

Meeting Minutes
Lake Street Design Project
Project Advisory Committee #3
June 17, 2016 | 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Members: Allison Sharkey – Lake Street Council, Chair
Aisha Gomez – Central Area Neighborhood Development Organization
Bob Speeter – East Business Representative
Christina Le – West Business Representative
Crystal Windschitl – Phillips West Neighborhood Association
John Berrigan – Lyndale Neighborhood Association
Marian Biehn – Whittier Alliance
Tom Roberts – West Business Representative

Staff: Jim Grube – Hennepin County
Nathan Koster – City of Minneapolis
Andrew Carlson – City of Minneapolis
Max Holdhusen – Metro Transit
Mike Kotila – S.E.H.
Bob Kost – S.E.H.
Anna Springer – S.E.H.
Charleen Zimmer – Zan Associates
Alex Magee – Zan Associates

Housekeeping

Allison Sharkey welcomed all meeting attendees and asked attendees to introduce themselves. She then asked if there were any changes or corrections to the April meeting minutes distributed via email. John Berrigan requested some changes to the minutes and provided a hard copy for reference. Corrections will be made and a revised version of the minutes will be re-distributed.

Allison noted the remaining Lake Street Design PAC meetings will be held on August 18, October 20, and December 15 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Additionally, there will be a meeting on July 14 for property owners, managers and businesses from 9 to 11 a.m. in the 5th Precinct conference room. Allison asked members of the PAC to review the revised roster and provide any additional changes, as needed.

Update on I-35W Transit Access Project

Jim Grube, Hennepin County, reported that Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis have been seeking \$25 million in state bonding from the Legislature for the local share of costs for the I-35W Transit/Access project. This was supported in the Legislature; however, the transportation bill did not pass. The team is hoping for a special session to pass the bonding bill. In the meantime, the project team continues to work with MnDOT on the design of the project and is still expecting to let bids in June 2017. Andrew Carlson asked for a recap on the project timing, particularly in terms of the special

session. He asked what it will mean if there is no special session and the project has to wait. Jim responded that he expects funding issues to be resolved in time for construction to start in 2017, although it may start later in the year than currently planned. Jim noted that the project team continues to meet with MnDOT, and they are full speed ahead on both design and a funding strategy.

Jim also noted that the PAC received invitations to attend upcoming I-35W Transit/Access project meetings. Allison commented that the I-35W Transit/Access PAC will have three meetings. Crystal Windschitl commented that the email the committee received had an incorrect date for the second meeting. The team clarified that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 21, from 8:30 to 10 a.m. to discuss design elements. The other two meetings will be held on July 12 and August 16. All meetings will be held at the Colin Powell Center.

Update on Lake Street Design

Mike Kotila, S.E.H., noted that the previous layout provided is now out of date and asked the team to use the new version handed out today. Mike walked through the updates to the project footprint. The layout now reflects pedestrian crosswalks and bump outs. On the frontage at SuperValu/Kmart, the sidewalk is wider than previously shown due to conversations with the city about the future development of this site and station locations for ABRT. Mike added that the wider sidewalk means the existing trees in this area will need to be removed. Jim noted that the south side has buildings up to the property line, meaning the south sidewalk will be less than 15' wide.

Marian Biehn asked about the curb cut on the north side of Nicollet, noting that it looked quite narrow where Nicollet would go through. She stated that it looks like the plans do not accommodate the reopening of Nicollet. Mike responded that the curbs are being designed to accommodate the existing driveway, since the reopening of Nicollet is not yet known, but everything underground is being designed to accommodate the future reopening of Nicollet. The driveway meets city code for driveways and the narrower driveway is safer for pedestrians. The intersection will be modified when Nicollet is reopened.

John Berrigan asked if the bump-outs on the east side of the intersection of Blaisdell and Lake Street are appropriate given the city's plans to modify Blaisdell. Nathan Koster, City of Minneapolis, responded that the city plans to install a protected bike facility on the west side of Blaisdell so parking will be shifted to the east side south of Lake Street. Thus, the bump-outs are appropriate on the east side.

Mike noted that the local bus stops on Lake Street will be relocated to share bus stops with future ABRT. The wider sidewalk width will accommodate the proposed ABRT shelters and related features. Jim Grube asked Max Holdhusen, Metro Transit, what type of outreach will be done around the ABRT on Lake Street and when it will occur. Max responded that this would not occur until later. Metro Transit does not want to start planning Lake Street (E Line) before they plan Chicago Ave. (D Line). John Berrigan requested that lighting at the stations be designed to avoid light pollution for residences in the area.

