

# **COUNCIL OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS (CONA)**

## **MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**DEC. 17, 2014, HOOKER ROOM, CITY HALL**

Attendees: Cynthia Bretheim, Prospect Hill, Jon Lawrence, Bryan Park, Jan Sorby, Bryan Park, Paul Ash, McDoel Gardens, Elizabeth Cox Ash, McDoel Gardens, Tim Mueller, Elm Heights, Don Granbois, Blue Ridge, Carrie Winkel, Crescent Bend, John Kennedy, Spicewood, Judy Berkshire, East Side, Tom Shafer, Park Ridge East, Georgia Schaich, Green Acres, Josh Desmond, City of Bloomington Planning and Transportation, Andy Ruff, City of Bloomington At Large City Council Representative, and Elm Heights resident, Dorothy Granger, District 2 City Council Representative, Mark Ayers, Crescent Bend, Yula Ayers, Crescent Bend, Sophia Hauserman, Near West, Sue Tuohy, Crescent Bend, Dustin Devitt, Crescent Bend, Dave Devitt, Crescent Bend, Sandi Clothier, Near West Side, Nan Brewer, Bachelor School Neighborhoods, Sharon Yarber, Matlock Heights.

The December meeting was called to order at 6:04, and introductions were made.

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed; the motion to approve was made by Tom Shafer with second by Don Granbois. The vote to approve was unanimous.

The treasurer's report was explained by Elizabeth. Expenses for the contract for Fountain Square Ballroom, the deposit, and post office rental fee, were presented. The motion to approve was made by Cynthia, with second from Georgia Schaich., the vote to approve was unanimous.

Jon reminded the group that last month we talked about the changes on 17th St that have occurred due to the plans for I-69. There is a lot of confusion about how the new road will affect Bloomington.

Jon introduced Andy Ruff, At Large Council Member, and Josh Desmond, City Transportation and Planning. Andy noted that this road is within Districts 1 (Councilperson Chris Sturbaum) and 2 (Councilperson Dorothy Granger), and noted that he has been working since the early 90's trying to get feedback from INDOT regarding I-69. "I'm here to listen to everybody's concerns. I'm on the MPO, where much of the funding for the transportation issues is worked on, and funding for this project may come from" explained Andy.

Josh Desmond, Transportation Planner, explained that, as an area with over 50 thousand people, Bloomington needed to have a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO, to address regional issues because these issues are all connected. Transportation dollars are funneled through the MPO, which means that several million dollars are available to fund eligible projects. Funding that comes from MPO means that the City is largely reimbursed for these projects.

Carrie Winkel, from the Crescent Bend NA, noted that the roundabout (at 17th St, which was brought forward at the last meeting) has enhanced safety in the area, but the main thing neighbors are concerned about are safety issues. She explained that (due to the new overpass connecting Vernal Pike with Bloomington at Crescent and 17th Sts) they know that the area will have more traffic. Carrie presented a series of photos that were projected so all could see the issues she was discussing. The school bus pick up stops are hard to see and dangerous, (out of site for many motorists), also the street is very dangerous in inclement weather; the street is very narrow in many areas, and there is a creek that runs parallel to the

road. In addition, there are large trees very close to the road, and there are no sidewalks, no way for people to walk safely along the road. This is a school walking zone for Tri-North and Head Start. Carrie said originally they were supposed to have sidewalks, some areas near the roundabout will get them this spring. Also, Lindbergh is a one way (to the south of 17th St, connects to the South Central Community Action Program and Head Start) but no one acknowledges it and drivers use it for both directions, making it very dangerous. The flyover (over I69) will have sidewalks, but not much of the street between the flyover and the roundabout.

After looking at the photos and hearing from Carrie, a discussion ensued:

Dorothy Granger, District 2 Council representative, said that it is true, she sits on the sidewalk committee, and the street is not adequate, and sidewalks are needed. Tim Mueller added that there is a tiny right of way there, and so anything (such as sidewalks or road shoulders) requires right of way acquisition. Don Granbois noted that traffic will be non-stop; people will be flying through this neighborhood.

Carrie noted that another complicated issue is that the new telephone poles were put right at the edge of the road, without getting any new right of way.

Tom Shafer asked when the road work is expected to be completed? Josh Desmond said it is supposed to be completed in 2016.

