Meeting Minutes

DATE: Monday, March 18, 2019
TIME: 4 to 6 p.m.
LOCATION: Hennepin County
701 4th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Committee Members:
Tammy McLemore, Dist. 1
Dave Carlson, Dist. 3
Judy Jones, Dist. 5
Greg Anderson, Dist. 7

Ex-Officio Members:
Jordan Kocak, HC Public Works
Dan Patterson, HC Public Works

Alternates:
Billy Binder, Dist. 2
Erin Daly, Dist. 3
Hokan, Dist. 4
Dave Gepner, Dist. 5
Ron Uglow, Dist. 7

1. Approval of the February 2019 minutes 4:00 – 4:05
The January minutes were unanimously approved with corrections. Dave Carlson moved, Billy Binder seconded.

2. Biennial election of new officers for chair and vice chair 4:05 – 4:20
- Committee to vote on new or reconfirm officers for chair and vice chair positions
Jordan Kocak had announced in December 2018 and January 2019 that members should consider whether they are interested in running for a position in upcoming officer elections. Judy Jones had expressed interest in being chair and Greg Anderson was interested in being vice chair.
Billy Binder: I’ve been around a long time; we’ve made a lot of progress of late, part of that is really good staff (Kelley Yemen and Jordan), and Dave Gepner has guided us through a lot of change. Billy nominated Dave Gepner for the position of chair. Dave said he has been doing it a long time, and he’s happy to give someone else the opportunity, but he accepted the nomination.
Billy nominated Judy and Dave for chair; Hokan seconded
Hokan nominated Judy Jones as chair and Greg Anderson as vice chair

Ron Uglow said Judy could do the job and Dave’s been doing it a long time. Erin also called for a new voice, some change in the momentum of the group. Greg asked Dave whether he’d continue on the BAC in any case; he said he would.
Dave Gepner asked whether the group would like to do a voice vote or secret ballot? The group decided on a voice vote.

Judy Jones was elected 2019-2021 chair with six votes.

Vice chair position
Judy nominated Greg Anderson, Ron Uglow seconded.
Discussion: None
Greg Anderson was unanimously elected 2019-2021 vice chair.

Judy Jones and Dave Carlson thanked Dave Gepner for his long history of service and leadership. Dave Gepner asked that people recruit more voices to participate; Greg added that members should meet with their commissioners occasionally.

Jordan announced that BAC District 6 alternate member Duane Hookom had resigned due to new job that would require him to be out of town many Mondays.

3. At grade trail crossing projects 4:20 – 5:00
- Jordan Kocak, Hennepin County – Review concept for three trail crossing improvement projects on regional trails – Orono Orchard Road, Fernbrook Lane and County Road 110.
Three locations were packaged into one project by Three Rivers. The county is supporting the study as well as construction of the crossings through the bike implementation grant program. They all cross a county road or parallel one and intersect another road. They’re at about 60 percent design, so this is a good and last opportunity to make significant changes to the designs.

110
Hokan: The perpendicular crossings create better sightlines, better safety. Traffic engineers are figuring out this applies to bikes, too.
Dave Carlson said the intersection doesn’t seem to be too busy when he’s gone through it.
Jordan Kocak: Some vegetation has to be cleared out for sightlines. Some plantings will prevent people from going straight. Project would go in 2020.
Dave Carlson would like to make ramps a foot or two wider to accommodate for bidirectional traffic. Greg Anderson said that would be good, but without making it look like a road and risking people driving on it.
Erin Daly said that the crossing should be level for biking because with the width, if it’s not at grade, it can be confusing as to where you get on the trail on the other side.
Hokan: What’s the ADT like? Jordan: 3,000 to 5,000
Billy: What’s the speed limit, can we lower it? Jordan: It hasn’t been considered, but we can look at it.
Jordan: I’ve asked the consultant to remove the bike markings from the drawing; it’s nothing more than a shoulder. We looked at potentially a trail, but the slopes make it difficult and expensive. Hokan: It would be good to remove bike symbols.
Hennepin County
Bicycle Advisory Committee

Judy Jones: Maybe we should put crosswalk markings on the road if there’s heavier recreational travel in the area. Jordan refers to the county’s crosswalk guidance and that we don’t want to do anything unless it meets criteria and has additional improvements.

Dave Gepner: It also says to the people driving that they have to stop. Jordan: It’s an open question of whether a trail without another road is an intersection.

Tammy McLemore: Any plans to improve the park entrance? Jordan: No, they’re keeping it as it is now.

Tammy: How busy is the park? Any signs for people exiting park? Judy: I’ve been there on game day and never have seen an issue finding a gap. Dave Carlson: I’ve gone through and had no trouble, but I was off-peak.

Dave Gepner: In the past, if developer put something in and they wanted access, they would throw a trail in, but I see more of those. Have attitudes changed or are they just getting away with it? Jordan: They’re probably getting away with it. If it’s affecting our right of way we want a say.

