

# DRAFT

## 2016-04-12 North Avenue Task Force Meeting #13 at Miller Center

### **NATF Attendance**

Paul Sisson - Co-chair, Ward 4 Council Appointee  
Ben Bloom - Ward 3 NPA Alternate  
Rich Nadworny - Ward 4 NPA Appointee  
Patrick Kearney - Ward 4 NPA Alternate  
RJ Lalumiere - Ward 7 NPA Appointee  
David Armstrong - Chittenden County Transit Authority (CCTA)

### **DPW & CCRPC Attendance**

Chapin Spencer - Dept. of Public Works (DPW)  
Nicole Losch - Dept. of Public Works (DPW)  
Marshall Distal - Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)  
Jason Charest - Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)

### **City Council Attendance**

Tom Ayres - Ward 7  
Kurt Wright - Ward 4

### **Community Attendance**

Approximately 25 persons

## **Agenda**

### **Housekeeping**

- Next meeting is May 10 2016 6-8PM at the Miller Center
- North Avenue Task Force (NATF) introduction by Paul Sisson.
- North Avenue Task Force members and public introduced themselves.
- ACTION: Approved agenda swapping item 5 & 4.
- ACTION: Approved March minutes without modification.
- Tabled: Co-chair nominations and vote.
- RJ Lalumiere volunteered to take notes.

### **Public Comment**

- Paul Sisson will be keeping tight tabs on time.
- Rich Nadworny any update on new members?

- Tom Ayres anticipates naming someone between now and the next NATF meeting. Since initial setup redistricting has occurred. Unclear whether he can unilaterally do it or has to consult with DH? Looking for clarification on that. Open to recommendations for the position.
- Jim Carrier lives on Plattsburg Ave. Has looked through materials. Concerned that the pilot may be too short to get good information. Should not be phased in. Not enough users being measured; most of the metrics are auto-centric. Too many negative metrics, not enough success metrics. Neighborhood input seems highly weighted. Should focus on users: people who commute in, bikers, sidewalk users, “street use professionals” (e.g., bus drivers, delivery trucks, emergency, garbage, etc.). Problem developing survey with 4-laners. Include cyclists, parents with children, shoppers, etc. Put people on the street to gather the qualitative day to day input.
- Woman would like to see survey weight being added to those who live or own property on North Ave. Input next to bike lane disingenuous due to closure of ILT.
- Bill Novotney someone brought up a good point re: North Ave highest accident rate. 30-40% of the accidents listed happened in Hannaford’s parking lot.

### **Councilor Comments**

- Kurt Wright just listening now.
- Tom Ayres thanks for flipping the agenda items. Pilot starting in 4-6 weeks so glad to see that front and center.

### **Technical updates**

- Nicole Losch with Public Works. Overview touching on phasing update, paving, crosswalk coordination grant for 5 new, requests to install speed feedback signs, provided in packet the DPW recommendations for survey, updated metrics, introduced marking and sign plan, highlight one area where parking @ St Mark’s needs change, update on outreach, and any updates from CCRPC.
- Phasing update - Pre-work: repaving happening near beltline ramps and eastern most lane from 127 to Shore, porkchop will be removed and flex posts put in to keep the same alignment for now. Questions on phasing and final verdict is we’re installing this all at once.
  - Chapin Spencer had concerns re: staff readiness so looked at incremental but diverse input from public was pro-all-at-once. Went back to staff and said can we do this by mid-june and the answer was yes. So will go with the NATF recommendation.
- Karen Rowell where’s the packet on public input? Mayor promised.
- Nicole Losch any other questions on phasing/paving?
  - Rich Nadworny is there an updated schedule? Nicole Losch not yet. Rich Nadworny when can we expect that? Chapin Spencer will work to get it out well in advance of the next meeting.

