



Lincoln Avenue Road Diet Working Group
Minutes of Thursday, December 4, 2014 • 9:00 am
Garden Theater Conference Room – 1165 Lincoln Ave

Present: Peter Allen, Bill Cardoza, Stacey Houghton, Jim Lightbody, Valerie Merklin, Eric Nelson, Tim Mulcahy, Chris Roth, Maren Sederquest, Tom Trudell, Jim Bittner (DOT), John Brazil (DOT)

Tom Trudell called the meeting to order at 9:04 am.

1. Discussion with Jim Bittner and John Brazil from the Dept. of Transportation:

- Jim Bittner and John Brazil explained that if there is at least a rough consensus among the Willow Glen community on what to pilot in a road diet, also called “right sizing a street,” the DOT would implement the pilot in spring 2015.
- Jim Bittner and John Brazil explained that the benefit of doing a pilot first is that it would allow them to see exactly what areas would be impacted, and how - in terms of both increase in the number of cars on surrounding streets and also the speed of those cars - without it being permanent. They noted there would be data collection and analysis on numbers and speed of cars before, during and after the pilot. They explained that the process of doing a road diet pilot is complex and the proposed timeline is tight, but it is possible.
- How the pilot would be implemented:
 - Existing striping would be ground out
 - Lines would be repainted with water-based paint
 - The pilot would need to be a significant enough length of time in order to change drivers’ behaviors so they can get a gauge of the actual impact of any spillover traffic on surrounding areas
 - If a decision is made after the pilot to make it permanent, it would be implemented with permanent striping at the time of planned resurfacing in fall 2015
- **Start and end points** of the pilot road diet:
 - DOT’s current DRAFT plan would be to pilot the road diet beginning at Parkmoor on the north end, and at Minnesota on the south end. They explained that:
 - Parkmoor was selected at the north end because it gives traffic an outlet to Meridian without impacting residential side streets like Glen Eyrie, which may happen if it were to begin at Coe
 - Minnesota was selected to the south, primarily due to budgetary constraints
 - There was discussion regarding the proposed start and end points for the pilot. There was agreement among RDWG members that the goal is for the trial to be successful and that having the road diet begin at Curtner in the south would likely offer the best chance for success due to the following concerns:

- Risk of significantly increased traffic on nearby residential streets if it begins at Minnesota
- Safety of children at the intersection of Lincoln/Minnesota by the WG Elementary
- Particulate matter by WG Elementary due to backed up cars if it were to begin at Minnesota
- DOT staff indicated that there may not be sufficient funding to extend the road diet pilot south of Minnesota. They explained that there are more costs involved than just the striping that would have to be done, including significantly more data collection and environmental analysis, so it may be cost prohibitive to do so. Also, that section of Lincoln Ave. (Minnesota to Curtner) is not part of the already scheduled resurfacing planned for fall 2015. If additional funding cannot be secured to extend the road diet pilot to Curtner in the south, the RDWG encouraged the DOT to consider other options, such as:
 - Moving the southern start point to south of Minnesota, but keeping temporary striping in this area for a longer period until the permanent paving (south of Minnesota) can be implemented
 - Adjusting signal timing at key intersections south of Minnesota to:
 - Reduce the amount of green time for northbound traffic during the morning commute and southbound during the evening commute
 - Increase the amount of green time for east- and west-bound traffic during peak commute times
 - The goal of these signal adjustments would be to discourage drivers from using Lincoln Ave. as a cut-through from south San Jose and encourage them to change to other routes that are more appropriate for heavier commute traffic.

The DOT staff indicated they will take the committee input and ideas back to DOT senior staff for further discussion and will return with possible refinements to the proposal (including the project limits as well as other actions that will help make the pilot a success).

- RDWG members also asked Jim Bittner and John Brazil about **pedestrian scrambles**. They explained that this type of change to an intersection works best in areas with a very high number of pedestrians and where at least one of the streets is one-way. It also requires a very costly signal modification (possibly as much as \$100,000), so would likely not be a solution for this area.
- The issue of **deliveries** was discussed. Jim Bittner explained that the city would not permit a designated use of the striped median by freight vehicles for loading and unloading purposes because they would not want to encourage delivery drivers to cross traffic from the middle of the roadway. They would also not want these large vehicles parked in the middle of the roadway, possibly blocking visibility for vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians. DOT staff suggested that the Willow Glen Business Association look at where loading zones are located now and request additional loading zones, if needed. The possibility of enforcing limits on delivery times was also discussed, but it was noted that this may not be practical for all types of businesses.
- The issue of **parking** was discussed:
 - Better signage and more awareness of the Bank of America public lot is needed – WGBA will address this.
 - Bill Cardoza asked if Blewett could request permit parking, as many employees of businesses in Town Square are now using Blewett for parking. DOT recommended that timed parking would be much easier to get approved and implemented than permit parking, and would address those parking for extended periods of time while working.

- The issue of **crosswalk lighting** was discussed:
WGBA has received many requests to add lighting along the stripes on the crosswalks, also called “uplights.” DOT does not recommend this type of lighting, as it has a significant cost (at least \$50,000 per crosswalk) and studies have shown that it does NOT improve pedestrian safety. They are also very difficult to maintain due to debris and condensation. The new standard is rectangular, rapid flashing beacons, which are about half the cost of uplights.
- 2. **Committee Member Responsibilities:** Tom reviewed responsibilities of RDWG members. All agreed that more community feedback is needed to ensure that all possible concerns are reviewed by the RDWG. The feedback form that Peter Allen created is posted on the WGBA and WGNA websites, and Peter Allen will put a link to the form on some other online resources, such as the Backfence elist, other WG neighborhood groups, etc. Peter Allen will also handle sending a response to anyone who emails the lincolnroaddiet@gmail.com email and he will act as the RDWG liaison to Richard Zappelli’s group, Stakeholders for a Safe Green Village.
- 3. **Publication of Minutes:** A procedure for approving and posting minutes was discussed and approved. RDWG members will receive a draft of the minutes by email following each meeting and email any edits to Valerie Merklin, WGBA Executive Director. Valerie will send a final draft that incorporates any edits received to all RDWG members for approval by email. Once approval from all RDWG members has been received by email, the minutes will then be posted on both the WGNA and WGBA websites.
- 4. **Future Guests or Speakers:** Other stakeholders or speakers to include in future RDWG meetings were discussed. Since the RDWG has recommended that the road diet pilot extend as far south as Curtner, a representative from a WGBA associate member located in that area will be invited to a future meeting to give feedback, as well. Jim Lightbody will also reach out to Santa Clara County and VTA to gauge their interest in participating in this process, as well. Outreach to the media will take place after the proposed plan is finalized with DOT.

Action Items from this meeting:

- Jim Bittner and John Brazil from DOT will take the RDWG recommendation to extend the pilot farther south to Curtner to senior staff at DOT for discussion
- All RDWG members will continue talking with their constituents for feedback to bring back to the group for discussion
- Jim Lightbody will follow up with DOT to get copies of any data they may already have on traffic counts on Lincoln, etc.
- Valerie Merklin will identify a WGBA associate member located on Lincoln between Minnesota and Curtner to attend the next RDWG meeting
- Peter Allen will respond to any emails that have come in to lincolnroaddiet@gmail.com and also post the response form on various elists, etc.
- Tom Trudell will work with DOT to determine the date of the next meeting, since we will need their feedback and would like to have a DOT representative attend, as well

Meeting Adjourned at 11:15 am. Minutes submitted by: Valerie Merklin, WGBA Executive Director