

SAPCC Transportation Committee

January 29, 2019 (−20°F or so)

Present: Pat Thompson, Scott Jensen, Patty George, Ray Bryan, guest Eric Nelson from Alliant Engineering (working on the Como bike path project)

Because we did not have a quorum, we did not review the notes from the last meeting.

Como off-road bike trail, Hamline Ave. to Raymond Ave.

Eric Nelson described the project. Work will be done in spring 2020 using a federal grant for trail construction as part of the Grand Round. An open house was held on Jan. 15 at Como Streetcar station, had 115 attendees signed in, probably 150 total. The addition of an off-road trail in general was well-supported. There are three segments of the project, each with different constraints:

1. Raymond to just west of Canfield:

Only one option. It keeps the on-street parking, with one driving lane each way, and an off-road trail on the north side (alongside Commonwealth Terrace). The current 6-foot sidewalk will be changed to a 12-foot shared-use path with a stripe in middle. Pedestrians and bikes/other modes would share.

2. Canfield to Snelling:

There are two options, Option 1 = narrows Como to 48' (8' narrower than current) to create a wider 10–11' boulevard between the north-side trail and the road. Option 2 = leaves the road width as is, fitting the trail behind the existing curb. Within those options for street width, there are two possible lane arrangements, one to convert from four lanes to three (shared turn lane in center) with 7' bike lanes in the street OR keep the current four traffic lanes with no bike lanes. Either type of striping would have no on-street parking if the road width is narrowed. ADT on Como in this stretch is 9,000 during non-Fair times, well below the level where four lanes are indicated by MnDOT. At this point, the city and county both support the 4-3 conversion. The county tends to want the curb to stay as is, the city wants to narrow to get a better trail experience with more separation from the street. It costs more to move the curb but the grant covers it; would mean less pavement in the long run, more permeability, and would have traffic-calming effect. A narrower street would possibly discourage street racing.

[Where the trail passes under Snelling, the current slope paving will be pulled into a vertical retaining wall.]

3. Snelling to Hamline:

[This segment is in District 10 rather than District 12.] Everyone involved wants to keep the existing sidewalk on the north side of the street and narrow the street by moving the north curb southward by 12' to save as many trees as possible (east of Arona). Given that, there are two options. Option 1: 38' overall width with no bike lanes, keep 11' driving lane and an 8' parking lane on both sides. Option 2: 42' overall width, keep the bike lanes

and eliminate parking on the north side of Como. People who prefer to bike on the street vs. on a path prefer keeping the in-street lane. Having in-street lanes wasn't part of the Grand Round vision, however. The city and county both want to keep in-street bike lanes from Raymond to Snelling, but are less committed to keeping them on the Snelling to Hamline segment. City may be leaning to keeping the parking. District 10 so far has indicated they prefer keeping the parking as well, citing use during summer from Como Park overflow especially.

Parking working group in D12

Nothing has been happening, the group has not met. Scott has been overwhelmed generally, would be best to back off from chairing (moving business at the end of March, lots going on). Plus there has been scope creep from the original area of concern: NSAP, district parking more widely, working with land/parking lot owners – seems like something the city should be doing, or through dedicated staff time. Since this was an idea from Ward 4 council member's office (during the previous interim period), can we pitch it back to the Ward 4 office for help? Is there grant money to support this, get a U intern from Humphrey or somehow fund staff time (Good Neighbor Fund?). District parking is in the 2040 plan and the district 10-year plan, how to start making it a reality. When can we involve PED given their over-capacity situation with 2040 plan? (Is the new Union Flats building parking built into the rent or extra? When will parking supply get worse?) Report to the board on this lack of progress. We need skillful leadership if it's going to go anywhere.

Report on Cleveland Ave. rebuild

The November meeting with the Cleveland planners was well attended. We have not been successful in getting a person onto the Cleveland planning group yet, however. Pat met with Reuben Collins from St. Paul Public Works, who is the St. Paul rep on the planning group to express our interest and concern about being represented fully in the process. Possible options for the plans will be available in spring 2019, with final design in fall.

Report on Como Phase 3 rebuild

All of the Phase 3 work will be done in 2020 (the possibility of doing the Brompton-Eustis section in fall 2019 was rejected by planners for multiple reasons). So this plus the other two projects (Cleveland rebuild and Como bike path) will be taking place on three sides of NSAP during summer 2020.

2018 and 2019 committee goals

We briefly reviewed our progress on our 2018 goals. Pat will forward notes on those plus a list of which goals to continue for 2019.

Adjourned at 8:25.