- Man how long will the pilot be implemented for?
- Nicole Losch not defined. Would like a year. Have a four month check-in. If there is overwhelming negative response could be adjusted then.
- Nicole Losch crosswalk coordination. Grant from VTrans for 5, but grant money process is slow. Designers are hired and getting ready for first public meeting. Could that be at the June NATF? Green acres, village green/Kilmerney Dr, BC, Ward St.
  - Rich Nadworny RRFBs an option? Nicole Losch that is an option and will be explored. Rich Nadworny is the money available to do all of them? Nicole Losch budgeted but does not remember if it is for ALL the x-walks.
  - Rich Nadworny in the fall thought installation would be later, fall/winter, is that still the plan? Nicole Losch yes.
  - Jay Catalano noticed a lot of pedestrians crossing near Poirier place.
    - Nicole Losch these are the first of up to a dozen planned.
  - Man If using RRFBs should put them everywhere otherwise you will confuse users. On again off again more likely to cause problems. Even add them for the existing x-walks.
  - Woman why not Woodlawn?
    - Nicole Losch would have to look at the area. Does not know off the top of the head.
    - Why not priority? Nicole Losch already crossing by HMS, more regular crossing was the community priority
- Nicole Losch request for speed feedback signs. Have one near Champlain Elementary. Still trying to look at the budget and expedite the review for potentially implementing it. Pre-existing request so not part of pilot budget.
  - Rich Nadworny had a discussion 6+ months ago about speed cameras. Q to Kurt Wright does VT allow speed cameras? Kurt Wright assume so but would have to check.
  - Jason Charest says speed enforcement cameras are not allowed in VT presently.
  - Man speed feedback signs have data that shows that speeds go down? E.g in Shelburne?
    - Nicole Losch no data on Shelburne Rd specifically. Asked CCRPC if they have some. Jason Charest said in Shelburne on Harbor Rd there were some decreases in the vicinity of the signs.
  - Patrick Kearney can't believe we can't find \$2500 to mount on a 4" pole.
    - Chapin Spencer will be back next month with what we can do.
- Nicole Losch public input document. Approved NATF recommendations in 1/2016. DPW took the info, talked with other city groups, mayor's office, etc. [Displayed DPW recommendations.] Draft is up on the website. Quote at the top shows why this is so important. City Council resolution specified it. So that is what we are trying to work towards. Trying to provide how and when. Measure specifically NNE support in 4-3 area. Also community sentiment for the project in it's entirety. How we may do this? We're thinking about public comments separate from survey, and throughout the process.

- Karen Rowell NATF is biased, DPW is Biased. Nicole Losch we have heard those concerns, which is one of the reasons we're looking at a third party development. Karen Rowell City Council has shown bias by putting ad in the paper.
- Rich Nadworny to Kurt Wright did city council pay for ad? Kurt Wright individual councillors paid in to PAC.
- Man does City Council have decision? Kurt Wright yes, but also clear that NNE has a large voice.
- Tom Ayres by charter the ultimate decision rests with city administration and council because this is a major public infrastructure project. Resolution that was passed was significantly flawed on many accounts, mostly by giving any impression that any group in any one part of the city can have a veto on public infra.
- Kurt Wright charter yea, but reality is that everything said has been to support that resolution.
- Nicole Losch other public comments can help keep the pulse on the project in general in more real time. Before we start formal process would like to have some of the quantitative data.
- Nicole Losch looking to get a wide range of diverse input in the formal survey process. For broader community, schools, churches, visitors.
- Nicole Losch structure tools to limit to 1/person, develop with 3rd party. Scheduling with NATF. Would like broad review of questions before finalization. Clarify threshold for "no support". Define how public input will be compared to quantitative data.
- Nicole Losch objectives not directly related to public input. Give traffic two weeks to settle down before measurement. 3 months before comprehensive survey input. Provide different opportunities for survey (online, paper, randomized phone). Develop Q w/ unhired as of yet 3rd party. Keep it brief (e.g. 10 Q). What is preferred config and by whom? Ask for names and addresses to limit to 1/person. Distribute link to online survey; IT dept has offered to help with that. Simplify for children. % participation, age groups, modes of travel, etc. Which is more beneficial problematic, safer? More comfortable? Wait longer?
  - Man how will you weight actual data versus feelings. Nicole Losch unclear still.
  - Woman wanted to mention random phone only works line. How overcome? Nicole Losch will work with firm and AARP to see how it can be improved. Way to compare to online and paper survey to help make sure they are standardized.
- RJ Lalumiere simplified questions are good for everyone.
- Patrick Kearney continuing on that English as a Second Language speakers. How can we separate if folks think 4-3 is good but don't like porkchop removal? Nicole Losch can ask guided questions to hone in.
- Rich Nadworny questions re: changes that happened creating this doc. Working with a 3rd party to do this? Have you had any convos with market research firms etc.? Nicole Losch not yet, still in RPC next fiscal year starts 7/1. Rich Nadworny would be good to get some pre-change sentiment, even if quick and dirty. Feels most comfortable with

them creating the questions in collab with DPW rather than “doing this”. Need buy in, but that does not mean “we get to create Qs”. Jim carrier had good point about folks going out and actually getting that on street presence. Would be good to get that back in. Would be good to have some of that as well. It’s one thing to limit the number of questions per data session. Coordinating with city list? Nicole Losch still working that out. Rich Nadworny if cannot do that might with BTV Ignite or some odd to do that. Randomized phone survey good to do phone but randomized may not be the best; would put it in areas that have gaps.

