City of College Station
Home of Texas A&M University

MINUTES

BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND GREENWAYS ADVISORY BOARD
Monday, May 2, 2016 3:00 PM
College Station City Hall
Council Chambers
1101 Texas Avenue
College Station, Texas, 77840

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Blanche Brick, Brandon Boatcallie, Jon Denton, Tina Evans, Molly Fierro, Phillip Lasley, Andrew Middleton

STAFF PRESENT: Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Senior Program Manager Venessa Garza, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services Molly Hitchcock, Senior Staff Planner Jessica Bullock, Director of Public Works Donald Harmon, Assistant Director of Public Works Emily Fisher, Board Secretary Amber Johnson

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: Call to Order.

Chairman Brick called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: Hear Visitors

There were no visitors present that wished to address the Board.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Consideration, discussion, and possible action to approve meeting Minutes.

Board Member Middleton motioned to approve the meeting minutes from April 4, 2016. The motion was seconded by Board Member Denton and was approved (6-0).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: Presentation, possible action, and discussion regarding a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission on the rezoning of The Retreat at College Station and a proposed multi-use path.

Senior Staff Planner Jessica Bullock presented this item to the board. The rezoning request for The Retreat at College Station will be heard by the Planning and Zoning Commission at the meeting on May 5, 2016. The request is to amend the original Planned Development District (PDD) for The Retreat at College Station, a multi-family project. At this time the applicant does not propose any improvements to the 3-acre area. The applicant is requesting a rezoning to incorporate approximately 3-acres of newly acquired Brazos County right-of-way located between the site, John Crompton Park, and Jones-Butler Road. The Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Master Plan shows a Multi-Use Path located on this tract. Staff recommends approval of the rezoning request with the addition of a 20-foot public access easement for the multi-use path as shown in the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Master Plan. The board has been asked to provide a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Board Member Middleton asked what the relationship between the newly acquired tract and the land that is currently being developed.

Senior Planner Bullock advised that it is the same project and applicant. The Site Plan that is approved is only within the current PDD area and as of now there are no plans that specify what will be developed on the newly acquired tract.

Board Member Fierro asked if the applicant had outlined what the prospective plan will be for the newly acquired tract.

Planner Bullock stated that as of now there aren't any prospective plans regarding what will be done with the property. Staff is proposing to recommend approval to Planning and Zoning Commission with the condition that the 20 ft public access easement is dedicated. Staff would like to propose that the easement be dedicated prior to issuance of any certificates of occupancy.

Board Member Lasley joined the meeting at approximately 3:21 p.m.

The applicant for the rezoning project, Veronica Morgan, with Mitchell and Morgan, a civil engineering firm, was present to speak to the board regarding the request. Morgan advised that she is representing the developer for The Retreat, Landmark Development. Morgan stated there are two key areas that should be examined by the board. The first area to be discussed is if the multi-use path is still warranted, as there are other developed areas that are in close proximity that could be used. The second area is regarding the proposed condition that the certificates of occupancy be tied to the dedication of the public access easement. Morgan advised that dedication of easements is a lengthy process that involves many approvals and the delay of final certificates of occupancy will not be acceptable by the developer or the financial lenders. She requested that the dedication of the easement not be tied to the certificates of occupancy.

Board Member Lasley asked when they were expecting to receive their certificates of occupancy.

Ms. Morgan stated that they are hoping to receive them by August 1St.

Board Member Fierro asked if the residents of the complex would easily be able to access the bikeway on Jones Butler Rd.

Ms. Morgan stated that residents could easily access Jones Butler Rd. She explained that there are interconnecting sidewalks throughout the complex that connect out through the driveway to the bike lane on Jones Butler Rd.

Board Member Denton stated that the proposed path along with the future Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) modifications to Wellborn Rd. and George Bush Dr. would be greatly beneficial to the bicyclists in the area.

Ms. Morgan stated that while potentially beneficial that they believed the only users of the path would be from the two complexes located at the Southern end of Marion Pugh and Jones Butler.

