

## Union Park District Council Transportation Committee Meeting

Monday, 02.12.2024, 6:30pm - 8:30pm, Via Zoom

**Committee Members Present:** James Johnson, April King, Lisa Nelson, Allen Saunders, Barb Thoman, Austin Wu, Sean Ryan, Lisa Mueller, Scott Berger, Amy Gage, Mary Morse Marti

**Committee Members Absent:**

**Guests:** Jane McClure, David Peterson (SPPW), Jeannette Rebar (SPPW), Kevin Sands (Hamline-Midway Coalition), David Hoban (Saint Paul DSI)

**Staff:** Leah Timberlake Sullivan

### 1. Agenda and Minutes

- February agenda and December minutes approved ( Johnson, Thoman seconds)
- No minutes for January (informal in person)

### 2. Follow-ups and UPDC updates

- Leah (executive director): not present at start of meeting, updated at end of meeting
- No updates from other boards

### 3. Camera Enforcement (James Johnson)

- Speed is a widely recognized major contributor to fatalities, injuries, and noise
- Vehicles in Saint Paul widely exceed speed limits by a wide margin
- Infrastructure changes are slow to implement
- Big cities (NYC, Chicago) have it implemented, Minneapolis is pushing forwards
- Suggested that UPDC write a letter to the mayor modeled on what Minneapolis is doing
- David Peterson: Speed Safety Cameras are considered a [proven safety countermeasure](#)
- Minneapolis Vision Zero department plan to do a pilot once legislative approval is in place, which is expected to be imminent
- Minneapolis has presentation about what is happening there (see document sent via email)
- Cmdr. Chris Kasal in Minneapolis will be transitioning as coordinator for Towards Zero Deaths (TZD) grant, is willing to come speak to the UPDC Transportation Committee
- David Peterson: SPPW is the leader of safety transportation plan, have been conversations with city leadership, will likely be working with Minneapolis. Many conversations are through transportation engineer (Randy Newton), Russ Stark is aware of legislative actions
- Strong Towns: noise increases health risks and lower speeds decrease noise, reduce emissions
- Our Streets has offered a [fairly different perspective](#) on speed enforcement cameras
- **Mary Morse Marti:** Despite all the negative impacts of speed enforcement actions, has moved towards supporting them due to pedestrian safety concerns, **makes motion that UPDC write a letter to ask the city to do a speed camera pilot project, Barb Thoman seconds.**
- Discussion: Speed camera only, or also red lights, tabs, etc.?
- Barb Thoman: Given the legislation, should the letter suggest we join Minneapolis in piloting such a thing?
- Yes: MMM, Amy, Allen, Scott, Sean, James, Austin, Barb, Lisa M, April (**unanimous**)

#### 4. Concordia Avenue Resurfacing (David Peterson and Jeannette Rebar, SPPW)

- Project will be from Snelling Avenue to Marion Street on Concordia (2024), St. Anthony (2025)
- Resurfacing info is at [stpaul.gov/resurfacing](http://stpaul.gov/resurfacing), with mill & overlay (3-6 days)
- Pavement surfaces tend to be good up to ramps (as surfaced by MnDOT)
- Rough surfaces slow people down, smooth surfaces tend to speed drivers up
- Federal law requires that we upgrade curb ramps (ADA)
- Possible pedestrian and traffic calming improvements: reduce lanes to 1 vehicle travel lane & bike lane, requires variance from MnDOT
- Install bumpouts (curb extensions) to narrow road and provide shorter crossing distance and better visibility
- These require variances from state (on city council agenda for this Wednesday), as state law requires one-way state aid roads to be two lanes, would be heard back by end of March
  - Could potentially add bike lane if granted (buffered)
- Assessments to abutting property owners
- Lots of areas of Concordia have few cars, but very fast moving
- Current lane configuration is 14', 11', 9' (parking) -> 12', 3', 6', 3', 10'
- Difficulty moving bike lane to left, because of onramps, safety, MnDOT unlikely to approve
- Some complicated design issues, especially around on ramps
- Timeline: February / April 2024 (engagement), March 2024 (variance approval)...
- Website: [stpaul.gov/ConcordiaResurfacing](http://stpaul.gov/ConcordiaResurfacing)
- Jary Lee is project manager
- Public meeting to share this information
- If we don't get the variance, what are the possibilities for implementing speed limits along the corridor?
- Suggested bumpouts on the highway side
- What is the likelihood of variance being granted? David: Have had one conversation with MnDOT staff, this is pretty unusual for them, haven't seen a lot of requests like this. The bike lane would get close to the capitol city bike lane, would be good future link.
- City wants to see 20' of potential roadway
- Variance committees can often be from outstate, having space for emergency vehicles makes approval easier. Should we send letter in support? Should we attend variance meetings? Jim of Flexibility In Design group might have some tips on an application like this
- **Sean Ryan moves to write a letter supporting St. Paul's request for a variance, James Johnson seconds, vote unanimous in favor**