- Woman strategic how? Rich Nadworny if there are pockets with low response rate can target those spots. Might get better results.
- Woman cell phones are skewing this. Social media/online will get those mobile folks.
- Woman has been peripheral. Supports pilot but concerned about the process. DPW is not really in the business of input. Has participated in phone surveys. Does not like market research often the wording is weird and does not let give the kind of info they want. The collation happens behind the scenes and folks don’t get to see the raw data. As you are developing the questions for input have people you can check in with along the way. Encourage you to take time and be thoughtful. Don’t just include the “invested” people. Wants people to feel heard and feel good.
- Woman would be nice to have a VT firm.
- Bill Novotney questions on driving times. Is there a way to have public data collection.
  - Rich Nadworny couple companies who have apps that do things like this. Would be cool to coordinate with them.
- Nicole Losch this is the first draft, feel free to send in comments on it.
- Gus might be good to have periodic survey inputs. Survey DPW/NATF, so how is my interface with City Council?
  - Nicole Losch schedule should provide clear list of opportunities to give input.
  - Rich Nadworny gus what do you need to connect with Kurt Wright beyond this?
  - Gus Since NNE will decide this how will my feedback be heard. A lot of concerns very valid. Is there a way to have those upfront and then address those concerns? Last one, witnessed accident at pork chop. Someone looking at traffic and plowed in to biker.
  - Man observed that incident. Personally thinks it is a perfect example of the flaws in the design. Biker caused it. He approached on the road, rather than using the sidewalk and then merged in to the car.
  - Joe Harrig if only one lane would not have had to shift lanes.
  - Man pork chop put in to facilitate ped/bike crossings.
  - Jay Catalano currently traffic allows free flow. Redesign will utilize the light and calm traffic. Uses the Ave on his bike, does not use sidewalk or x-walk, bikes can use the full lane.
- Nicole Losch metrics - travel time threshold hard to pin down. Will have estimates of what we think it will be. Reordered the columns, info still the same. Green are all largely

unchanged. Did not add or remove from the ones in green. Will review with the full collection of quantitative metrics. Projects are always a balancing act, some things will be better and some worse. Things that changed: Leddy Park Rd -> Lakewood Pkwy, removed Manhattan Dr and Plattsburgh Ave at 127 removed from the immediate review we can come back to them if we are hearing they are a problem, working on the snapshot comparison of what intersection operations are now and what we think they will be. LOS is metric before and that is now changed to queue information; Queueing is best and most relatable measurement. Looking at current signal timings and optimizing. For travel times there were some discussion that speeds were taken at the avg speed along the ave, not at the speed limit. Traffic speeds there were questions about 127 and what may happen over there if folks migrate over there; there has been a consistent decline in the volumes since the 90's so some growth should still be OK. Traffic/biek volumes we only have 4 lane data for bikes, looking to see if we can add counts north and south of the 4 lane section as well.

- Patrick Kearney looking at queuing time at 127 and manhattan Dr. Nicole Losch have data but those removed from immediate measurement, not going to be closely evaluated.
- Rich Nadworny has heard some concerns about the red part up top that your window for measurement is too short, not giving enough time for traffic to settle. Nicole Losch don't have defined scheduled for turning off/reversion. Can still have some flexibility, 2 weeks is the minimum time. Trying to have a tight feedback loop in case things are really not working well. Not just "difficult" but real problems. Trying to have a reasonable threshold before changing anything. Normal operations means no unusual incidents that would impact.
- Bill Novotney someone mentioned before the large vehicles. Bus schedules may be impacted by this and cause folks to be late. Nicole Losch there is consideration in the list for transit operations. DA not flexibility re: schedule, budget, etc. Rich Nadworny what are you doing for conversations with bus drivers? Chapin Spencer GMT is looking at increasing headways. DA to Rich Nadworny; have spoken the city, don't know of any active efforts here. Ben Bloom buses will pull into bike lane.
- Mike McGarahan been working on quite some time. Does not include peak time when measurement points are. Nicole Losch peak hours, 2 hour window at busiest times, Jason Charest 7:15-8:15AM, 4:45-5:45 PM. Study was 7-8:30AM and 4:30-6:00PM. Mike McGarahan pneumatic tubes? Jason Charest those collect 24x7 and gets speed, axle and raw volumes. Will be able to re-deploy to check for any changes. Mike McGarahan people were counting. Jason Charest correct that is a different method at intersections w/ interns to manually collect turning movement counts; will be done again. Mike McGarahan is all this data being shared or is it pick and choose? There is a lot of suspicion. Does not have greatest faith in how this is collected and disseminated. Nicole Losch posted summary of the data, but happy to share raw data. Mike McGarahan please do.