Chairman Brick asked how many residents are anticipated in current proposed development.

Ms. Morgan stated that they are approximating 796 residents.

Board Member Fierro asked what the timeframe would be for the City to develop the proposed multi-use path.

Manager Garza stated there is not an exact timeframe but approximated that it would like be 10-15 years from now if not longer.

Board Member Fierro asked if the Board would be able to make a recommendation that a condition be made that the easement is provided within a certain timeframe.

Senior Planner Bullock stated that the timeframe being recommended for the dedication of the easement is before certificates of occupancy are to be issued. She stated that is the last step that is required.

Board Member Fierro stated that it seems as if control is lost once the certificates of occupancy are issued.

Planner Bullock stated that control is lost after they are issued and the time frame of the easement being dedicated could be extended to a longer stretch of time.

Board Member Lasley stated that the two properties identified are not the only potential users of the proposed multi-use path as there isn't a good connection South of Harvey Mitchell Pkwy. He stated that Old Wellborn Rd could potentially provide a connection underneath Harvey Mitchell Pkwy and that there has been some discussion in the past regarding potentially raising the overpass so that there is a straight route.

Chairman Brick asked if there has been discussion regarding potential changes to include the raising of the overpass.

Public Works Director Donald Harmon stated that there has been some discussions regarding potential changes to Jones Butler but as of yet there is no funding that has been identified to make that connection.

Board Member Lasley stated that it is important to keep in mind future developments such as potential connections that may occur that would benefit from the multi-use path. There are currently only two connections across Harvey Mitchell Parkway.

Manager Garza stated that that the connections across Harvey Mitchell Parkway could be something that the Board could look at addressing in the Master Plan.

Board Member Lasley stressed the importance of the Board looking towards the future as the Board has had many discussions regarding past opportunities that were missed due to lack of foresight. Lasley stated that along with other changes at Wellborn and George Bush he believes TXDOT is intent on adding a pedestrian connection at Marion Pugh which benefits users of the proposed trail and cuts down on potential travel time instead of users heading south to Jones Butler to make the connection to head towards the Texas A&M University campus.

Chairman Brick asked if the applicants concerns were not the proposed path itself but that the concern was held regarding the timing that staff is recommending regarding the dedication of the easements.

Ms. Morgan stated that the timing in regards to the dedication of the easements is a concern. Morgan also pointed out that there are no plans further South in the areas that Mr. Lasley has described on the Master Plan and that they should be identified.

Chairman Brick stated that she believed that the conflict did not lie with if the path should be constructed or not as most on the board seem to agree that the project is a good idea. Brick asked what the disadvantages are to not tying the certificates of occupancy to the dedication of the easement.

Senior Planner Bullock stated that the timeframe that was created was done as they felt it was the final step in the required process. Bullock stated that staff is open to alternative timeframe suggestions the board may have.

Chairman Brick stated that it puts the city in a bind if there is no control over the dedication of the easement. Brick asked if the applicant had just acquired this property.

Ms. Morgan stated that they had just acquired the property from Brazos County.

Chairman Brick asked the applicant to confirm that their concern was the timeframe in which they are potentially get the easement dedicated.

Ms. Morgan stated that her concern is primarily with the timeframe in which is being proposed to have the easement dedicated.

Board Member Lasley asked what a reasonable timeframe would be to get the easement dedicated.

Assistant Director of Planning and Development Molly Hitchcock stated that it is a difficult situation. A comprise could be the issuance of temporary certificates of occupancy (TCO's) with a condition that final certificates of occupancy not be issued until the easement is dedicated.

Ms. Morgan stated that would be a problem with their financial lenders.

Planner Bullock stated that based on previous experiences it would most likely be a few months after August before the buildings would be cleared for a permanent certificate of occupancy.

Ms. Morgan stated that her client would be concerned about the temporary certificates of occupancy. She advised the client is coming in with the rezoning case as the tract of land currently holds many different zoning designations. If the conflict regarding the timeline for the dedication of the easement is not resolved they may pull the rezoning case.

