

SAPCC Transportation Committee  
April 27, 2021

Present: Betty Wheeler, Pat Thompson, Scott Jensen, Kim Frair, Bailey Waters, Karen Nelson, Nick Studenski, Tara Smith, Ceci Ruesga

Approval of the minutes of March 30: Amended to fix a grammatical error (add "is" to "make it clear to car drivers that the path is not for cars"). After that, the minutes were approved without objection.

### **Territorial Road project and grant status / update**

The dry well in the right-of-way for the planned sidewalk on the north side of Territorial Road is still causing issues. The city requires that the well be filled in before the sidewalk is constructed. The city says it is the financial responsibility of the St. Anthony Greens HOA. The HOA is aware of the city's requirements for filling in the well and is exploring options to fill it in. The HOA is getting a cost estimate. If the cost is not excessive, the HOA is supportive. Once done, the sidewalk will go ahead. The effect on timing is the main question: Public Works funding is fine for two seasons, but it could mess up our plans if we get funding for the projects we have in mind. The total sidewalk budget is a bit above the CIB amount, but Public Works is willing to cover from its general fund.

All grant proposals were submitted on time. The Seal Residents Council and St. Anthony Greens HOA submitted letters of support. Kathryn and Pat will meet with the Neighborhood STAR panel in about 10 days, and if there is a review with Good Neighbor, follow up on that as well.

### **Highway 280 speed limit**

Work continues on a resolution to oppose an increased speed limit on 280 (context: speed studies on other highways have led to increased speed limits. There is an upcoming or current study on 280 per a Star Tribune article, no details yet from MNDOT).

Our committee voted unanimously to send a letter with the below whereases (to be finalized by Scott - thanks Scott!) and the be it resolved that SAPCC opposes any increase in speed limit on TH-280.

Concerns include:

- While federal guidance advises that the 85th percentile of actual speed on a roadway is used as a benchmark to guide the speed limit, that federal guidance may soon change.
- Sound levels are very high in adjacent neighborhoods (despite soundwall!)
- On/off ramps are relatively short and close to one another. This makes merging/lane changing difficult/dangerous.
- The use of the roadway is significantly different from the designed use. The highway was designed as a smaller connection road. It did not connect to 94,

traffic volume at the time was lower, and trucks at the time were significantly smaller/lighter.

- Sloped roadway, view of downtown is distracting
- Climate change/VMT
- Sight distance due to curves, bridges, slope
- Context of 280 with local roads. High speed on 280 can carry over to high speeds on local roads after exit.
- State Fair traffic? Per Bailey they usually look at the 30th highest day of traffic.

### **St. Paul Parking Minimums**

We compared thoughts on the proposed parking minimum changes. Thoughts include:

We like the TDM options, and like the idea of having 'teeth' to enforce/encourage them. There are some other ways to encourage these. In the meeting they noted other requirements for buildings with 25+ units. The benefit of the eliminated minimum is a simpler process. Fewer hoops to jump through could mean a clearer incentive for developers, increased ability to finance plans, less administrative overhead. Another thought - could we introduce new incentives for TDM options. One question in a forum call asked why not offer floor area ratio credits for TDM features? Why not require unbundling parking requirements altogether?

The committee came up with the following statement to summarize our position on the parking minimums:

We support *any* movement by the City of Saint Paul to reduce parking minimums, but prefer the option to eliminate parking minimums. We prefer this option because it is simpler, relieves administrative burden, provides the clearest incentive to developers, allows for the largest possible increases in affordability and sends the clearest message about the city's priorities on climate change.

Karen moved to endorse this and Scott seconded. Vote was unanimous in favor.

### **Closing notes**

Someone from MNDOT will attend next month's meeting to discuss 94