

Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2015

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: City Council Chambers, City of Urbana, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL

Members Present: Brandon Bowersox-Johnson, James Roedl (Stacey DeLorenzo), Andy Rousseau (Elsie Hedgspeth) Cynthia Hoyle, Audrey Ishii, Susan Jones, and Craig Shonkwiler

Staff Present: Kevin Garcia

Members Absent: Karie Brown-Tess, Michele Guerra

Others Present: Daniella Birch, John Prince, Charlie Smyth, Jeff Yockey

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Roll call was taken and it was noted that a quorum of members was present.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Susan Jones moved to approve the agenda; Craig Shonkwiler seconded the motion; and the agenda was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Susan Jones asked that item 5. a) of the minutes be changed to read, "Susan Jones expressed concern about pedestrians following weird traffic patterns while transferring from one bus to another."

Craig Shonkwiler asked that under item 5. a), the revised date and the meeting location of the MCORE Open House, September 17, 2015, be included in the italicized text regarding the meeting information. Mr. Shonkwiler asked that item 5. b) be changed to read, "He added that the existing sidewalk snow removal program could be expanded to include more businesses in the areas where sidewalk snow removal currently was required by ordinance."

Cynthia Hoyle moved to approve the minutes as corrected; Susan Jones seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved by voice vote.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

Daniella Birch and John Prince spoke as representatives of the Prairie Cycle Club in opposition to the installation of bike boxes at the intersection of Goodwin Avenue and Green Street as part of the MCORE project until more research had been done.

Ms. Birch asked that more research be conducted to determine the safety of the bike box design before adding the feature to the intersection.

Mr. Prince believed that the design would make bicyclists more susceptible to right hooks since motorists were continually turning in front of bicyclists when using the current configuration. He stated that right turn lanes should be to the right of the bicycle lanes.

Cynthia Hoyle stated that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) would be glad to receive input, but BPAC would not be taking any action or recommendations on design.

Audrey Ishii asked Mr. Prince if the location of the problem where bicyclists encountered motorists turning in front of them was for northbound and southbound traffic on Goodwin Avenue.

Mr. Prince stated that the busses travelling south on Goodwin Avenue were known to turn in front of bicyclists. He said that there were near-misses at almost every intersection.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson stated that current design of the bicycle lanes allowed motorists to travel through the bicycle lane to turn right. He thought that the bike boxes allowed bicyclists the space to go in front of traffic.

Danielle Birch stated that she would prefer that the right turn lane for motorist be installed to the right of the bicycle lanes.

Craig Shonkwiler stated that he did not think there was enough available space to install the right turn lanes to the right of the bicycle lanes. He asked if Ms. Birch and Mr. Prince had recommendations regarding the use of bike boxes.

John Prince stated that modifications to the intersection of Green Street and Wright Street were needed. He suggested the installation of sharrows with a right turn lane.

Ms. Birch said that the bicyclist needed to be able to take the lane so she recommended sharrows so bicyclists would know not to go between the motorists and the curb.

Mr. Shonkwiler stated that with the bike box, the cyclists would be in front of motorists at the stop bar.

Ms. Birch was concerned because the bicyclists using a through lane after the light for the bike box would be susceptible to right hooks from motorists not seeing bicyclists moving along in the bicycle lanes

Mr. Shonkwiler explained that the consultants looked at the right turning volumes and physical space available and weighed the pros and cons of several options for the intersection. He said that the consultants were preparing plans based upon the behaviors of the casual bicyclist, since 60% of the bicyclists fall within that category, and for pedestrians. He encouraged Ms. Birch and Mr. Prince to attend the MCORE Open House on September 17th to provide input.

Cynthia Hoyle mentioned that MTD bus drivers were trained to merge to the right when making right turns to prevent bicyclists from entering the blind spot thus avoiding conflicts with bicyclists while the busses are turning. She asked anyone observing an MTD driver cutting off bicyclists to notify MTD. She added that the drivers should move over into the turn lane as far to the right as possible so bicyclists would be unable to fit between the curb and the bus. She said that if MTD drivers were making right turns by crossing over in front of bicycle lanes, MTD should be notified by phone or website and stated that the problems could only be corrected if MTD was made aware of them.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson affirmed Ms. Hoyle's message by encouraging people to use MTD's website or call 217.384.8188 to let MTD know if operators were not using correct procedures when driving.

Ms. Hoyle mentioned that MTD had been very concerned about reducing conflicts and improving infrastructure to reduce fatalities.

Mr. Prince stated that bus drivers were not the only vehicle operators who had cut in front of bicyclists when trying to make right turns.