The board held a discussion to determine if there are any other viable options to achieving the dedication of the easement within a controllable timeframe.

Board Member Tina Evans motioned to recommend that the rezoning request be approved with the addition of the dedication of a 20-foot public access easement for the multi-use path as shown in the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Master Plan and as proposed by City Staff. With the addition of the City expediting their side of the process as much as possible.

The motion was seconded by Board Member Fierro and was approved (6-1).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: Presentation, possible action, and discussion regarding bike lane maintenance.

Director of Public Works Donald Harmon presented this item to the board. Mr. Harmon advised the Board that he was present to answer any question regarding street-sweeping or street maintenance.

Board Member Denton asked is if there is an established schedule for street-sweeping.

Mr. Harmon stated that the streets are swept every 10 to 12 weeks by two street sweepers. There is no set route as there needs to be some flexibility. They cannot sweep if there is inclement weather. They also assist in accident cleanup. Northgate is swept every Monday and this process takes an entire business day. Street sweepers have to make 3 to 4 trips back to the yard to refill water. Major thoroughfares such as Texas Ave. and University Dr. are swept every 5 weeks. One of the largest problems that they face with street cleanup is site construction activities and debris. Inspectors maintain oversight on construction activities especially in regard to silt debris.

Board Member Lasley stated that there were some previous discussion regarding an area on George Bush Dr. that seemed to contain a large amount of debris in the roadway.

Ms. Garza stated that the assigned inspector for the construction project took a look at the site and did not find any issues when he went by.

Board Member Boatcallie asked if there is an established maintenance schedule for problems such as cracked sealing on asphalt type pavements.

Mr. Harmon stated that the repairs are generally contracted out and the repairs to these asphalt pavements are imperative as they can deteriorate the roadway.

Mr. Denton asked if there any special attention given to the areas where the transit buses are stopping to pick up students.

Mr. Harmon stated that they are in contact with Texas A&M University Transportation Services who is responsible for the bus routes. Approximately 12 years ago concrete pads were poured in these areas that performed well until the bus stops were relocated due to changes in

development. An item will be going before City Council on May 26th regarding the use of concrete streets instead of asphalt streets. Concrete streets perform better with the heavy weight of mass transit systems. The department would also like to request a Service Level Adjustment (SLA) to be brought before City Council to have the ability to acquire an additional street sweeper.

Board Member Evans asked approximately how long the street sweepers last.

Mr. Harmon stated that they last for approximately 10 years. The lifetimes are usually measured by length of time or hours of service.

Chairman Brick asked if the proposal that will be brought forward will be asking for more funds and include the reasoning behind the request.

Mr. Harmon stated that the proposal will include a prioritization list and also list the reasoning behind the request.

Ms. Evans asked how long the department had been on the 10 to 12 week street sweeping schedule.

Mr. Harmon responded that they had been on that schedule for approximately 1 year. He stated that they have not seen the impact of a lot of the new streets as they are still in the build out phases.

Ms. Evans asked if the recommendation was to at least keep up with the growth at the current 10 to 12 week schedule.

Mr. Harmon stated that it is important for them to examine growth and how deferring maintenance affects the deterioration and future costs associated with roadway repairs.

Ms. Evans asked if cleaning the roadways extends the life of the roadway.

Mr. Harmon stated that cleaning has a minor role in the extension of the life of the roadway. If the roadways are not cleaned the pooling of water contributes to the deterioration of the roadway.

Ms. Garza asked if it would be helpful for the board to make a recommendation regarding the maintenance of the roadways.

Mr. Harmon stated that it would be helpful and may or may not be added to the proposal that is reviewed by the City Manager.

Chairman Brick mentioned that Impact fees will be soon be reviewed and additional funds from those types of fees could provide additional resources.

Board Member Lasley motioned to support the Public Works Department's proposal to increase the street sweeping quality and timeframe.