- Nicole Losch [displayed graphic of overhead view starting at Plattsburgh and moving south] Retained parking at St Mark's; by Dodd's not enough space - going back to PWC to redo parking by there. That is also where we start to move the center line.
  - Rich Nadworny flex posts, any plans to put them out here? Nicole Losch not in this northern section, 127-> HS. If that works we can talk about other places.
  - Mike McGarahan have you talked to church people and funeral homes about that? Nicole Losch yes, JL did outreach with the church, everyone along North Ave was informed and invited. Also did parking counts. On street definitely used when there is a service, but more for convenience.
  - Chapin Spencer hearing that a direct connection would be helpful.
  - Mike McGarahan funeral homes, Fr. Dallas, this is something there might be open parking spots but up front used by mobility challenged folk.
- Lane conversions begin at Shore Rd. Dedicated left turn.
  - Gus is there signage as well for left turn hanging from the signal? Nicole Losch new signs for TWTL begin/end, etc.
- Nicole Losch left turn only at Hannafords. Crosswalk being installed on the south side of the intersection.
  - Patrick Kearney might move bus stop? Could get clogged up. Nicole Losch can pay close attention to that area.
- Nicole Losch approaching EAP have several left turn pockets.
  - Bill Novotney is the length at EAP enough? Sometimes sb backed up to the funeral home now.
  - Jason Charest should be conservatively long, ~350' so should be OK.
  - Rich Nadworny Rite-aid/Lakewood? Nicole Losch has dedicated lanes.
  - Gus left hand heading nb to turn in to little eagle bay cars come close. Nicole Losch will be painting guidelines.
- Nicole Losch Saratoga Ave has buffered bike lanes to 127 because there is extra pavement as the roadway widens. 127 intersection remove porkchop, and cleaning the right turn curbing.
  - Mike McGarahan why remove NB slip lane? Nicole Losch to see if it will work, will be looking at closely. Mike McGarahan last slip lane closure never had a chance to weigh in, hopefully not another one of those situations. Nicole Losch yes opportunity to convert back if does not work out.
  - Rich Nadworny when doc online? Nicole Losch hopefully tonight.
- Patrick Kearney can you show where road goes by ledge? Nicole Losch displayed it.
- BK when the buses are trying to get in to school. Can make some extra space so folks can pass on the right?
- Paul Sisson thanked Nicole Losch to update.

### **What is the role of the Task Force? Is the Task Force needed?**

- Paul Sisson what is our role? It has not been well defined. City Council resolution talks about collab, we're not collabing. E.g., phasing. DPW has had meetings with BPD, BFD, etc. We're the firing line. We've not lied, been dishonest, but that is some people's

perception. Could this just be a public forum run by DPW? Ask in the next 2 weeks that you communicate our role.

- Rich Nadworny on City Council as well to clarify. Incumbent on City Council as well as Chapin Spencer to clarify our role.
- Tom Ayres I used flawed. It is o so many counts, vague on NATF, DPW, CCRPC roles, vagueest of all is the role of ppl of NNE in determining the fate.
- Rich Nadworny revisit this. You owe it to us to clarify or take it away.
- Tom Ayres no one City Council would argue that the work of the task force has been anything but exemplary. I honor the work you have done. There has been a lack of clarity throughout this process. I will bring the possibility of a clarifying resolution to colleagues and see where it goes. I think this task force has unjustly been maligned. Especially re: bias. You were charged to oversee the pilot project. How can you if you do not advocate for the project itself. The whole Q of who is going to deliberate over the results of the pilot is independent of the work we've done.
- Chapin Spencer I hear your concerns. Well in advance of the next meeting will get something out.
- Tom Ayres at last couple meetings, been at almost all of them, what has happened is that the attack on the NATF has been used as a smokescreen to try to derail the pilot.
- Gus thanked the NATF.
- Woman first meeting, looking at these diagrams is very exciting.

#### **Task Force work in April / May next meeting prep**

N/A

#### **Actions Taken**

- Approved agenda after swapping items 5 and 4.
- Approved March minutes without modification.