

MEETING NOTES

PROJECT: WHSP: Winooski - Howard - St Paul Scoping Study

MEETING: Public Meeting – Local Concerns

DATE: November 12, 2016

LOCATION: Potvin Park, Burlington VT

ATTENDEES: **RSG:** Corey Mack, PE; Roxanne Meuse, EIT
City of Burlington DPW: Martin Lee, PE; Chapin Spencer, Director
Steering Committee: Scott Mapes, PE, Esq; RJ Lalumiere
Neighborhood, Residents, and Public: Laura Gibson, Nina Chill, John Kassel, Jason VanDriesche, Peter Keating, Robert Viskup, Zyna Martin, Julie Campoli, Martin Lee, Jessica Oski, Joel Baird, RJ Lalumiere, Brad Ketterling, Tree Spaulding, Andrew Geurtin, Karen Freudenberger, Mark Freudenberger, Glenna Copeland, Rod Copeland, Matt Stanton, Margo Parris, Dwight Aseltine, Andy Simon, Erik Brotz, Leslie Noble

1. INTRODUCTION / PROJECT BACKGROUND

The local concerns public meeting was held at Potvin Park in Burlington on November 12, 2016 from 10 am to approximately 11:30 am. The meeting was publically advertised 2 weeks prior to the meeting date.

Martin Lee, DPW: Introduced the project and welcomed all who attended. The project is funded by a Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant from VTrans, and RSG was selected to perform the study.

Corey Mack, RSG: Introduced the project, objectives, and project area. Discussed the background and previous studies, and that this project is an effort to identify short and long term improvements to the intersection.

C. Mack: This meeting is to discuss the experience of pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers traveling through the intersection, identify issues that challenge this travel, and develop concepts that improve safety, efficiency, and comfort for all users. This is the first public meeting in the process. There will be at least two more public meetings: one to discuss the alternatives developed further, and one for

the final report that documents the project development to be approved. These meetings will be scheduled and advertised at a later date.

Jason Van Dreische, Local Motion: Noted that the project should highlight immediately implementable solutions that can be fast tracked through the project development process for a spring-time implementation of a demonstration project with simple products: paint and flexible bollards. Interim bump outs could be placed to decrease crossing distances for pedestrians and reduce the vehicle travel lane widths. Jason also suggested that bike boxes would be good. Jason stated that he wanted to see this work happen in the spring of 2017. Jason used chalk and a tape measure to draw his concepts on the road. Jason provided a sketch of his ideas after the meeting.

During the meeting, attendees walked around the intersection as a group while discussing concerns and ideas. After the presentation, comments and questions were collected from meeting attendees. The information in this summary document shall be combined with the comments collected by RSG to form a complete summary of the meeting.

2. SITE WALK AND OBSERVATIONS

The attendees walked around the intersection and discussed features of the intersection:

- Motorists were reported to speed up to the green (particularly southbound (SB) on S. Winooski Avenue from the stop sign at Spruce Street), knowing that the complex intersection sometimes results in longer waits due to the three signal phases. Possible speed humps?
- Pedestrians do not have signals, and some approaches are difficult to see which traffic lane has the green traffic signal.
- Signals can be difficult to see in some lighting situations; back plates were requested.
- Pedestrian actuation (button) is not present; difficult for pedestrians to know when to cross safely, and may negatively impact traffic operations since Howard Street will be given a green light to accommodate pedestrian travel, whether or not a pedestrian is present.
- Many concerns about children using the intersection, particularly given the proximity to Edmunds and Christ the King elementary schools and Callahan Park; difficult to tell when to safely walk; crossing guards are used during these peak times but not present outside of school travel times
- Right-turn on red rules are not clear:
 - SB St Paul?
 - SB Winooski to NB St Paul?
 - WB Howard to NB St Paul?
- St Paul and Union intersection, south and uphill of this intersection is a free northbound movement, which allows for a fast downhill approach to the intersection.

