



**PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL  
OCTOBER 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 – 6:00 PM  
CITY HALL – ROOM 1029  
301 W. SECOND STREET  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Elected Members in Attendance**

Nic Moe  
Joe Alamazon  
Peter Baird  
Marva Overton - Alternate  
Girard Kinney

Carmen de la Morena-Chu-  
Alternate  
Luke Urie - Alternate  
Joel Meyer - Alternate  
Janet Beinke -Alternate

Patricia Schaub - Alternate  
Emily Risinger, Vice Chair  
Heyden Walker, Chair

**Guests in Attendance:**

University of Texas  
Students  
Summer Lawton  
John Woodley  
Mikey Grolnik

Tom Wald  
Rafael Riojas  
Steve Miller  
Debbie Dixon  
Karen Lorenzini

Robert Anderson  
Carrie Gammel  
Ed Wallace

**Staff in Attendance:**

Laura Dierenfield

Adrian Lipscombe

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Heyden Black Walker called the meeting to order at 6:08pm

**1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL**

The first 3 speakers signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will each be allowed a three-minute allotment to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

NONE

**2. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MEETING NOTES**

Emily Risinger moves, Joe Alamazon seconds. Unanimously approved.

### 3. I-35/MOBILITY 35 BRIEFING

- Presentation by Texas Department of Transportation I-35/Mobility35 Team
- Ms. Lawton presents the corridor wide recommendations for shared use pathways alongside the frontage roads in terms of the most to least desirable condition:
  - i. Where possible 5' or greater separation with a 12' Shared Use Pathway.
  - ii. Where there are Right Of Way constraints, there will be a 6' sidewalk without a buffer.
- Ms. Lawton then presented an update on the 51<sup>st</sup> Street Roundabout. She pointed out the frontage road bypass lane: one is able to enter roundabout from the SB lane off IH-35, west and east from 51<sup>st</sup>. Existing turn-around remains. She explained, 'why do a roundabout?': To maintain access, add a collector/distributor, improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The shared use pathway serving pedestrian access to and from the roundabout starts at 6' wide and goes down to 5' at the approaches. Roundabout allows for continuous traffic flow. There will be two lanes in the roundabout. There will be a free right lane as well. She pointed out the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon that are proposed to be present at all crosswalks, flashing yellow. To best serve the visually impaired, truncated domes will be lined up parallel and not in line with road pavement to make sure the person knows the direction for crossing.
  - Mr. Moe expressed concern with the use of the word "improvement" if the current crossing provides for a signalized crossing and this proposal will eliminate a signal.
  - Ms. De la Morena-Chu asked what the speed limit would be and what the posted speed limit would be. Answer: The design puts cars at 25-25 MPH. The free right has been redesigned to slow vehicles. Speeds are based on free flow. Posted speeds have not been finalized.
  - Ms. Lorenzini also shared that TxDOT is also looking at a raised crosswalk for each of the legs of the roundabout with texture. This serves to communicate to drivers that this is a pedestrian space. Looking at half-way between curb height and street height. This is the case at Airport & Lamar where there is a free right. She notices that vehicles slow for curve due to the raised crossing and curve. Riverside would be another possible place as well as downtown. It will not be possible everywhere but TxDOT will pursue design solutions where possible.
  - Mr. Baird feels that the free right seems duplicitous. It seems to create multiple crossings. He would rather see as two lanes. Answer: There are currently a lot of movements doing a free right now. For a roundabout to function well you need balanced traffic. In this case we have more traffic southbound, so this make the whole intersection work better. We do need to do additional analysis so they are crossing free right safety but we feel that is best meets the needs of the motor vehicle volume.
  - Mr. Wald asked if there room for a solid barrier in the gored area? Answer: The gored area is for truck over tracking.
  - Ms. Lorenzini added that placement of sidewalks are balanced with the need to fulfill the pedestrian desire line.
  - Mr. Baird stated that many pedestrian crashes are at night so the design of road needs to be able to design for conflicts.

- Mr. Wallace asked about placement of the pedestrian crossing between the roundabout and Harmon and expressed a need for a refuge island. Answer: There will be three segments to cross at Harmon. The refuge islands will be as big as possible (narrowest is 10') but right-of-way is constrained in these areas. Purchasing Right-of-Way adds 2-3 years to projects.
- Ms. De la Morena-Chu expressed thanks to TxDOT for being so thorough, open and honest.
- Ms. Walker-Black asked about the width of the free right onto 51<sup>st</sup> what is width of free right lane? Answer: It is currently designed to match the width of the receiving lanes on Harmon.
- Mr. Wald asked what the width would be for the SUP in the roundabout. Answer: 12' in the main area, with 9' sections where there are constraints.
- General discussion turned to allowance for trees, lighting and visibility. Answer: TxDOT has not reached that level of detail yet. The design will include lighting as well as trees where appropriate. We don't necessarily have sight triangles across roundabout. This is best-practice for roundabouts. We'll need to balance this with deterring homeless. We will determine comfort level with sight triangles.
- Mr. Anderson shared that there are safety benefits to be derived from the loss of visibility but it really depends on the context. Low visibility creates concern in a state where people are driver-oriented and in an environment that is auto-oriented.
- Mr. Woodley asked about guardrails. Answer: these will be added in the final design.
- Ms. Overton asked why bicycles couldn't be restricted to the Shared Use Pathway rather than to the roadway. Answer: Bicycle is a vehicle under Tx law so allowed to be on all roadways except limited access freeways.