Judy: What are the construction impacts, how long would it be closed. Jordan: I would guess maybe a couple of months. Judy: Is there a bypass? Just keep it open? Jordan: They’re pretty good about it, they’d find a way and make it as minimal as possible.

Dave Gepner: Does Three Rivers have their own crew? Jordan: I’m not sure.

Orono Orchard Road and Shoreline Drive
Jordan: You’ve seen this before, but this is a more refined version.

Hokan: I remember talking about turn radius and it seems this has been made sharper. Jordan: The free right / porkchop is going away. It is an acute angle, so it’s tough to get some vehicles through there.

Dave Carlson: What’s the width of the road and the median? Jordan: Median is a minimum of 6 feet. Dave Carlson: And the lane widths? Sometimes people using the general lanes get squeezed out.

Dave Carlson: The median break, is it flush or a ramp? Jordan: I’m not sure.

Greg: Will this make it harder or easier for people to turn left off Orchard onto the trail? Jordan: You should take the lane and turn left onto the median.

Judy: I’m worried cars will queue in the crossing and cut off people using the trail. Jordan: This will have a striped crosswalk, and I will recommend a stop bar.

Judy recommended putting the stop sign before the trail.

Fernbrook at Maple Grove High School
Jordan: This is Medicine Lake Regional Trail, near Maple Grove High School and elementary school. It’s moving the trail closer to the intersection. The crosswalk markings are going away.

Dave Carlson Recommends leaving some space for people biking on the shoulder; don’t use it all for a bumpout. Could use some paint to calm traffic without creating barrier to bicycling.

Dave Carlson: This looks like a better crossing. Hokan: I like the tightened turning radius.

Greg: Does Maple Grove use RRFBs (rectangular rapid flash beacons), is that an option next to the schools? Jordan: I can ask.

Dave Gepner: Stop bars across those three lanes? Jordan: Not without additional improvements.

4. Nicollet Avenue Study -- Bloomington 5:00 – 5:30

- Jordan Kocak, Hennepin County – roadway restriping project in Bloomington - review study limits, scope, outreach and objectives

Jordan: Last month Emily Kettell brought this project, but without a layout. We’re working a very short timeline, working with Bloomington, so getting this committee’s opinion as soon as possible was important.
This project is driven by a CenterPoint project. To the south, they’ve put the roadway back as it was before. This year, they’ll redo the northern half of the corridor, so we need to have it figured out by May. It goes from Old Shakopee to American Boulevard. Kennedy High School has some concerns about bus movements. They’re worried the 4-3 will reduce gaps in traffic. And, if parents are dropping off students from Old Shakopee, it can back up… will they be unable to turn out of the high school lot or will they be delayed? County is modeling traffic, but Jordan doesn’t think it will be too bad. And if it is we should be able to come up with some creative solutions. And even if not, it’s a small part of the corridor.

At Kennedy High School
Greg Anderson: Northbound left turning traffic going to the fuel station would block traffic. Jordan: Those lefts are not allowed.
Jordan: Buffer would be striped, buses would be able to cross it.
Judy Jones: Wider bike lane than 4+2 would be better given what all is happening here.
Ron Unglow: Slowing traffic down is a great argument alone.
Judy Jones: Southbound on Nicollet, does it need a dedicated right, or could we do a buffer there, too?
Jordan: I’m not sure, we can look at it. I think the county or city wants to keep the right turn lane, but if it’s possible I’d want to.

At 90th
Hokan: That’s bizarre. Jordan: This is a rough draft, there is much room for change, especially with the southbound right/bike conflict. Hokan: You can’t move curbs, but can you just put paint there?
Judy: With that (paint) you could bring the bike lane into the 12-foot space… It would be a wider radius for people driving to make the turn.
Hokan: Of the two choices, this is better than angling the lanes into the intersection.
Jordan: On the north side, mixing zone might be too long. Hokan: There’s an opportunity to reduce lane widths. Jordan: Designer needs to measure actual lane widths after the snow melts, so he was being conservative.
Hokan: If an 11-foot lane is reasonable, that’s what it will be? Jordan: Yes. Billy Binder: I strongly agree.
Jordan: I feel like we’re moving to a place where 11-feet is the standard.
Ron Unglow: Is the Bloomington council on board? Jordan: I believe they are. There is still some work to do with them, but I think they like how the Portland 4-3 is working. They want to be sure it’s going to work.
Judy: They’ll catch a lot of grief from residents; any information we can give them will help make their case when they get those complaints. Jordan: This improves biking, but the bigger impact is it’s a big safety improvement for everyone. There are more dimensions that being just a bike project.
Hokan: Would it be possible to put in a turn lane on northbound Nicollet onto 90th to use that “extra space.”
Dave Gepner: I haven’t been in a situation like this where you get to the other side of the intersection and find you’re in the middle of traffic with a vehicle on your right.