Cynthia Hoyle said that the MCORE project could improve bicycle safety by the design of the roadway.

Susan Jones said that education would be very important. Ms. Jones felt that there should be guidance to let bicyclists know to get out in front of motorists to use the bike boxes. She added that there should be serious research on the effectiveness of the bike box.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a) MCORE Project Update

1) Overall Project Update

Craig Shonkwiler reviewed the plans for MCORE Projects 1 through 5, and pointed out specific features under consideration for Projects 1 and 5, which were located within the city limits of Urbana. He said that Project I, located in Urbana, would go out to bid in 2016 and improve transit, bicycle and pedestrian systems within the University District.

Mr. Shonkwiler pointed out the features of Project 1 (Green Street from Wright Street to Busey Avenue), which included raised bicycle lanes, colored pavement to differentiate lane usage, reduced traffic lanes, boarding islands for transit users, possible bike boxes, possible bioswales to separate pedestrian and bicycle lanes and leading bicycle and leading pedestrian crossing intervals. He said that the pedestrian scramble would remain at the intersection of Wright Street and Green Street, which was maintained by the City of Champaign, and that the design for this intersection was still being developed.

Cynthia Hoyle expressed concern about bicyclists crossing Wright Street after travelling in the raised bike lanes to make left turns. She wanted to make sure that bicyclists were given a clear definition about how they should act.

Mr. Shonkwiler said that the consultants were looking at two-stage left-turns to allow pedestrians and then bicyclists to cross the intersection before motor vehicles could enter the intersection. He also mentioned that most of the construction would occur during the summer to reduce the congestion typically occurring during the school year. With that, he mentioned that scheduling would be difficult so some of the work would take place while students were back on campus.

Between Wright Street and Goodwin Avenue, Mr. Shonkwiler showed renderings of traffic lanes separated from bus lanes that would allow transit users to load and unload away from traffic. He mentioned that the west entrance to the Illini Union would be closed and a loop drive would be installed at the front of the Union to create fewer conflicts between turning vehicles and pedestrians. He said that to implement the plan, some trees would need to be removed in front of the Illini Union. He added that the plans were concept drawings and that changes would be subject to public input. From there, he explained that the cities and university would review and approve the plans and then approval would be sought from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Mr. Bowersox-Johnson noted that the bicycle lanes would be routed behind the bus stops at the Illini Union.

Mr. Shonkwiler mentioned that the consultant was looking at ways to reduce pedestrian and bicycle conflicts near the bus stops. He pointed out that when bicyclists were in the bike lanes, they would be expected to follow the same rules as motorists. In other words, if a pedestrian was in a crosswalk as a bicyclist approached the crosswalk, the bicyclist would stop for the pedestrian until the pedestrian had cleared the crosswalk. He added that pedestrians would be expected to wait to cross until bicyclists and motorists had cleared a crosswalk before entering the crosswalk.

James Roedl pointed out that the design showed a barrier at the south bus stop near the Illini Union to keep pedestrians from entering the bicycle lane. He asked if there would be any additional barriers to keep pedestrians out of the bicycle lanes.

Mr. Shonkwiler said that the consultants were looking at this while trying to maintain areas so access for snow removal would be possible.

Ms. Hoyle asked if rumble strips, such as those used in Stockholm, Sweden, had been considered. She said that those rumble strips were gentle, yet provided bicyclists with an advance warning of a pedestrian crossing.

Audrey Ishii said that motorists were not seeing bicyclists and wondered if there would be any conflicts with the driveway along the north side of Green Street across from the proposed entrance to the Illini Union.

Mr. Shonkwiler stated that the north driveway was a service entrance that did not have as much traffic as the entrance to the Illini Union, so there should not be as many conflicts.

At Goodwin Avenue and Green Street Mr. Shonkwiler said that the bus stops would have the raised bicycle lanes with the lanes going around the bus stops. He explained that the leading bicycle and leading pedestrian intervals would occur at the same time at this intersection and at the intersection of Lincoln Avenue and Green Street to provide a three-to five-second advance crossing time; bicycle lanes would be added to direct bicyclists away from pedestrian traffic. He added that the intersection of Goodwin Avenue and

Green Street was the most heavily traffic pedestrian crossing in Urbana. He also noted that there appeared to be an increase in bicyclists on Goodwin Avenue had occurred after the installation of bicycle lanes.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson asked if there would be any changes to the bus stop at Busey Avenue. He said that there did not seem to be enough room to move the bus stop off of the street.