The motion was seconded by Board Member Denton and was approved (7-0).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: Presentation, possible action, and discussion regarding the new Police Station.

Assistant Director of Public Works, Emily Fisher presented this item to the Board. Ms. Fisher is the project manager for the new Police Station. Last year the Police Department's current and future needs were assessed based on population predications. Several sites were looked at the City the final selected location is located at the corner of Krenek Tap and Dartmouth. A conceptual site plan has been developed to include an approximately 79,000 sq. ft. Police Station, a 10,000 sq. ft. annex building, and parking for the public and city employees.

Program Manager Garza stated that the Bicycle, Pedestrian, Greenways Master Plan includes a trail that goes alongside Bee Creek. The trail proposed on the Master Plan runs closely behind the newly proposed Police Station. It will need to be discussed how the trail will be kept outside of the floodplain to prevent additional maintenance and around the Police Station.

Board Member Middleton asked if the area was all part of City of College Station property.

Ms. Garza stated the land is all owned by the City of College Station.

Chairman Brick asked if there was timeframe for when the trail would be built.

Ms. Garza stated that there is no established timeframe for the development of the trail.

Board Member Lasley asked if it would be possible for a portion of the trail to be built with the Police Station.

Ms. Garza stated that adding a trail was probably not listed in the scope of work.

The board held a general discussion regarding the proposed fencing surrounding the Police Station and specific design of the site.

Board Member Boatcallie stated that the concern would be if the trail would be able to fit between the fencing and the floodplain.

Chairman Brick asked if the trail, as it is being presented, would enable the trail to be developed at a future date.

Ms. Garza stated that is unclear if the trail could exist with the current proposed design of the Police Station.

Chairman Brick asked if there is a chance that it would not be constructed.

Ms. Fisher stated that this conceptual plan could change again. She added that the space that is listed now would be plenty of space for a trail to be built through.

Ms. Evans stated that they would not like to lose the ability for development of the trail.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: Presentation and discussion regarding education and encouragement opportunities such as May is National Bike Month.

Greenways Senior Program Manager Venessa Garza presented this item to the board. There will be a proclamation at the City Council meeting on Monday, May 16th at 7:00 p.m. regarding National Bike Month. A reminder email will be sent to the board regarding attendance of the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: Presentation and discussion regarding the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Advisory Board calendar of upcoming meetings.

- May 5, 2016 ~ Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting ~ City Hall, Council Chambers ~ 6:00 p.m.
- May 16, 2016 ~ National Bike Month Proclamation ~ City Hall, Council Chambers ~ 7:00 p.m.
- May 19, 2016 ~ Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting ~ City Hall, Council Chambers ~ 6:00 p.m.
- June 2, 2016 ~ Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting ~ City Hall, Council Chambers ~ 6:00 p.m.
- June 6, 2016 ~ Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting ~ City Hall, Council Chambers ~ 3:00 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: Possible action and discussion on future agenda items – A Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Advisory Board Member may inquire about a subject for which notice has not been given. A statement of specific factual information or the recitation of existing policy may be given. Any deliberation shall be limited to a proposal to place the subject on an agenda for a subsequent meeting.

Board Member Fierro stated that she felt crowdsourcing would be a great option for encouraging citizen involvement regarding issues related to bicycle, pedestrian, and greenways in College Station.

Board Member Lasley added that the Minnesota Department of Transportation (DOT) has an online forum that they use frequently to poll citizens for input that has been very successful in the engagement of their citizens.

Ms. Fierro agreed that something such as the program done in Minnesota that encouraged continuous involvement would be ideal.

Manager Garza asked if the board would like to have an agenda item related to the topic at a future meeting with Ms. Fierro as the leader of the discussion.

The board stated that they would like a discussion on the possibilities of crowdsourcing at a future meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

APPROVED:

Blanche Brick

Blanche Brick, Chairman

ATTEST:

Amber Johnson

Amber Johnson, Board Secretary