



Prosperity & Livability Committee
Members: Ewing, Hill, Wagner and Williams
Chaired by Council Member Ewing
3rd Floor Lobby Conference Room
September 7, 2016 – 9:00 A.M.

MEETING MINUTES

Present:

Committee Chair Jason Ewing (Joined meeting at 9:07 a.m.), and Committee Members Alyce Hill, Jay Wagner (Joined meeting at 9:21 a.m.), and Chris Williams

Also Present:

Council Member Cynthia Davis

Staff Present:

Greg Demko, City Manager; Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager; Mark McDonald, Director of Transportation; Jeron Hollis, Communications & Public Engagement Director; Loren Hill, Economic Development Director; Lee Tillery, Parks & Recreation Director; Maria Smith, Deputy City Clerk; Lisa Vierling, City Clerk

Others Present:

Jim Bronnert, representing FIDO

News Media:

No News Media Present

Handouts:

- *City of High Point Traffic Calming Program, DRAFT*
- *Hedgecock Dog Park, Preliminary Concept Plan*
- *Hedgecock Dog Park, Illustrative Concept Plan*
- *High Point NC Water Plant*

Note: These handouts will be attached as a permanent part of these proceedings.

Committee Member Hill called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and asked Mark McDonald, Director of Transportation to provide an update on the Proposed Traffic Calming Policy.

1) Update: Proposed Traffic Calming Policy

Mr. McDonald gave a brief update on the Traffic Calming Policy that he had been working with the Raleigh template from last year and making adjustments and changes from. He noted how the Raleigh template plan was much larger than the City of High Point's plan, and since the last meeting he had trimmed down and worked on the point system and included the points system. He added that he still needs Council and staff's suggestions to provide feedback.

Program Components

He explained what streets qualify and primarily Federal/State system roads would be excluded without approval from the State Department Transportation and the State Traffic Engineer. He also pointed out the other routes such as: snow routes, transit routes, emergency response routes etc... They would also be excluded unless there would be recommendations from the department heads, fire, police, public service, and managers.

Committee Member Hill asked about the speeding issue on Rotary and Johnson that was addressed. Committee Member Hill read off a part of the definition: "collectors serving a broader purpose and range of uses..." She asked if those would be excluded under this. Mr. McDonald explained that Rotary may not be so much under this as Johnson may have been and both of those were addressed. Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager, explained that it was not an automatic exemption but a higher level of review and suggested to change out "excluded" because it maybe too strong of a word. Mr. McDonald discussed how Johnson Street is not so much a residential street. He reviewed the Federal and State route exclusions, and that the city and does not have complete jurisdiction over those streets and in order to do anything to those state they would need approvals from the Department of Transportation. Committee Member's Hill and Williams expressed satisfaction with the exemption.

Public Involvement

He mentioned that there would be a counter measurement applied.

Emergency Access and Response

Mr. McDonald explained they would address the Fire and Police department as well as street, utility and maintenance.

Funding Equity and Neighborhood Participation

He discussed where the program is fully funded by the City as long as funds are available, but the residents and homeowner associations can participate financially in the program. By them participating, it could move their project up the prioritization list.

Process

He then reviewed the first, second and third contacts... He would like to streamline it.

First Contact

He explained this would be going out to assessing what the complaint is about, documenting, to see if there is anything else we can do, requesting enforcement, and improving signing.

Second Contact

He explained that this would be if there was a previous request before and they had viewed it previously and felt that there is a need to do more to collect data.

Third Contact

He noted that this is where they actually started to apply the policy itself and viewed all the volumes, speeds and graded it by the points. He then pointed out that they started to meet with the citizen representatives or HOA's to complete a petition if they want to pursue it to view the different strategies.

Traffic Calming Criteria**Speed limit reductions and Multi-way STOPs**

While implementing traffic calming, he suggested viewing the combination of volumes, speed, crash histories, pedestrians, schools, parks, and cross-walks. These should be looked at when implementing traffic calming.

Petitions and Prioritization

He reviewed how some of the streets are scoring more than 40 points may be advanced through the petition process for funding. He explained that 40 points currently is an arbitrary number in the table which might be more or less. He reviewed the explained the petition and how the prioritization talks about how the petition process works with 75 percent of properties along with the individual streets with the property owner or adult resident with only one per address.