At American Boulevard
Jordan: The bike lane drops here because there isn’t a bike facility to the north. We like to end bikeways at logical points, but here we’re proposing you get on the sidewalk or take the lane. Hokan: That’s OK, but people biking need to know that’s happening in advance (with signage and/or other means).
Judy Jones: I would blend the bike lane into the far right lane before the intersection rather than ending it at the intersection. Is there a way to get a bike priority signal, especially if you use a bike box?
Erin Daly: When I went up Lyndale it was very similar to this intersection, I was turning and would just take the turn lane. But here, if you’re going straight, you need to know ahead of time if you need to get in the
lane. Jordan: How about a sign that the bikeway ends, bikes may use full lane? Judy: Maybe also sharrows, as bikes are merging into the lane and on the far side. Preferably before that right turn.

Jordan: Southbound it’s less complicated, this is where the bike lane starts. Dave Carlson: Is there any reason to have that second southbound lane (the merge after the intersection)? Drivers race to make the merge first. Jordan: Probably not.

Hokan: Similar thing happens on Franklin Avenue Bridge. It would be simpler and calmer for everyone if it were one to begin with.

Jordan: MnDOT has a project with 494 where they’ll consolidate some of these interchanges. There’s a chance the interchange at Nicollet will go away, opening opportunities to restripe to the north. Ultimately we want to get over the barrier of 494. There are some decisions being made that might make more sense with that vision.

Judy Jones: And Richfield has something going on with Nicollet? Jordan: Yes, that’s a 4-3 conversion, a separate project. I’ll bring that to the BAC, too.

Dave Carlson: This is an improvement.

5. Member announcements 5:30 – 5:40

Billy Binder: I was told CenterPoint is going to dig up Winnetka Avenue North right where it was repaved 3.5 years ago, between the Luce Line and Medicine Lake Road. Winnetka is a clean slate; Bob Byers did a 4-3 conversion three years ago but without bike lane stencils or signs. Here’s our chance to add those, maybe with room for a buffer, or pylons or a protected bikeway between Crystal and Golden Valley. It’s very valuable. It’s scheduled for 2020; we have a chance. Tammy and I need to convince the mayor in Crystal to go with a 4-3 conversion. For safety reasons, bike connections; we have an opportunity to speak about this.

Jordan: The county is working with Crystal staff on this.

Billy: Tammy and I, representing Golden Valley and Crystal, we can make the case to add a connection at no cost because of the CenterPoint work. It’s not great coordination, but it gives us a second chance.

Jordan: As the project progresses, as we have a layout, we’ll bring this to the BAC. For now, please let staff handle the communication.

Billy: The county is working with Golden Valley on Glenwood from 100 to Thomas Avenue North in Minneapolis, in 2020. We’re working on a layout with the city. There are few stoplights, so people drive Glenwood very fast, with two schools right off Glenwood. There’s potential for kids on the street, we have to slow it down. Narrow lanes, crosswalks, bumpouts, pylons, concrete divider. We’re looking at those issues, meeting in late April. We should come up with a position to slow traffic and make it as good as it is to the east, where there are bike lanes, and to the west, where there are bike lanes.

Greg Anderson: There was an open house on County Road 47 in Plymouth. The county doesn’t really want it, and the city was fighting it. The city is studying taking the road over. They had a lot of good comments on people wanting to walk and bike along it. If you have some idle, time search Plymouth’s Web site for County 47, review comments and make comments. I bike that road and it’s not the greatest.

Dave Carlson: Winnetka right now already is a 4-3 Medicine Lake Road to the Luce Line? Is it likely they’ll keep in the same? Billy: Yes, we want to do the same farther to the north. Jordan: County staff are working with Crystal and New Hope. The real roadblocks are with the cities, the county recognizes the benefits of 4-3s.

Jordan: We’re gearing up for Bike Month and Bike to Work Day. I know some of you have volunteered at a pit stop or ride into downtown. If you’re interested – even if you’re outside your district – please feel welcome to join. We’re doing things in St. Louis Park, Golden Valley, Richfield and Minneapolis.
Dave Carlson: I met with Ben from St. Louis Park and George Haggeman. Because southern Cedar Lake Trail will be closed, we’re looking at moving it from Victoria Park to Minnetonka Boulevard to catch people on the detour as well, and to explain the detours. We might also do some smaller spots. Ben will work with Hopkins possibly at the Depot, too.

Dave Gepner: Richfield is home to major bike shop chains Penn and Erik’s, started within six blocks of each other. The Sorensons, children of the founder (who was a Northwest Airlines mechanic) are fighting a bit, and so selling out to Freewheel, and probably will close some of the locations. They were one of the country’s first and biggest Trek dealers. It’s kind of sad.

Judy Jones: If there are no other announcements, I’ll adjourn the meeting. Adjourned at 6:05.

Next meeting:

Monday, April 15, 2019
4 to 6 p.m.
Location: 701 4th Ave. S., Minneapolis