On the east side of the freeway, bump-outs will be added on the cross-streets at 3rd Ave., Clinton Ave., and 4th Ave. 5th Ave. will not have a curb extension due to future planned bike lanes on 5th. Mike described on-street parking before and after reconstruction of Lake Street. Overall, there would be a loss of four parking spaces. Marian noted that there is an ABRT stop at 3rd, Nicollet and under the freeway, which seems very close together. Mike stated that the stop at 3rd Ave. will be a local bus stop.

Max responded that the ABRT stops are closer than normal because there are important transfer connections at 4th, the Orange Line (under the freeway), and Nicollet.

Mike noted that there would need to be easements for sidewalk widening work. Crystal asked for an update on any conflicts with underground areaways. Mike responded that areaways have not been fully identified yet. Nathan Koster commented that there is a defined city policy about what to do with areaways – they will either be abandoned and filled or the owner will be required to reinforce the areaway based on design by a certified engineer.

Discussion on Streetscaping and Lighting

Description of Proposed Streetscape Plan

Bob Kost, S.E.H., walked through the proposed streetscaping plan, which is comparable to streetscaping along other sections of Lake Street. New streetscape would have street trees spaced 35' on center and light fixtures spaced 60-65' on center. In addition to the trees and light fixtures, the proposal includes benches, bike loops, and trash receptacles. For the future ABRT station area, there would be a 2-foot tactile strip along the platform edge for people who are sight impaired. The ABRT station area would have street trees, a bench, a pylon, a ticket vending machine and a shelter.

Bob noted that, in general, these concepts are following the existing Lake Street design where litter receptacles are near the corners and bike racks are located mid-block. There would be decorative fencing on the back side of either end of the transit stop and along surface parking lots. Bob added that there would be widening along the frontage of the Office Max parking lot to accommodate the future ABRT stop. The pedestrian passageway in this area would be along the front of the sidewalk. On this block, the design includes narrower trees to be respectful of business signage and existing trees on private property in this area.

Bob described the base level streetscape versus the enhanced streetscape option. In the base level, lighting would follow a high-low lighting system like the existing lighting in the project area. This system follows a pattern of alternating 30' high streetlights with low acorn fixtures. Sidewalks would have accessible crosswalks and would include street trees with grates. Mike commented that we are showing this to represent the cost baseline. The enhanced level streetscape elements include the additional cost of the shepherd hook fixtures and an increased number of light fixtures to be consistent with other sections of Lake Street. The enhanced streetscape option also includes plant/banner holders on the poles; holiday lighting on light poles; decorative benches, litter receptacles, and bike loops; and decorative fencing near surface parking lots. Andrew noted that the most cost-effective way to add streetscape enhancements to this area is through the roadway project.

Discussion of South Side Between 1st and Stevens Avenues

Tom Roberts asked if the existing bus stop on the east end of the block would be eliminated. The project team responded that it would be. Tom stated that he does not support planting new trees in front of his business since he already has mature trees located in this area. Tom suggested putting in the structured soils now so that trees could be planted in the future, if needed. Bob responded that this is something the team can consider. Nathan noted that tree species that fit the area can be used rather than just eliminating the trees. Crystal agreed with Tom that, if there are already trees in this area, the project shouldn't waste public money putting in additional, unneeded trees. Andrew noted that there is a long

history about boulevard trees along Lake Street. The decision was made by policy makers in the past to keep them in. He noted that this project is looking at the public realm, and the existing trees are on private property. John Berrigan commented that he represents the people who share that block, and they understand that trees tend to come and go because of the difficult growing situation for boulevard trees. John noted that, since there is so little green in the area, he sees value in preserving the green space and keeping the trees in the design. Tom asked if the design could incorporate something besides trees, such as shrubs. Allison noted that there are a lot of questions regarding the specifics about what goes where on each block, and asked if this is the meeting to go block by block to discuss where things should go. Bob responded that the team would like to hear suggestions about the proposed plan.

Tom stated that he did not think that the bike racks on the corner of 1st and Lake make sense since there is not a bus stop or building entrance located there. Bob responded this could be eliminated, but noted that the design should provide some predictability for the traveling public. Keeping benches, bike racks, and trash receptacles in the same spot on every block would accomplish that.

Bob noted that the tree species and tree spacing was adjusted to be sensitive to the existing trees. Marian stated that she supports planting the street trees right away because they will add more green space. It will also ensure that the area remains consistent with the rest of Lake Street. Tom noted that most places only have trees in the boulevard and not on private land. Adding trees in the boulevard will make the area look crowded. Marian responded that she believes the trees on Tom's property plus the boulevard trees would be great. Christina Le agreed with Marian that the additional boulevard trees in the area would look very nice. Crystal restated her opinion that she agrees with Tom that the trees are unnecessary.