A petition of support for the installation of traffic calming measures requires agreement of at least 75% of properties along each individual street segment. Only one (1) signature per property will be counted.

Project Funding

He noted that this would be set aside at Council's discretion annually and used until the funds are exhausted.

Maintenance

The Public Services and Transportation Departments will be responsible for the maintenance of all paved surfaces, curbs, and signage associated with these treatments, without assessments or additional costs to the residents or HOA. For any community landscaping that may be disturbed by the installation of a traffic calming treatment, an established HOA may 1) request an encroachment agreement for the HOA care of the landscaping, subject to other applicable permissions; or 2) request a maintenance agreement with the City for the ongoing maintenance of the landscaping. Such maintenance by the City will be at the HOA's expense. In the absence of HOA maintenance, Parks & Recreation Department staff will be responsible for landscaping maintenance, and may, at its discretion, alter or remove the landscaping without notice.

Removal

He pointed out this would be by petition where it would be taken out by petition but would have to remain in place for a period of three years so the City can assess its effectiveness before and after.

Documentation and Reporting

Mr. McDonald reported that all correspondence and contact information in the database which would allow the City to track the contacts if we received any requests that had been received and any relevant data to the project. An annual report would also be provided.

Scoring

- Speed
- Volume
- Pedestrian Activity
- Crash History
- Other Factors
- Financial Participation
- TOTAL POINTS

He noted they put most of the emphasis on Speed (up to 35 points) and Volume (up to 25 points); Pedestrian activity (up to 15 point maximum); Crash History (up to 15 points). The bonus points come with financial participation by the neighborhood up to 50%.

Chairman Ewing had a question to the Removal section, second paragraph. He read: *"The cost of removals by petition and substantiated by data will be funded by the program's annual budget as may be available without impacting other qualifying projects. The cost of removals that are not substantiated by data and therefore not supported by staff will be borne entirely by the residents and/or HOA."* He noted that it excludes if they go through the removal of the petition process and it does not specify if they go through the petition process that it would be driven by data. Committee Member Hill asked if Chairman Ewing was asking not the cost of removal but what the City paid for installation. She continued that it is not substantiated by follow up data and then what we would charge. Chairman Ewing inquired what could happen where they could go in and say and wait three years and say it did not do what they wanted it to do and now want it removed. He then pointed out based on data, we now have installed the device which did its intended purpose, and now the residents have decided that they want it removed and want to do something else with the landscaping or just do not like it or are waiting for us to take it out and will have to reimburse the City for what the install was. Mr. McCaslin raised the question if it would cost as much to remove as it was to put it in. Mr. McDonald gave a speed hump as an example where it could be billed out. He did state that the removal cost could be as much as the installation cost sometimes.

Chairman Ewing suggested that if the data supports what we recommend and what was done but still just wanted to have it removed, he does not see why the City should pay for the cost of removal. Committee Member Wagner expressed if the data shows that if it was working then why it should be removed. Mr. McDonald entertained removal by petition. He also suggested to leave the data and evaluate it annually and not address the removal by petition process at this time.

Mr. McCaslin brought up the idea to make it at their cost and if they want it removed then they would have to raise the money to review it to remove it. Committee Member Wagner was in favor of this idea.

Mr. McDonald asked if the Point Ranking made sense and if there were any questions. Mr. McCaslin expected there to be more neighborhoods wanting this and if Council continues funding and depending on what kind of devices are put into this. He explained if someone gets on the list and the city has more projects than money and put a priority list down and had been on that list for three to four years, would it be next up or would it be scope by the score? Mr. McDonald stressed that they would take anything that would score the highest. Mr. McCaslin agreed with Mr. McDonald. Committee Member

Williams asked if points could be included under the other factors. Chairman Ewing pointed out that funding was a large piece of it also.