- There was considerable appreciation for the most recent curb extensions at the northwest corner of St Paul and Howard and the north corner of St Paul and Winooski. Additional curb extensions would be welcome.
- Many reports of speeding vehicles and red light running, requested additional enforcement at this intersection.
- No crosswalk is present at the South Winooski leg of the intersection making it difficult for many pedestrians to cross at this location. It was discussed that a “switchback” style sidewalk could be installed on the south side of Potvin Park to ensure that a new crosswalk and sidewalk meets accessibility standards. It was discussed that the switchback style sidewalk would still likely leave a goat path running from east to west on the southern tip of the grass by Potvin Park. It was stated that an exception could be made to install a sidewalk that does not meet ADA grades if safety is improved. The City Arborist would be consulted prior to impacting any trees in this area.
- Crossing at the northern St Paul – Winooski crosswalk requires particular attention as Howard street vehicles may be turning and not expecting pedestrians in this second crosswalk.
- Signal timing is not long enough for bikes to get moving from a stop through the intersection, particularly the EB Howard left to NB Winooski (due to the long crossing distance and the steep grade of EB Howard at the intersection).
- Without countdown timer, difficult to know if there is enough time for a pedestrian to cross the long east-west crosswalks.
- Two trucks were noted on SB Winooski (thru movements onto SB St Paul) during the LCM walkthrough, even though trucks are prohibited on Winooski
- Bus stop is inadequate, even though it serves many high school students; snow can often pile up rendering the bus stop difficult to access. Recommend a shelter, waiting pad, and bus pull off area.
- Camden, ME’s “Stop, Wait, Wave” campaign was noted as effective at uncontrolled crosswalks.
- SB Winooski was noted as a fire route from the Station at Winooski and Main.
- SB Winooski right turns to NB St Paul were discussed as possible to restrict, but residents along Winooski between Howard and Spruce often turn right here to head downtown.
- The unused area of asphalt behind temporary curb extensions could be used as an opportunity for a neighborhood art project.
- EB Howard bikes would benefit from being further up the hill and into the flat spot of the intersection; a curb extension and bike box may help bicycles position themselves better (but limit visibility to the traffic signals).
- Visibility to traffic lights may be restricted with curb extensions.

- With the large expanse of asphalt at the intersection, it is common for left turning vehicles to be passed by through / right-turning vehicles in the shoulder / intersection.
- Consider narrow travel lanes (10-foot).
- Consider extending bike lane markings through intersection.
- Consider extending the contra-flow bike lane double yellow on Winooski south, more into intersection.
- Consider including chevrons for bicycles through intersection.
- Consider moving the SB Winooski “BIKE LANE ENDS” north to allow for bicycles to position themselves in advance of the intersection.
- Trees and landscaping obscures speed limit sign.
- Stormwater management is a concern.
- St Paul is the designated truck route; design should discourage truck movements onto Howard.
- The grade of Potvin Park makes construction of a pedestrian crosswalk of Winooski a challenge; the landing area must be ADA-compliant.
- Potential to extend the “nose” south of Potvin Park to tighten the area where the roads intersect and to improve the crosswalks. This alternative would reduce the capability of making a right turn from South Winooski Ave onto St Paul Street. There was concern raised that restricting this right turn movement would be unfair for residents that live on South Winooski between Howard Street and Spruce Street. The idea of adding a slip lane through the “nose” at this intersection could alleviate this concern, but an unintended consequence of the slip lane could be that drivers will make the movement without stopping for vehicles on St Paul Street.
- The bus stop at Potvin Park does not have a designated waiting area.
- Participants generally preferred the traditional intersection approach to a roundabout:
 - The roundabout gives green space to the center of the road
 - The traditional design with curb extensions offers more useable green space for the adjacent commercial developments.

3. IDENTIFIED ISSUES:

The following list of general issues is a result of the comments and discussion from the meeting. It is intended to inform the development of the Purpose and Need Statement.

- a. Long crossing distances / expansive pavement
 - i. Pedestrians in crosswalks
 - ii. Bikes to travel from stop through expanse of pavement

- iii. Vehicles entering during yellow phase
- b. No pedestrian signals or button actuation
- c. No crosswalk at S Winooski Ave
- d. Underdeveloped transit facilities
- e. Poor visibility to traffic signals
 - i. Location of signals in center of intersection
 - ii. No back plates
- f. Speeding vehicles
- g. Trucks on prohibited route
- h. Potvin Park underutilized as a public space

4. POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES:

Alternatives to consider in further evaluation:

- a. Demonstration project with paint and flexible posts
- b. Neighborhood art in remaining asphalt area
- c. Bike infrastructure to start from flat
- d. Curb extensions
- e. Accessible crossing of Winooski Ave
- f. New signal system – existing geometry
- g. Roundabout – existing geometry
- h. Realigned roadway – traffic signal
- i. Realigned roadway – roundabout
 - a. Traditional / multiple / oblong

5. ACTION ITEMS:

1. RSG to develop draft Purpose and Need Statement and Alternatives for Consideration List for review by Steering Committee
2. RSG to incorporate Action Item #1 into Existing Conditions Report, for review by Steering Committee and Public

These notes are the understanding of the preparer. Please contact the preparer with any discrepancies or differences in understanding. Notes compiled by Roxanne Meuse and Corey Mack – 11/17/16.