Discussion of North Side Between 1st and Stevens Avenues

Allison noted that the north area seems light on trees. Bob responded that there are some spacing issues with the north side. The lighting needs to have an even distribution which requires a certain spacing, and there are multiple driveways. The design incorporates as many trees as possible given these constraints. Allison commented that she is concerned that the corner of Stevens and Lake Street will look like a big parking lot, and the team should consider investing in a landscape buffer. Christina asked if there could be planter boxes or hanging planters from the lights. Bob responded that one of the options for additional landscaping could be to include planter boxes. Christina commented that she would like to see those on the corners to make the neighborhood look nicer and feel safer.

Tom asked about the plan for the vacant building on the north side of Lake. Mike responded that the alley has to close on the east end at Stevens. Nico Plating plans to take over the property for employee parking. Aisha noted that it would not be a good idea to move employee parking to the front Lake Street corner. Mike reported that conversations are going on with Nico, and this will impact opportunities for landscaping. Aisha asked if there would be any mitigation for a surface parking lot on Lake Street frontage. Bob responded that there could be decorative fencing and some landscaping. Marian reminded the group that Nico is an important employer for the neighborhood.

Discussion of Tree Lighting

Andrew discussed electrical options for lighting trees and noted that, as Lake Street was re-done west of I-35W, they added a parallel lighting system that runs through its own conduit to the tree pit with an outlet at tree canopy height. These are subject to a high degree of vandalism but have a benefit of providing an even flow of power since each tree is individually lit. The other option is placing the outlet higher up on the light poles. Marian asked if it was possible to put the outlet higher in the tree. Andrew responded that it is possible but not until after newly planted trees have become established. Bob stated that there are options now for an outlet with a locked cover to be installed at the ground level. Andrew noted there is less vandalism with these but they often have to be dug out in the winter. Allison noted that the cost for lights on the trees is twice as much as lighting for wreaths hung on light poles. However, she indicated a preference for spending the extra money to put in the tree lights because she felt the wreaths did very little to enhance an area. Marian asked if these items would be included under the Special Service District. The response was that these items would be included in special assessments and would need to be maintained by a Special Service District. Crystal stated that the team should take crime statistics in this area into consideration. Tom asked if the tree lights were only for decorative lighting. Bob responded that decorative lighting is the main purpose. Tom commented that there are a lot of LED/solar lighting options available now, so it is possible there would not need to be electrical outlets installed.

Discussion about Benches and Bike Loops

Aisha asked if the benches would be the same red benches used in other areas. Bob responded that the final design would use materials that match materials already being used along other parts of Lake Street.

Allison noted that the decorative benches need a divider in the middle. Andrew responded that the larger benches have the divider in the middle but the smaller ones do not. Andrew also noted that the city prefers the backless option so the bench doesn't face only the street or the business fronts.

Regarding the bike loop, the city prefers the double mounted option as opposed to the single post because it is more stable and requires less maintenance.

Discussion of Neighborhood Banners

Christina asked if banners could go on later. Bob responded that banners usually have about a ten-year life span so they have to be replaced over time anyway. Christina responded that, in looking as costs, she believes this feature could be added later to save costs now. Christina felt the tree lighting creates a greater impact than the banners. John stated that, on the issue of identity, the Lyndale Neighborhood Association has a preference for extending the Lyn Lake District to I-35W. Andrew noted that, in terms of banner brackets, the city prefers a spring loaded bracket because it has a longer lifespan.

Discussion of Transit Stops

Jim asked if there had been confirmation that a shelter will go in at 3rd Ave. Mike responded that, if ABRT is not implemented right away, then a local shelter will be installed and the ABRT shelter will be put in later. Max noted that, if the funding for ABRT is not in place by the time the streetscaping project

is ready for construction, then it will be completed in phases. Christina commented that it would make more sense to put in the BRT stations right away so the work is not redone in a few years.

Discussion of Trash Receptacles

Marian asked why the litter receptacles are in the enhanced option. Andrew responded that they are an upgraded version. Andrew also stated that the design needs to provide for the roll-out of street-side recycling. There should be space for two side-by-side containers.

Discussion of Costs

Mike went over a table showing costs for various streetscape elements, both for a base package and an enhanced package. He noted that, for the current proposal, 90% of the costs would be covered by federal, county and city funds. Only 10% of the cost would be assessed to property owners.