Council Member C. Davis noted that if they choose to participate versus what she wrote down was that it was fully funded by the City and the neighborhoods could contribute if they choose to. She gave the example of Jerry Mingo's neighborhood that may not meet the criteria of the point system, but may be in need of those improvements. She added that those that are based on high point then some neighborhoods would be missing out that would need that attention that would be addressing the high points. Mr. McDonald explained that the idea of a point system is to identify where the greatest need is. Council Member C. Davis pointed out from previous meetings that some neighborhoods could afford to do some of those things that they could take on some of the cost without question.

Committee Member Williams was viewing the volume as opposed to the pedestrian activity and noted for areas such as that are more welcoming because they do not have transportation. Chairman Ewing suggested increasing the CAP. Committee Member Wagner also commented where there was a neighborhood with many walkers that the city should provide mechanisms to make it safer.

Mr. McDonald suggested reducing the emphasis on the volume and on crash history because you do not see many neighborhoods associated with a crash history. Committee Member Hill asked if there was a measure if it has to be adjacent to or near a church and wanted to make sure there are not pedestrian heavy areas that would not score high because they are not located close enough to one of them. Mr. McDonald reported that for each area they would be different and they would identify an influence area around the study street. He also stressed in some cases a commercial district or a school district might be only a block away, but if the school is six blocks away it would be less of a factor.

Committee Member Wagner would like for lack of sidewalks to be a consideration in neighborhoods where they have a lot of foot traffic in the streets. He mentioned the two girls on Cedrow who got hit just walking to the park. Mr. McDonald felt it would be a good idea to factor in sidewalks and balance this with volume/speed and possibly de-emphasize crash history.

Chairman Ewing inquired on how this would be analyzed, implemented and what kind of timeline as a petition process or compile a list using year after year. Mr. McDonald believed it could fall between both possibly both meet the minimum thresholds, normal and acceptable and have it set at 40 and once it meets that threshold, they would meet with the HOA and present options to them to give an overview of traffic calming for the petition which they would have 60 days. Once that petition comes back in, they have the points they need then it goes on the prioritization list for funding and then move forward for the best treatment. They would then be funded based on where they ranked for as long as the annual allocation of funds last. At the end of the year when there is no more money than that list would just transfer to the following year.

Mr. McDonald suggested Council contact him with any further questions or comments so that he can come back to Council with a complete finished product.

Chairman Ewing inquired on the turnaround time from start to finish once a petition is started. Mr. McDonald pointed out the difficulty in making the award per contract since they have not addressed how that would be done as an annual contract for this type or possibly an on-call contract for construction activity. He noted for data collection it takes about 30 days to schedule the collection and to process the data, to meet with the community group then about one to two months to do the petition process then another one to two months again then to meet again and could take up to six months. Overall, Mr. McDonald gave the turnaround time approximately 6-12 month process. Chairman Ewing pointed out for the applicant process that this would not be the fast process and it could be another 6-12 months before they start to see the results they want.

Mr. McDonald gave a quick update on James Road and basically creating another lane of traffic. He suggested putting in another edge line and marking off areas for more parking near the recreation center along James Road and another second line with a five foot bike lane on both sides on Hartley on the south end up to Oakview School. He noted that this would be more detailed than what they anticipated at first. Mr. McCaslin asked about the timetable for this project and Mr. McDonald replied that this should happen quickly.

2) **Presentation by Parks & Recreation: Proposed Dog Park**

Lee Tillery, Parks & Recreation Director, began his presentation for the concept for a Dog Park, the background, how it fits in this park, the cost, and the benefits in that area as well. He stated he began meeting with Jim Bronnert along with other interested citizens back in November when they had the interest in starting a dog park within the city. He mentioned that there is a larger dog park proposed and contained in the Master Plan for the Westchester Park.

He mentioned Jim Bronnert's group, FIDO, that has been recently meeting over the last year to discuss what that park would look like. The proposal from this group was to see if the city would provide the opportunity for a dog park. He added although they have not budgeted any money for a dog park, this group would try to raise money and asked if the city would provide the land for the proposed dog park. Staff looked at several existing parks and felt Hedgecock Park would be more suitable to add a dog park to. They employed a group from Durham, McAdams, that does a lot of dog park design. They came in to do some designs and looked at the lay of the land with the stream buffer and prepared the cost estimate as well. Mr. Tillery pointed out there are currently no restrooms at Hedgecock Park, but there are water/sewer lines running to the park.