Ms. Lorenzini encouraged everyone to submit feedback on the Mobility35 website. She said there is a charrette planned for November and that TxDOT will be making that date available.

#### **4. ELECTIONS (7:15 – 7:45)**

- Recommendations from the Membership and Nomination Subcommittee Chair, Joe Almazan: 9/30 meeting of the Membership and Nomination Subcommittee. Joe agreed to be Chair. Then the Subcommittee met to review membership applications. Upon review of applications, we determined that those who have provided active leadership and momentum have specific knowledge and support of PAC initiatives, especially Vision Zero Task Force activities. Sub-committee declined to make a fourth recommendation. We didn't recognize names and faces of three of the six applications. Motion was made to recommend Peter Baird, Heyden Black Walker and Robert Anderson. Next the Subcommittee discussed nominating a Chair and Vice Chair and determined that this should be done at the Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> meeting following election of full members.
- Brief Remarks by Candidates – Each candidate was invited to give a 2 minute statement about who they are and why they are seeking a PAC membership seat.

- Voting Process - Voting then commenced by secret ballot. Full and Alternate PAC members were eligible to vote.
- Results:
  - a. New Members:
    - Peter Baird
    - Robert Anderson
    - Heyden Black Walker
    - Tom Wald
  - b. Chair: Heyden Black-Walker\*
  - c. Vice Chair: Joe Almazan\*

\*Upon review of the bylaws confirming that officers may not serve two consecutive years in the same position, the position of Chair and Vice Chair will be voted on at the November meeting.

## 5. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS & STAFF AND COMMISSION BRIEFING

- **Vision Zero Update:** Presentation by: Nic Moe, Projects Subcommittee Chair

Mr. Moe reported that Vision Zero is now part of Imagine Austin. The Vision Zero Task Force will be meeting this Friday. The last Task Force meeting shared six top contributing factors that lead to injury or death: speed, improper maneuvers, driver inattention, alcohol & drugs, failure to stop and failure to yield. This has been mapped and is publically available. The Task Force will prepare an Action Plan. The next meeting will focus on feedback from group. In the last week or so we have tied 1986 as the deadliest year on Austin Roads and we are just now into October so we anticipate it will be even worse. Conditions are as horrible as they've ever been. There is a lot of momentum to move forward on smart policies that will make record stand forever.

Question: Can you break down the modal split of crashes?

Answer: Of those who have been killed, 27 or about a third are pedestrians and 1 bicyclists.

Question: Has there been any discussion about peds/bikes be more defensive and educating them?

Answer: there is a big emphasis on education of all road users. Almost half of the people who have been killed are homeless so technology may not be as feasible a solution.

Mr. Moe also shared that there was a vigil last Wednesday hosted by Vision Zero ATX, an advocacy group. It received very successful coverage. All 5 major news networks covered it as well as the Austin American-Statesman. Three Council Members and the Mayor attended. There was representation

from APD, HHS, ATD, and PZD. Families were able to tell stories of their own personal loss. It was a very powerful event.

- **Technical Subcommittee Update:** Presentation by Peter Baird, Chair

Mr. Baird shared that the Technical Subcommittee is moving from the Sidewalk Master Plan Update to other areas. The new focus will be on developing a pedestrian rights handout. Especially with focus on Vision Zero, the Technical Subcommittee would like to produce a handout to explain your pedestrian rights in Austin. This has been done in other cities. What are my rights, what are my next steps? Help to clarify rules and regulations.

Other focus areas of the Technical Subcommittee will be:

- d. Foliage clearance pilot project
  - e. Exploring Wayfinding
  - f. Refining the ideas of residential shared streets
  - g. Continuing work on Code Next
  - h. Continuing work on GIS connectivity
  - i. Creeks and Trails and looking at the pedestrian environment around Waller Creek.
  - j. Catchment areas around MetroRapid bus stops - show what is catchment and what isn't.
  - k. Transportation Criteria Manual Update
- BAC Update: Mr. Wald provided an update from the BAC.
    - 1) Non Bicycle Mobility Devices and ADA access – discussion at next meeting
      - a. What are the standards and what are the expectations?
      - b. Interest in having a cross-committee about it.
    - 2) Passed resolution on entire I-35 corridor.
    - 3) Electric Bicycle
    - 4) Maintenance Budgeting Discussion
  - UTC Update: There was no one present from the UTC. Heyden will work with Laura to find a way to communicate better with the UTC.

## **6. BRIEFING ABOUT STEP IT UP! THE SURGEON GENERAL'S CALL TO ACTION TO PROMOTE WALKING AND WALKABILITY**

- Presentation by PAC Chair, Heyden Black Walker

Ms. Black Walker shared information about the Step It Up initiative. The website provides some great goals, resources and playlist to walk to. It is clear we can prevent chronic disease. Calls Americans to walk, safe places to walk, safe places of all ages and abilities. This initiative has gathered alot of momentum.

## **7. FUTURE BUSINESS / ADJOURN (8:00)**

- Possible "Better Streets Week" Walking Tour, Sunday, 10/25 – Call for volunteers.

Adjourned at 8:17 PM.