Jim discussed the cost table and noted that, for the base level items, there is a large cost but no special assessment. Jim asked why the entire lighting system is not included in the base level design. Mike responded that the proposed shepherd hook lighting system would trigger the need for an enhanced special assessment and a special service district. Crystal stated that the city changed their lighting policy so now you have to opt out of the special assessment. Jim noted that the total special assessment rate is very low at \$16 per running foot. Previously, it was between \$100 and \$200 for other segments. Marian asked if the team could confirm that this is a one-time cost. Jim responded that it is a one-time cost. Andrew noted that the cost table shows two types of electrical hookup, but there should only need to be one.

Christina suggested breaking up the cost to phase in over time, if possible. Allison responded that, if the cost is broken up, property owners would pay 100% of the costs later as opposed to only 10% of the cost now. Nathan explained that there is a cap on the federal funding and all of those funds should be used if possible. Allison added that the more things that are installed and purchased, the more will need to be maintained in the future. Crystal asked if there is any standard that is held to keep things maintained. Andrew responded that, if the project chooses the enhanced design, that would need to have a Special Service District involved who would maintain everything.

Discussion of Special Assessments and Special Service Districts

Uniform Street Assessment

Nathan provided an overview of the uniform street assessment noting that the City Council sets a uniform rate for residential and non-residential properties based on square footage of benefitted property within an "influence area". City right-of-way staff identify how much square footage for each property is within the influence area. The whole parcel is not included in this assessment, just the portion in the influence area. For street reconstruction, the assessment can be paid over twenty years. This is a given for all projects. Allison asked why the commercial rate is so much higher than the residential rate. Crystal responded that it is because businesses have higher traffic and use of the roadways so there is more wear and tear than a residential property.

Special Assessments for Enhanced Streetscape and Special Service Districts

Jim stated that the enhanced streetscape improvements will need a petition for any special assessments and for a Special Service District. By City Council practice, they will want 70% approval by property owners to move forward.

Tom asked when the project would decide on the extension of the Lyn Lake Service District. Andrew responded that they could schedule a meeting to discuss this further. Tom answered that he didn't need a meeting because he is in full support of the extension of the Lyn Lake Service District to I-35W. Marian noted there is a gap in service districts on the Whitter (north) side of Lake Street. Andrew responded that the property owners can opt into other existing service districts. John commented that, speaking for the Lyndale Neighborhood Association, they would prefer an extension of the Lyn Lake Special Service District.

There will be additional conversations with commercial property owners moving forward to ensure they are in agreement with these plans. Only commercial property owners, not businesses or residences, pay for the Special Service District. Businesses only pay if they own the building.

Motion on Enhanced Streetscape Plan

Allison noted that the committee should think about what was discussed today and talk with their neighbors. Everyone should come back to the next meeting ready to start making decisions. Jim stated that he needs the support of the PAC for the concept of an enhanced streetscape plan with a Special Services District to move forward.

Crystal moved, and Christina seconded, a recommendation that the PAC support the proposed enhanced level streetscape plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting

The next Lake Street Design PAC meeting will be held on August 18th, 2016, 10 a.m. to noon, at the Colin Powell Center.

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| 1. | INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME – CHAIR | 10:00 AM |
| 2. | HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS – CHAIR | 10:10 AM |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review of April meeting notes ▶ Upcoming Meeting schedule ▶ Reminder to check contact information on roster | |
| 3. | UPDATE ON I-35W TRANSIT/ACCESS PROJECT – JIM GRUBE | 10:20 AM |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Municipal consent and EA process ▶ Funding request at Legislature | |
| 4. | UPDATE ON DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT – MIKE KOTILA | 10:30 AM |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Transit Stops ▶ Curb extensions/bump-outs and parking | |
| 5. | DISCUSSION OF STREETSCAPING/LANDSCAPING – BOB KOST | 10:50 AM |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Proposed streetscape plan ▶ Base options/cost and additional options/costs | |
| 6. | DISCUSSION OF ASSESSMENTS – JIM GRUBE AND NATHAN KOSTER | 11:20 AM |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Uniform assessment ▶ Special assessments for streetscaping ▶ Special services district | |
| 7. | AUDIENCE COMMENTS – CHAIR | 11:45 AM |
| 8. | NEXT STEPS AND NEXT MEETING – CHAIR | 11:55 AM |
| | ADJOURNMENT | 12:00 PM |



ROSTER

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE LAKE STREET DESIGN PROJECT

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