James Roedl asked if the bus stop pavement on Busey Avenue would be reinforced.

Craig Shonkwiler said that Green Street would be rebuilt in this location. He added that Green Street between Goodwin Avenue and Lincoln Avenue would be a rehabilitation project and that between Busey Avenue and Race Street would be a reconstruction project. He mentioned if it was determined that the reconstruction project was to be done with asphalt, then a concrete pad would be expected to be installed at the bus stop.

Mr. Shonkwiler discussed the features of Project 2 (Green Street from Fourth Street to Neil Street in Champaign). He said that the project was slated before the TIGER grant was sought, but that it fit well with the objectives of the MCORE Project. He showed renderings of the Gateway entrance on Green Street, east of Neil Street, and cross-sections that included the installation of bicycle lanes. He mentioned that Champaign had a desire to promote redevelopment in that area.

Mr. Shonkwiler pointed out that Project 3 (White Street from Second Street to Wright Street and Wright Street from White Street to Springfield Avenue, both in Champaign) would begin construction at the same time as Projects 1 and 2 in 2016.

Ms. Hoyle mentioned that the widening of White Street was considered as part of the Boneyard Creek improvements in that area, but to widen White Street would have resulted in the loss of a substantial number of trees so there were no plans to widen the street.

Ms. Jones said that the road conditions resulting from the bus traffic on that part of White Street were more of a concern than was the width of the street.

Craig Shonkwiler discussed some of the features in Project 3 including a protected left turn lane for bicyclists at White Street and Wright Street and marked bicycle lanes that continued through the intersection of Wright Street and Green Street.

Susan Jones expressed concern about the addition of the fountain at White Street and Wright Street and thought that it might be confusing for those travelling around it.

Mr. Shonkwiler asked the commissioners for their opinions on the marked bicycle lanes through the intersection of Wright Street and Green Street.

Cynthia Hoyle commented that the lanes would help motorists know where to look for bicyclists and make them more aware of bicyclists on the roadway. She added that additional lighting was planned for the intersection of White Street and Wright Street.

For Project 4 (Armory Avenue from Fourth Street to Wright Street and Wright Street from Armory Avenue to Springfield Avenue, both in Champaign), Mr. Shonkwiler credited the bicycle community for their input in the proposed design at Armory Avenue and Wright Street. As a result of the communication with the bicycle community, a design was proposed which provided eastbound/westbound bike lanes and one-way travel

northbound for busses on Wright Street. He added that the project would require a revamping of parking at Armory Avenue and Sixth Street,

Mr. Bowersox-Johnson pointed out that the busses would not stop to discharge passengers at the corner of Armory Avenue and Wright Street, but that the discharge would occur north of the corner on Wright Street. He pointed out that the right turn lane would be to the right of the bicycle lanes.

Craig Shonkwiler discussed Project 5 in Urbana, which he said did not involve many infrastructure changes. One change he did mention was that parking would be removed on Green Street between Race Street and Busey Avenue. He discussed the addition of passenger loading areas in front of the First Presbyterian Church and the Unitarian Universalist Church. Sidewalks would be five feet in width and he said that easements might be sought to move the sidewalk around some of the trees along this section of Green Street.

Mr. Shonkwiler asked for input from the Commissioners regarding the installation of turn lanes for eastbound Green Street at Race Street. He added that the raised median would remain on Green Street. He asked if most of the eastbound traffic would turn either left or right instead of travelling straight.

Cynthia Hoyle said that it varied. She mentioned that during Market at the Square many bicyclists would travel straight to travel into the Landmark Hotel parking lot then travel between Lincoln Square and the Methodist Church.

Mr. Shonkwiler said that staff would try to determine which turning patterns were prevalent.

Jeff Yockey asked what the proposed speed limit would be for Green Street. He added that lower speeds allowed motorists time to think about what actions to take.

Mr. Shonkwiler said that staff would propose the speed limit on Green Street between Lincoln Avenue and Wright Street be reduced to 25 miles per hour.

Mr. Yockey asked if there would be pedestrian signals at the crosswalks near the bus stop at the Illini Union. If not, he asked if conduit could be added in anticipation of future needs.

Mr. Shonkwiler said that there were no plans for signals although he said that the plans were not final at this point.

Mr. Yockey asked what the pattern for traffic movement would be at the intersections with the pedestrian scramble crossings and the leading bicycle intervals.

Mr. Shonkwiler stated that the pedestrians would be allowed to cross during the pedestrian scramble; the bicyclists would be allowed to enter the intersection during the leading bicycle interval; and then motorists would be allowed to enter the intersection. He mentioned that bicyclists would operate as pedestrians if on the sidewalk; they would act as motorists if in the bicycle lanes.

