



Wentworth Ave (CSAH 8) Reconstruction Property Owner Meeting #2 Summary West St Paul City Hall *February 13, 2018*

Purpose:

The purpose of the stakeholder meetings was to present the preferred alternative based on public and agency feedback received (see attached newsletter).

Attendees:

34 people signed in. Please refer to the sign-in sheet at the end of the document for more details.

Materials Presented:

The meeting began with a presentation that gave an overview on the project purpose and need, scope and considerations, improvement alternatives considered and how they were evaluated, input received from the public and stakeholders, concerns for pedestrian safety, the proposed alternative, right-of-way acquisition process, and project schedule. A group discussion immediately followed the presentation with some one-on-one discussions while reviewing the draft project layout.

Comments Received:

Input was gathered through group discussion and one-on-one with the project staff. No written comments were collected. The following summarizes questions and comments that were discussed:

Preferred Alternative Selection

Question: How concrete is the preferred typical section?

Answer: The preferred typical section is the selected alternative that is moving forward based on an evaluation of safety, economic, environmental, and stakeholder and public input. The final design and right-of-way acquisition process will address specific details associated with each property on the project corridor.

Regarding the Proposed Trails

Question: Asked for clarification on maintenance and snow removal requirements of trail vs sidewalk.

Answer: Per ordinance, trails are maintained by the city and sidewalks are maintained by the property owner.

Question: Questioned need for trail on both sides of the road and if this will encourage more pedestrians to cross at unmarked locations.

Answer: Trail is proposed on both sides of the road from Charlton Street to Humboldt Avenue because of the adjacent higher density residential and pedestrian destinations located on both the north and south sides of Wentworth Avenue.

Comment: Kids are walking on both sides of the roadway on a daily basis and it is a miracle each day someone does not get hit.

Question: Asked if flashing beacons could be installed in midblock areas where pedestrians would likely cross. Many commented that the midblock crossing on Marie Avenue by the Dodge Nature Center works well for pedestrian safety and for slowing traffic.

Answer: Through final design the project will determine if installing a flashing beacon would be beneficial. It is likely that the future greenway crossing of Wentworth will likely include a flashing beacon.

Question: Why is the city and county proposing to construct trail along Wentworth Avenue, connecting pedestrians to Delaware Avenue where there is currently no sidewalk or trail and the traffic volumes and speeds are worse?

Answer: The city is aware of the safety concerns on Delaware Avenue, and discussions of how to address these issues have begun. Reconstructing Wentworth Avenue is an opportunity to implement trails at the same time and continuously build upon the non-motorized system. It is much more difficult and does not make financial sense to construct trail years after a roadway project is complete. Such process would also disrupt the property owners and corridor users twice.

Question: How do we know that constructing trails will actually increase pedestrian safety?

Answer: Research data confirms that providing trail on both sides of the road is 2.2 times safer than having no pedestrian facilities. Trail on one side of the road is only 1.5 times safer.

Comment: The proposed parking lot at Marthaler Park will encourage pedestrians to cross the road midblock.

Answer: Trails on both sides of the road will encourage pedestrians to utilize the trail on one side of the road until they reach their destination or a location that is safe to cross. The trail on the south side of Wentworth will connect in with a future trail entrance to the park.

Regarding Tree Removal

Comment: The loss of trees is still a concern for several property owners.

Answer: Property owners will be compensated for all tree removals through the right-of-way acquisition process.

Question: Can we avoid/minimize tree removals?

Answer: The design team will attempt to mitigate or avoid impacts and removals.

Comment: The loss of trees as screening for our property will open up our view to a road and the proposed Marthaler Park parking lot. In addition, reconstruction of the road and the new parking lot will result in impacts to the wetland quality and views.

Answer: Both the Wentworth Avenue and Marthaler Park projects are required to provide water quality treatment and adequately maintain drainage. Wetland impacts will be avoided and/or mitigated as part of the roadway construction. Water quality and drainage improvements will be key parts of both projects.

Regarding the Proposed Roadway Section

Question: Will widening the roadway section increase traffic speeds and increase pedestrian accidents and severity?

Answer: The road is being designed for a 35 mph design speed, which does not stop drivers from speeding but makes it uncomfortable for them to travel much faster than the posted speed. The immediate benefits of providing trails is it removes the pedestrians from walking along the road and shoulders, thereby improving pedestrian safety.

Question: Can the intersection of Wentworth Avenue and Bellows Street be a three-way stop?

Answer: The design team reviewed whether changes to traffic controls at every intersections was warranted. The Wentworth/Bellows intersection does not meet the traffic thresholds to warrant an all-way stop. We will be improving the sight-distance issues that are currently present at this intersection.

Question: Will the project include roadway lighting?

Answer: Standard practice for a county road project is to replace existing lights impacted by the project and review potential lighting at intersections. Anything beyond that would be at cost to the city. The County and the City will work through this issue during the development of construction plans.

Question: Wentworth Avenue and Smith Avenue is problematic due to grades, sightline obstructions, and high vehicle speeds.

Answer: The design team will review installing a directional guide sign for traffic approaching Smith Avenue.

Comment: The bus stop at Bellows Street is unsafe and should be relocated or removed.

Utilities

Question: Will I be required to, and in what time frame, hook up to the new sanitary system even though I have a functioning septic system.

Answer: The city is currently looking into how to handle this and what the requirement would include. This decision will be made as part of the Public Hearing tentatively scheduled for April 2018.

Comment: Trails on both sides of the road do not solve the existing safety problem of residents having to cross the road to access their mailbox.

Answer: Since this project will require replacement/relocation of mailboxes the city and county will have the conversation with the post office to determine if mail delivery patterns can be altered to allow residents to avoid crossing Wentworth.

Question: Can Xcel bury the power lines to minimize the impacts to private properties for relocating the power poles?

Answer: It is our intent to propose this to Xcel Energy during the utility coordination process. Xcel has jurisdiction on this facility and burying is at their discretion. It is unlikely that they will do so due to past experience and the expense associated with it.

Right-of-Way Acquisition Process

Aaron and Jake gave a brief outline of the federal right-of-way acquisition process; that appraisals are done by a third party, and the timing of notifications and the public hearing. Attendants were highly encouraged to respond to the notifications and meet one-on-one with the appraiser to ensure all their concerns are documented and addressed in this process. Attendants were also made aware that Mayrinda Cain, the county right-of-way specialist was present at the meeting to answer any questions one-on-one and that she has handouts with more detailed information on the process.

Question: If I want to have a second appraisal done do I have to do that at my own expense?

Answer: The County will reimburse the cost of an appraisal up to \$1,500 for residential properties.