#### 4. David Hoban (Director of Department of Safety and Inspections)


- Shares org chart of 8 divisions, David oversees 4 of them, Dan Niziolek oversees 4, director is Angie Wiese
- Describes all the various departments of DSI (code enforcement, homeless assistance, etc.)
- COVID created hiring issues, and Parks Department wasn't able to clean easily
- Fences presented visual barrier and crews would drive on buy and we wouldn't get to it
- Hopes that we see an improvement in the last two months
- We did an RFP, hired a master contractor to do the work
- We went from around 250 abatements on our list to do, regularly down to 35
- **Q:** Was the issue of the trash that was reported multiple times over the years, on the publicly available website, there were not a lot of abatement orders. We saw a lot of "GOA," but the trash was not gone on arrival. During all this process, we were doing monthly trash

cleanups. There were 12 visitations, a lack of having staff, lack of understanding what the level of abatement really means.

- a. **Hoban:** It was inexperienced trash, we struggled with getting staff, staff didn't go to level that we expect level to be cleaned.
- **Q:** Sent photos to DSI with examples of trash that had been there for years, if inspectors aren't seeing trash it doesn't exude confidence in DSI.
  - a. **Hoban:** My hope is that those issues will be addressed in a more timely manner. We weren't meeting the mark, we hired the right people.
- **Q:** Thank you for the removal of fence, removed about 40 bags of trash on the north side of University. Median planters are responsibility of SPPW for cleaning.
- **Q:** Does the city have any guidelines for the amount of trash that would constitute a nuisance?
  - a. **Hoban:** We are mostly complaint driven, takes a complaint coming in, inspector comes out to inspect it. If there is an obvious amount of trash, the bottom line is that the owner of the property takes care of it.
- **Q:** Does the process of issuing abatement orders differ for businesses and residences? Timelines, levels for fines, or anything else.
  - a. **Hoban:** It should be the same
- **Q:** Is there any scaling to abatement for businesses?
  - a. **Hoban:** Minneapolis does administrative fines, they have the option to escalate it, etc., and those fines can jump quickly. In Saint Paul, it's criminal based, city council takes control of the fines and how much people have to pay. Would require charter commission to tackle it again.
- **Q:** Who is responsible when business is closed?
  - a. **Hoban:** I've had multiple meetings with CVS, they are being required to hire cleanup folks, install cameras. It's often difficult with business representatives of larger businesses, as residents are often more responsive. We're also increasing patrols in that area.
- **Q:** Are we as tough on residents as we are on businesses?
  - a. **Hoban:** Trying to find a more friendly letter, these are the consequences, here are the notifications.
- **Q:** Are any of these details about complaints accessible?
  - a. **Hoban:** No, they're not visible.
  - b. **Hoban:** Our system is called Amanda, it's very antiquated, the new updated system will include a lot more information. Citizens will be able to get their own dashboard, etc.

## 5. Other Things To Do

- Kevin Sands (HMC) brought letter about Snelling Avenue
  - a. Decade ago they brought a multi-modal Snelling Avenue study
  - b. In 2016-2017, they said they would create a bike path, did an engineering plan and design and it fully disappeared
  - c. **Would like us to sign onto a letter, James Johnson makes motion to forward letter to the board, Scott Berger seconds**
  - d. Vote: **unanimously passes**
- Work plan
  - a. **Sean Ryan moves to approve 2024 Work Plan and send to the board, Mary Morse Marti seconds, approved unanimously**
- Lisa will send out links to a bunch of things, including I-94, etc.

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- Leah: UPDC updates: invite to Skyline Tower winter festival, inviting Patty Lammers to give annual crime update to separate fact from fiction

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

**Next Meeting:**

Next meeting Monday March 11th, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm via videoconference.