

10th & Page CDBG PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE

Minutes

Neighborhood Development Services Conference Room, City Hall

Wednesday, February 8, 2017

6:00pm – 7:00pm

Attendance:

Task Force Members	Present	Absent
James Bryant	X	
Taneaia Dowell		X
Vezena Howard	X	
Joy Johnson		X
Sharon Jones	X	
Seth Kelley	X	
Tim Padalino	X	
Lyle Solla-Yates	X	
Ali Radjavi	X	
Tierra Howard - Staff	X	
Others:		
Carl Schwarz - Resident	X	
Josephine Haden – Resident	X	
Lorenzo Haden	X	
Eberhard Jehle	X	
Chris Henry	X	
Brennen Duncan - Staff	X	
Amanda Poncy - Staff	X	

The meeting began at 6:00 pm. Attendees conducted introductions. Tierra Howard (TH) reviewed the agenda.

Review and Feedback - 10th St NW & West St Draft Plan for Pedestrian Improvements

Brennen Duncan (BD) handed out the results of a spot speed study that was conducted on 10th St NW north of Page Street on 6/2/2016. The study captured the average vehicle speed (MPH) and the traffic volumes on Tuesday through Thursday. Lorenzo Haden (LH) stated that people who are driving south on 10th St NW are accelerating at a high speed down the hill and that during the weekday when there is traffic, people tend to not speed due to traffic, however, on weekends when children and elderly persons are out, there tends to be more speeding.

Ali Radjavi (AR) asked what time the traffic and speed counts are taken and how the data is captured. BD explained that the traffic counters are left out for three days and are bolted into the street so that the cars pass over them. BD explained that he has not seen the raw data for the study but could follow-up with the Task Force (TF) if they wanted more information on the data. AR explained that in his opinion, averaging the data over three

days does not provide enough information about safe or unsafe speed and traffic conditions.

Tim Padalino (TP) stated that if the study was done in late May or early June, then data including the student population would not be included in the study results which could have an influential impact on the study. BD stated that he is not positive about the dates that the study was conducted and that he would have to go back and look at the data.

Josephine Haden (JH) stated that it seems like the traffic is bad on 10th St NW every day especially in the morning and the afternoon. James Bryant (JB) agreed that the traffic is bad between 5pm – 7pm.

Seth Kelley (SK) stated that in his experience, vehicles will cross the yellow lines to avoid stopping for pedestrians at the 10th St NW and West St intersection. JH stated that most of the time people do not stop for those waiting at the crosswalk and people who are crossing do not look. JH stated that the kids and adults usually come to a crosswalk and don't look because they assume it's safe to cross.

TH showed a map of the current conditions. Amanda Poncy (AP) reviewed the draft plan with changes to the existing intersection. The changes include: adding a crosswalk to the North of West St, curb extensions (on the west side and the north and south side of 10th St NW which would shorten the crossing distance/time on 10th St NW, ADA curb ramps, and rapid flashing beacons on the north and south side (two sets) to enhance visibility for pedestrians crossing.

LH explained that is likely that vehicles traveling south down 10th St NW (from the north) will hit the curb extension since there are no parking spaces and there is no guideline existing for persons to know that that the curb extension is approaching. Staff informed the group that the curb extension is only being proposed at the location where on-street parking is allowed (on 10th St NW and not on West St). AP explained that the location is where there is an open field and that on-street parking is allowed in that area, however it may not be used. SK stated that he thinks that the curb extension on the north side will help with visibility and that he does not think that it will affect the traffic. Eberhard Jehle (EJ) suggested that marked parking spaces (white line) from Grady Ave to West St on 10th St NW could help vehicles avoid hitting the curb extension. SK suggested that including a bicycle lane on the West side of 10th St could also prevent vehicles from hitting the curb extension. EJ suggested that if you paint the top of the curb extensions fluorescent safety orange, drivers will pick up the orange with their headlights from a long distance. BD and AP stated that the curb extension only comes out about five feet and parking lanes are usually 7-8 feet.

SK stated that the sidewalk ends on West St (on the south western side). SK stated that when walking his kids to school, they cross the street at an angle and not straight across because the ends of the sidewalks are not parallel to one another. He asked if there was a way to do a cross-hatch marking in the middle of the intersection. EJ suggested perhaps SK is referring to a plaza-style intersection. SK stated that cars end up pulling up into the crosswalk at the stop sign. BD stated that they tried to identify the location in which pedestrians tended to cross to see which crosswalk is being used. BD agreed with SK in that there is a loss of visibility for the crosswalk south of West St due to the change in slope.