He pointed out back in the 80s there was constrictive and much of it was restricted with funds and much was landmark conservation funds which does protect that park in perpetuity. He mentioned what you need to take into consideration and how it affects the neighboring community. He noted the proposed dog park was discussed at the July and August Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting and was approved at their August meeting.

Mr. Tillery reviewed the costs that would be involved to maintain the park throughout the year. The initial costs were fairly low. The estimated cost for the proposed Hedgecock Dog Park is \$97,119.00 and Mr. Tillery felt this is an accurate reflection of what those costs would be moving forward.

Council Member C. Davis asked if the reason the city could not do anymore was because of being locked in to keep the baseball field and Mr. Tillery responded that is correct.

She also heard there was concern about the cost of maintenance, but noted that this was a great trial run for what is planned for the Westchester Park, which the total cost for has been estimated around \$5 million. Mr. Tillery believes there would not be a problem for the Parks & Recreation staff to maintain the Hedgecock Dog Park. Council Member C. Davis asked if there was any way to attain any additional space and Mr. Tillery responded that they could not. She agreed that this was still great usage of the current space.

Committee Member Wagner asked what other locations were evaluated. Mr. Tillery shared that they looked at Oakview extensively to see if they had room and his initial thought was to look at some of their Recreation Center sites but that was harder than he thought. Committee Member Wagner asked if any sites along the Greenway were viewed and Mr. Tillery did not.

Council Member C. Davis believes this was a good starting point considering looking at other sites that were under-utilized facilities such as: basketball courts and tennis courts etc... Chairman Ewing suggested that there is more value to do two or three smaller dog parks that would have satellite locations throughout the City rather than having one large one that people would have to travel to visit. He asked if the City would fund a portion of it if they raised a certain amount. He suggested that it would be the city's responsibility to handle site preparation and anything and looking at a dollar match would make sense for the City to pay the site preparation portion of that since it is city-owned property.

Assistant City Manager Randy Hemann suggested for the Committee to vote to let them move forward with fundraising and to see what they can put together. Mr. Demko also suggested for the Committee and Council to acknowledge the change and use of the dog park and make it more official.

Council Member C. Davis asked if there was a way for people to contribute to the City since FIDO is in the process of applying for their 501(c)3 non-profit status. This way people can write checks to the city for the proposed Hedgecock dog park until such time that they can receive those dollars. Mr. Tillery suggested that they can set it up similar to the way they did the Miracle League.

Mr. McCaslin asked if Federal approval was needed and Mr. Tillery responded that since they are not taking away any amenities within the park, they would be adding an amenity so he did not believe their approval would be needed.

Mr. Bronnert pointed out that this is the first of two more dog parks that they would like to propose.

Chairman Ewing moved THAT THE HEDGECK DOG PARK CONCEPT AS PRESENTED BE FAVORABLY RECOMMENDED BY THE PROSPERITY & LIVABILITY COMMITTEE AND GIVE FIDO THE OPPORTUNITY TO START FUNDRAISING WITH POTENTIALLY SOME CITY INVOLVEMENT ONCE FUNDRAISING EFFORTS ARE UNDERWAY.

Committee Member Wagner made a second to the motion, which carried by a unanimous 4-0 vote.

3) Kearns Water Plant

Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager, provided an update on the old Kearns Water Treatment Plant. Staff has some long term future and potential ideas for the facility, other than demolition. Staff felt some creative folks may come up with a use for it and suggested the demolition funds already set aside could be used to stabilize and repurpose the building and create jobs. Staff would like to research this and potentially put it out to the public to receive proposals to see what other possibilities are out there. Staff asked if it would be okay for him to work together with the Economic Development Corporation staff and bring back some possibilities and numbers to be compared with demolition costs.

Chairman Ewing moved that the Prosperity & Livability Committee support staff in this endeavor and bring back possibilities/numbers for comparison with the demolition costs. Council Member Hill made a second to the motion, which carried by a 4-0 unanimous vote.

Lastly, Council Member C. Davis suggested that staff also look at the old National Guard Armory off of English. She thought it would make great apartments.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:18 a.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria A. Smith
Deputy City Clerk

Jason P. Ewing, Chairman