James Roedl said that he had been instructed by the U of I Police that bicyclists were allowed to ride through pedestrian crossings.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson said that law enforcement should be made aware of the rules for traffic for the new features being added.

Audrey Ishii said that she did not feel comfortable riding between pedestrians during a pedestrian scramble crossing.

Cynthia Hoyle said that the design needed to help guide users.

2) Bike Boxes

Mr. Shonkwiler stated that the installation of bike boxes would necessitate the restriction of right turn movement for motorist when the traffic light was red.

Danielle Birch asked if people (motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians) knew how to behave at intersections with bike boxes.

Craig Shonkwiler said that the design was geared for those who were casual bicyclists. Again, he encouraged those with questions and concerns to attend the open house on September 17th so their input could be recorded and their concerns addressed.

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson agreed with earlier comments that education would be necessary.

Susan Jones asked about the possibility of bicycle traffic being right-hooked by right turn movements after the initial light for the bike box had cycled off.

Mr. Shonkwiler said that bicyclists would need to be aware how to navigate within the intersection on a stale green to avoid conflicts. Getting bicyclists to use the bike box to get out ahead of traffic was one way to reduce conflicts between bicyclists and motorists. Mr. Shonkwiler stated that the question would be an appropriate question for the consultant.

Mr. Shonkwiler showed a short video which explained how the bike box works.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sixA3FJc1I>

3) Traffic Signal Improvements: Leading Bicycle Interval/Leading Pedestrian Interval

Craig Shonkwiler mentioned that the lead interval for bicycles and pedestrians would be set at different times for the intersections of Goodwin Avenue and Green Street and Wright Street and Green Street; but he said that the lead interval for bicycles and pedestrians will be the same at Lincoln Avenue and Green Street.

Cynthia Hoyle said that in the City of Portland the addition of lead intervals decreased the number of conflicts. She added that 86% of road users understood the bike box concept. She mentioned that correct signage and markings would be critical in sending predictable messages to roadway users. Ms. Hoyle stated that if after the bike boxes were installed it would become apparent if they were not working, so they could always be removed since

the installation would be done with pavement markings instead of permanent pavement changes.

Charlie Smyth mentioned that the City of Portland had seen an increase in accidents for downhill bike lanes. He was concerned about bicycles riding through pedestrian scramble crossings at the intersection of Green Street and Goodwin Avenue. Mr. Smyth stated that to work toward "Vision Zero," the City needed infrastructure that reduced conflicts. He suggested installing right turn bike lanes with sharrows.

Cynthia Hoyle said that the City of Portland had reported an increase in accidents for four intersections located on downhill streets, but the city had reported decreases in eight other intersections.

Charlie Smyth expressed concern about bicyclists overtaking vehicles and those vehicles turning right on a stale green conflicting with those bicyclists riding along the right side of motorists. He said that motorists were not always aware that they should look to their right when making a right turn.

Craig Shonkwiler presented a video which showed how leading pedestrian intervals were designed to operate.

<http://www.streetfilms.org/lpi-leading-pedestrian-interval>

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) Bradley Avenue Bike Lanes

1) Initial Discussion

Craig Shonkwiler reported that the contract had been awarded for pavement patching. He said that the installation of bike lanes on Bradley Avenue would be included as part of the project, which would start next year. He mentioned that he would discuss the plans in more detail with BPAC and seek their input on alternatives.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- MCORE Open House 9/17, Alice Campbell Alumni Center
- Light the Night on 9/9/15
 - Craig Shonkwiler reported that several attended the event.
 - Cynthia Hoyle said that 900 sets of lights were distributed.
- Kickapoo Rail Trail 9/19/15 (kickapoorailtrail.com)
- Walk and Roll to School 10/7/15
 - Cynthia Hoyle asked that anyone interested in participating let her know.
- Bike Rodeo 10/17/15 at the Market at the Square—volunteers needed
- Bicycle Summit 10/28/15
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Training 10/29/15 (Will include a presentation about new guidelines for bicycle facilities.)

8. FUTURE TOPICS

a) 2015 Bicycle Master Plan Update

Mr. Shonkwiler reported that the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission was working on the plan, but that state budget constraints had impacted their staffing. He hoped that the plan would be available soon for review.

- b) Bradley Avenue Bike Lanes
- c) Volunteer Sidewalk Snow Removal
- d) Appointment of Vice-Chair (By-laws)

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stiehl
Recording Secretary