SK stated that flash rapid beacons or lights that are visible to vehicles driving northbound and southbound would improve visibility.

TP asked if the proposed curb extension is coming out into West St. Staff stated that the extension will not come out into West St. He stated that it is already difficult to navigate West St when driving across 10th St NW in a vehicle. Brennen suggested that the radius appears to be too narrow in the draft plan and that it could get broadened out to make the curb have more of a natural curve (it should be at least 15 feet). Brennen stated that cars currently run over the existing radius.

SK stated that the middle school children stand on both sides of 10th St NW & West St (Southwest and East side) for the bus to pick them up and/or drop off (Walker, Buford, and CHS). SK stated that he thought that there should be a timer with a flashing light that flashes during the time that children get on and off of the bus.

Carl Schwarz (CS) asked if a diagonal crosswalk is do-able in the City. BD stated that he does not know, he'd have to look, but it is not recommended for ADA reasons, especially for those who are blind and have to cross the street. SK stated that he is happy with whatever. BD and AP stated the whole geometry of the intersection is weird due to the streets not being aligned. EJ brought up the idea about a pedestrian plaza where vehicles are supposed to stop in all four directions and then pedestrians can proceed to walk through the plaza and often times it is raised up and he suggested that if the school buses are picking up and dropping off kids, then it could work. He stated that a plaza-style intersection would work with reducing speeds as people begin speeding the moment they pass Washington Park. AP mentioned that the plaza intersection is usually used when you have traffic signals which are not being suggested at the 10th St NW and West St intersection.

AR asked if raising the intersection would have an impact on speeding. BD stated that it does slow people down. AP stated that one challenge is fire and emergency access tends to not be supportive of raised intersections (as was shown in the West Main St planning process). BD stated that there are also concerns with water drainage issues amongst other issues. SK stated that the intersection does not necessarily need to be raised, however the whole intersection should emphasize that people are crossing. BD stated that you could get the same impact with art work at the intersection. He stated that it would be a cheaper option/opportunity and would be unique for the neighborhood. He stated that the artwork at the intersection would work the same way in that it would draw more attention to the intersection.

TP stated that he likes the idea of art whether it is placed at the intersection or off to the side as a sign, art in place, etc. TH stated that she recalls from a previous meeting that the group had an interest in signage. BD stated that a sign could be placed in the northwest corner of the 10th & West intersection.

BD stated that if the group decides on one crosswalk, then the curb extension on the northwest side of 10th can be shortened in length. EJ stated that there are hardly any residences (more commercial) in the northeast corner of the intersection. EJ asked the TF if they observe how the children walk to Washington Park during the summer. LH and JB stated that they usually walk on both sides, however, LH stated that they usually are

crossing the 10th St NW & West St intersection at certain times of the day (morning and evening – school hours). He stated that he observes more pedestrian traffic at the 10th & Page intersection. EJ stated that there may not be as much pedestrian traffic north of West St, therefore the crosswalk to the north of West St can be eliminated. EJ stated that the curb extension may still be useful to minimize the traffic and speeds even if there may not be a crosswalk there. EJ stated that staff should consult with the school district to determine where the bus stops are located. JH stated that there are two bus stops at the 10th St NW and Page St intersection and the 10th St NW & West St intersection.

TH stated that she was going to get feedback on specific components of the plan so that the information can be brought back to the consultants to draft a final plan:

- The TF agreed to eliminate the crossing north of West Street and to keep the crossing on the south side of West with one set of flash rapid beacons and to shorten the length of the curb extension on the north west section of the intersection.
- The TF agreed to keep the other curb extensions and ADA compliant ramps at each of the other corners of the intersection as outlined in the plan.
- There was discussion about possibly including art work at the intersection. BD stated that we could check with Lance to see when the street is supposed to be repaved. Tim stated that along similar lines, maybe the group can agree to have a sign installed at the intersection which could achieve something similar to the art work idea. He stated that a sign can contribute to place making and may slow drivers down. There was discussion about incorporating different pavement texture (pavers) at the crosswalk. BD stated that we would need to talk to public works to figure out their schedule for repaving the road and maintenance-related issues. AR stated that it does not sound like it's worth the gain and that he just brought it up as a cost/benefit question. Chris Henry (CH) asked if landscaping is possible. TH stated that she talked with parks as this was a question brought up by the TF and the City does not have the funding to maintain landscaping. She stated that the adopt a spot program is an option, however, usually Parks has to end up pulling out the landscaping and put down concrete due to maintenance issues. CS asked if there is space in the northwestern side of the bump out to install a tree. SK stated that reducing the amount of visual obstructions at the intersection is important. AP and BD stated that there is a waterline that runs right through the middle of the area and a gas line is right under the curb line as well as the overhead utilities.