Cynthia Bretheim wondered who we ask for help with this? Josh described the process: It will be coming out of the Plan Department and there are funding sources, scheduling and design processes to go through. This requires a grant process to go through, some is staff level, some is legislative, based upon staff recommendation. The four year capital program will begin in 2016. There will be an engineering plan, right of way (donations would be helpful), and then the completed design. Once right of way is good to go, in the 3rd fiscal year, it could finally begin. If we use federal money, we would have to propose at staff level, get local and MPO approval. The Planning staff is very concerned about and interested in this project.

Judy Berkshire asked if Josh could estimate a time or space of time when the cars start screaming down this street? Josh: INDOT says fall 2016, but never know with them.

Judy Berkshire followed up to ask if it would be possible to create short term safety features during that 1-2 year period. Josh responded that, yes, we should be looking at ways to calm traffic, including a flashing speed limit sign, and there are other temporary measures that we can look into.

Andy Ruff asked what do you envision that would be desirable? Response was a two lane roadway, less hill, and continue sidewalk along the road.

Elizabeth Cox-Ash asked about whether sidewalks are planned for just one or both sides of the street. Josh replied that both, multi path and sidewalk, and the flyover will also have the sidewalk and multi-use path. A question was asked about environmental concerns regarding the creek? Josh said he didn't know right now. Federal money must have an environmental review process, and there is a retainage lake next to the roundabout.

Jon Lawrence asked about what happens when there isn't a neighborhood association, how do you communicate with those affected? Josh: "we might have to go to how we do in it Planning, those neighbors are notified by mail."

## **Discussion of Interchange at Gordon Pike and road widening on Rhorer Rd.**

Fullerton Pike road widening had a first and only public meeting, CAC committee, set up just for them. Nan Brewer, of the Bachelor School Area's newly formed association, talked about the Fullerton and Gordon Pk. major interchange. She noted that the area is 99% built out residential; when the original plan in the 1960's was done, Highway 37 wasn't even built, and most neighborhoods were not even created. By INDOT's own guideline, the road should have minimal residential impact. There are serious concerns; this is a neighborhood street, with children going to two schools, about how they get to school, with a street that is 3 lanes wide, and wider than Walnut St. The County says INDOT wants it, one mile from Tapp Road, brand new construction. Why does INDOT want to do this when it passes two schools?

Question: Can the MPO just approve funds for the road work? Answer from Andy Ruff: Josh is not in a position to talk about this, but I am. I think that the Fullerton Plan is unnecessary and my feeling is that the county hasn't moved like the city has to understand what overbuilding a road does to climate change. The first phase will affect the area around Kroger on Walnut St. Pike, it will be a five lane megaroad, to "improve" safety along the road, now scaled back to 3 lanes, but with no standard lanes.

A discussion on the appropriateness of this road widening continued, with a general feeling from CONA members that we needed to take action on this issue. Andy explained that the MPO should be petitioned right now because they will be determining what projects to fund on January 9th, 2015.

Jon asked for a vote to determine if CONA members wanted to draft a letter of support to the south side neighborhoods to prevent an interchange at Fullerton Pike. Cynthia Bretheim made the motion that we support these neighborhoods and Jan Sorby offered a second; the motion passed.

The discussion continued as to what the letter would address. Andy added: a first priority would be to eliminate the interchange project, 2nd, to make the road compatible with the neighborhood. The letter needs to go to Bill Williams as well as the County Commissioners and MPO members. Don Granbois asked about CONA's ability to stand for neighborhoods not associations yet, and not in the city. A short discussion followed and Jon noted that the bylaws do not exclude the County, and encourage newly formed groups to become a part of the organization, so the spirit, if not the letter, is to encourage NA's in the county.

In answer to a question from CONA, Josh noted that the TIP is adopted in late spring, early May. Right now is the time if you want to write a letter supporting a project to enhance the safety of the 17th St. corridor. The Mayor is an advocate for this project. He explained that Planning will put together a draft TIP, which will come out in the next few months; there will be an opportunity for input, either to speak in person or write letters.

Elizabeth Cox-Ash made a motion that we support the connection of the roundabout and 17th St. to be put in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) so that safety measures could be undertaken with funding for both permanent and temporary safety measures along this corridor. Sandi was second, and the vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.