

APPROVED

TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes

September 18, 2014

The September meeting of the TSAB was held at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, September 18, 2014 in the training room of the municipal building (room 104). Meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

Present were:

Alex Crutchfield (ORHS rep), Gene Dunaway, Andrew Howe, Jana Humphrey, Bill Polfus, Jane Shelton, Steve Byrd (City rep)

Non board members:

Members of the OR Regional Planning Commission (during the webinar)

- 1) Minutes from the August 19, 2014 meeting were approved unanimously.
- 2) There was no real discussion on the Annual Planning. Bill Polfus handed out the new document that he'd modified per the discussion of the previous meeting (see appended). The TSAB will review and discuss these changes next meeting.
- 3) Steve Byrd handed out a picture of the N. Tulane and Penn. Ave intersection with the conceptual sketch of a round-about placed in the middle of the intersection, as the city is pursuing an option to install a roundabout at that location (see appended).

Kathryn Baldwin joined us to give us more details about the proposed project:

Oak Ridge is now part of the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), and we get some of our funds for street improvements through them. The TPO promotes efficiency and the concept of 'mixed used' streets. The proposed roundabout was one of the first items Oak Ridge stated needed fixing when we joined the TPO.

The funds for this would be coming from the TPO's Transportation Alternative Program (TAP). We applied for the funds to do this project last year, but did not receive the funding. This year the funding is an 80/20 matching program – the TAP will provide 80% of funds and the City will provide the other 20%. All the funds provided come from TN (no federal portion). This grant requires a public meeting. The TPO application must be submitted by October 3rd, 2014 for review, and the formal submittal to TDOT is November 3rd. Construction would occur via a phased roll-out over three years.

The location of the roundabout is justified for a number of reasons:

- The intersection is difficult for pedestrians to cross
- The car "stacking distance" is only about 1.5 cars on the N. Tulane -> Westbound Penn 'mini-segment', meaning that in times of high traffic, we get congestion and back-ups due to this short 'stacking distance'.
- About 5 to 10 traffic incidents occur here annually (including one fatality)

Roundabouts cut down on roughly 85% of accidents compared to standard designs.

- 4) The TSAB meeting was adjourned at 5:55 pm, so we could watch the webinar with the ORRPC at 6pm.
- 5) The members of the ORRPC joined us and together we all watched a webinar on Urban Street Design.

In short, the webinar focused on ways to transform streets and intersections into more "all inclusive" environments, bettering the experience for all and often bettering the neighborhood or retail area.

By means of landscaping, street markings and other more drastic means, a street that used to cater primarily to automobiles can be transformed into a space that works for pedestrians, bicycles and cars and often can be transformed in ways that bring new life to a street. By altering the aesthetics and flow, storefronts can receive a renewed life, bare streets can be transformed into gathering places, and public pride in the area can be increased.

One of the attractive points of this approach to urban street planning is that many of these changes can occur with very little investment and city planners can actually try out their visions before implementing them permanently – one can test the return on the investment before investing, in a sense.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Howe", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Howe
TSAB Secretary