TH stated that she would type up the minutes and that the information would be shared with the consultants and then we can share the final draft with the group before bidding the project out.

JH mentioned that the bump-outs are taking up space and that they need to be removed because of parking and that they have to pay for parking.

Discussion about 10th St NW and Page Street Intersection

AR asked if the 10th St NW and West St intersection could be bid out with the 10th & Page intersection improvements. TH stated that since the Page St intersection requires analysis, then, most likely both intersections cannot be bid out together.

TH informed the group that if a traffic analysis is conducted, that the analysis may or may not warrant a signal at the intersection. A signal typically costs \$350,000 to \$500,000. Therefore, if a signal is warranted, CDBG may not be able to cover the cost of a signal. JB stated that the TF recommended the same type of improvements for 10th St NW and Page St as what is being recommended at 10th St NW and West St and that they were not referring to a traffic signal. BD stated that previous studies have shown that the Page St volumes are not high enough and the 10th St NW volumes aren't high enough for a traffic signal. SJ mentioned that at the time that the study was conducted, the buildings on Main St that have been constructed and are being proposed were not accounted for in the study. BD suggested that maybe the group recommend completing a study on 10th St NW and Page St when the proposed buildings are finished with construction to account for the traffic volumes that may be generated from Main St development.

AR asked if the same improvements proposed at West St could be applied at the Page St intersection. BD stated that the only reason why rapid flash beacons are being proposed at the West St intersection is because it is a safe route to school route and that they are not generally used on two lane roads. SJ asked what the difference is between the kids catching the bus at 10th St NW and Page and 10th St NW and West St. The group agreed that the intersections are similar and that there is no difference. TP stated that with 10th St NW being a framework street, it's is not just an average two-lane road and it tends to be a cut across through the heart of the City.

TH asked BD if a study was conducted, would he anticipate that there would be recommended interventions at the 10th St NW and Page St intersection that are not already in place. BD asked the TF what they would like to see at the intersection. The TF stated that they would want the same intervention that is being proposed at West St including the rapid flash beacons.

CS questioned the conditions that trigger the need for a study. BD stated that he does not know that a study would be needed.

LH agreed that you would need the same interventions at Page St because more children travel at the bottom of 10th St NW and Page St than on 10th St NW and Wertland St. SJ stated that adults also cross the intersection as well, including UVA employees who park in the area.

BD asked AP if there is a pedestrian threshold for when the rapid flash beacons are recommended. BD stated that staff could do a pedestrian count study. AP stated that typically there are thresholds, it is based off of total number of pedestrians and the numbers are adjusted if there are children or elderly persons (the number can be multiplied). She stated that the number is usually 20 per hour. AP stated that there is a rapid flash beacon being proposed at 10th St NW and West St because not only is it a drop-off and pick-up location for school buses, but it is also a safe route to school route. BD stated that there are a few more visibility issues at 10th St NW and West St than there is at the bottom of 10th St NW. TP stated that the Page St intersection does not have visibility issues but it is at the bottom of two hills. JB stated that speeding is the concern at the Page St intersection. TP stated that the best use of the funds would be to do pedestrian upgrades at Page St, even without having a study conducted. SK stated that the proposed rapid flash

beacon that the group recommends to eliminate at the West St intersection should be placed at the Page intersection.

TH asked what the process would be for conducting a pedestrian crossing study. BD stated that he does not know what the process would be. AP stated that installing a rapid flash beacon would require an engineering study to look at the speeds, pedestrian volumes, and proximity to other crossings (which would not be the same as a signal warrant analysis). She stated that you also do not want to get drivers used to stopping only when they see the flash rapid beacons versus stopping at any marked crossing.

CS asked if a study is required for stop signs. AP responded yes.

SK stated that if you are on the west side of Page St, you have to ease out into the intersection because of bush that is reducing visibility. TP stated that at the other side of the intersection, there is a fence that also reduces visibility.

BD stated that the bump outs (that are being proposed at West St) already exist at the 10th St NW and Page St intersection at a few of the corners of the intersection.

TP stated that the truncated domes are chewed up so that generally speaking, they need to be replaced even if CDBG funds cannot fund the replacement/maintenance.

EJ suggested that having flash rapid beacons at the top and the bottom of 10th St NW would help with making the intersections much safer for pedestrians.

TH stated that she would talk to staff regarding moving forward with 10th St NW & Page intersection and would follow-up with the TF.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10pm.