would help with their investments and something to point to and say the City is dedicated towards it. He also thought, given the little knowledge he has of the Comprehensive Plan, it would be easier to change a bike plan if it were a separate item rather than having to go back and do an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. He could definitely see some benefit towards having a separate plan. He thought it would be a good thing to have.

Mr. Culver thanked the presenters for addressing the Commission.

Chair Ficek also thanked the presenters for their presentations.

7. Items for Next Meeting – May 24, 2022

Discussion ensued regarding the May PWETC agenda:

- Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Annual Meeting
- Update on Storm Sewer Projects
- June: City Council July Joint Meeting preparation

Chair Ficek indicated he would like to change the Commission name to “The Sustainability and Infrastructure Commission”. He thought it would be more succinct with what the Commission does. He noted there are other cities that have gone this route with sustainability commissions.

Mr. Culver commented the Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission, as with all the other Commissions in the City are set in City Code. Changing a name actually requires action by the City Council and it is an important change which would require a public hearing to make that change. It is not to say the name change cannot be done but he wanted the Commission to understand the process it would take. The Commission could make a recommendation to the City Council to consider changing the name of the Commission. He would suggest the conversation to be at the June meeting.

Chair Ficek indicated he would be looking for that recommendation if the Commission was in agreement.

Mr. Culver reviewed “No Mow May” with the Commission.

8. Adjourn

Motion

Member Misra moved, Member Joyce seconded, adjournment of the meeting at approximately 8:24 p.m.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion carried.