

PPA Transportation Committee Minutes
Tuesday, 15 June 2021, Pratt School Ampitheater

Attending: Evan Roberts (Chair), Dan Cross, Kathy Kahn, Pat Thompson (St Anthony Park Community Council), Ruth Newman, Dan Bryant, Thomas Johnson, Gail Johnson, Walter Johnson, David Frank, Cam Gordon (Ward 2 Council Member), Nick Juarez (MPD Community Liaison Officer), Britt Howell, Lupe Castillo, Peter Wagenius, Kate Needleman, Alonda Zaragosa, Jesus Vega-Zaragosa, Laura Preus, Bob Sykora, Nancy Kosciolek, Rob Nordin, Mary Britton.

1. MNDOT Changes Proposed for the Sound-absorbing Wall on I-94

Bob Sykora briefed the committee on the sound-absorbing walls on the west side of I-94. Graffiti has been a problem, and MnDOT is open to discussions on graffiti abating paint, and repainting the walls. They would like to attend a future meeting for discussion with the neighborhood.

2. MNDOT Proposed Changes to Speed Limit on MN-280

Pat Thompson and Peter Wagenius briefed the committee on the proposal by MnDOT to raise the speed limit on MN-280 to 60mph. Following discussion the committee passed the following resolution for the Board to consider, which follows the language used by the St Anthony Park Community Council

Resolution Against Raising the Speed Limit on Trunk Highway 280

Whereas TH-280 was originally designed before the modern interstate highway system, primarily for slower and lighter truck traffic, and continues to have short entrance and exit ramps in spite of recent improvements, creating difficulty merging into traffic or crossing lanes to exit;

Whereas this segment of highway is significantly more dangerous than other state highways considering crash rates, ramp density, and length of segment;

Whereas the highway is prone to winter icing and spring flooding;

Whereas the 85% rule, used to determine optimum speed by traffic engineers, is under question and may be about to be changed on the federal level;

Whereas the traffic noise from TH-280 is already intolerable to the neighboring residents, in spite of sound walls;

Whereas drivers exiting the highway into the adjacent neighborhoods often fail to completely slow down to surface street speed limits;

Whereas increased speed limits would require greater acceleration of both light- and heavy-duty vehicles entering the roadway, increasing emissions of hydrocarbons, CO, NOx, and fine particulate matter;

Whereas higher vehicle velocity increases both air pollution and climate change, because it promotes resuspension of particulate matter, increases tire wear, and decreases efficiency of fuel combustion;

Whereas an increased speed limit sends a signal contrary to Minneapolis' and the Prospect Park Association's commitment to combating climate change, as shown in their respective Climate Action Plans and, since transportation is the largest portion of Minnesota's carbon footprint;

Be it resolved that the Prospect Park Association opposes raising the speed limit on TH-280.

Motion moved by Peter Wagenius , Seconded by Kathy Kahn

Passed Unanimously

3. Community Forum with Nick Juarez, Crime Prevention Specialist, Minneapolis Police Department

Nick Juarez provided an update on discussions with the Valhalla Place methadone clinic. He will be conducting a premise survey within the next month to observe noise and other conditions. He has talked with the clinic about how to improve their oversight of security staff.

Community members raised concerns about needles being disposed of, and waste in the property adjacent to Speedway owned by Jeff Barnhart. The location of the Speedway dumpster is a factor in these concerns, and Nick Juarez will talk to Speedway about moving the dumpster.

Britt Howell will continue discussions with area businesses, to convene a meeting with the clinic, business owners, and relevant PPA and city staff.

Concerns about whether Valhalla is adhering to regulations on clients leaving the clinic with additional doses were discussed. This matter is a Department of Health and Human Services oversight responsibility.

Nick Juarez emphasized that documenting the times and locations of needle disposal and problematic behavior would be important for further investigation by the state regulatory agency.

4. Franklin Avenue speed and design concerns

During the community forum, a question was raised to Nick Juarez about speeding on Franklin Avenue. Following further discussion the following motion was made by Bob Sykora and seconded by Dan Cross.

That the Transportation and Safety Committee encourage the neighborhood and PPA to support installation of traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures on Franklin Avenue Southeast where the avenue widens at the intersection of Arthur, Malcolm and Franklin"

Passed unanimously.

Bob Skyora and Evan Roberts will develop concept plans for interim and longer-term design changes to Franklin Avenue that would contribute to improved pedestrian safety.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm