

# **PENN AVENUE RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, August 6, 2020 @ 11:00 a.m.**

## **Virtual On-Line Meeting**

### **MEETING MINS**

Attendees: Nina Gibbs, Terence Olesniewicz, Eric Setzler, Kyle Potter, Magda Gangwar, Bruce Chan, Eric Boerer, Amber Epps, Nate Hausler, Dan McDowell, Walt Haim, Ed McCabe, Larry Laude, Heather McElwee, Christine Bethea, Amy Mitchell, Mike, Children's Home, Allison (sluna-office), and David Nash.

Nina Gibbs called to order at 11:08 A.M. The meeting was recorded.

#### ***I. Welcome/Introductions***

#### ***II. Previous Meeting Minutes***

Heather approves the meeting minutes and Bruce seconds to approve. Terence Olesniewicz from Trans Associates compiled the meeting minutes from previous PARC meeting.

#### ***III. Preliminary Engineering Update/Review Prelim. Engineering Schedule***

##### ***a. Preliminary Engineering***

Terence gave a brief update on the project status. The Design Field View submission is anticipated for the end of summer/early fall. This is the last submission as part of the Preliminary Design phase of the project. The contract for core boring for geotechnical and environmental investigation has been awarded and the work is anticipated to start by the end of the August once all City permits have been obtained and a field utility meeting is held.

Eric S. indicated that Final Design is anticipated for next year with the final Public Meeting anticipated to be held next spring. Many of the details of the design including street furnishing and landscaping will be addressed during Final Design.

#### ***IV. Other Issues / Items – Questions submitted by attendees.***

##### ***1. Bruce asked what are the design elements that will be addressed in Final Design and what will be up for public discussion?***

Eric S. indicated that elevation and location of the road (Line and Grade) is established early on in the design process and refined as the design process progresses. As part of the Design Field View Submission the curb line and bumpouts are defined. Preliminary Stormwater and Green Infrastructure Elements are also incorporated. Some kind of underground storage will be provided and this requires coordination with Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA).

We are also starting to look at street lighting design and based on previous comments received pedestrian scale lighting will be investigated. However, we must see how this works with other design elements and what the conflicts may be. Pedestrian scale lighting is a big design decision as it affects spacing and number of poles and overall lighting levels. Other aesthetics will be reviewed in Final Design to determine what can be done and what will fit within the street area. Street trees will be coordinated with the City Forester and is anticipated to be an iterative process balancing how proposed trees will interact with lighting and drainage elements of design.

Eric S. further explained that the project is in a bit of a lull and that the Covid pandemic has definitely slowed the project down. The upcoming borings are an important step in the project to determine soil conditions and look for environmental issues. The City wanted more testing prior to construction based on lessons learned in Phase 1 and the back and forth between the City and PennDOT also took a little longer than anticipated. However, it is important that these issues are discovered during design as opposed to construction. Terence indicated that it is very proactive to have this testing done along with the high level of Subsurface Utility Engineering (SUE) coordination completed as part of Preliminary Engineering.

- 2. Nina indicated that there are MPT issues/concerns. Larry asked if cross traffic at Atlantic will be permitted during construction. Nina also asked how much time will the Community have to adjust to new traffic patterns.***

Eric S. indicated the traffic control concepts were shown at the Public Meeting. We know that we will need to close traffic in one direction to construct the project. Port Authority bus service will need to be maintained and detoured. The City is coordinating this with the Port Authority. The details for this will be determined in Final Design and the design team is working to minimize delays and inconveniences.

He further explained that more refined traffic control will be presented at the next Public Meeting and the quarterly PARC meetings will continue. After Final Design is completed there is typically 5 to 6 months from the Bid Phase to the start of Construction. The City will keep everyone informed through the construction process.

- 3. Bruce asked regarding the public process, what will be the opportunity for the public to be involved more with selection of materials so that there may be more public ownership? It will help to make it feel like the project is for everyone in the community. Will there be an opportunity for this?***

Eric S. explained that the City is working to be responsive to the community and the City has made it a point to attend the PARC meetings. This is often more input and outreach than many projects ultimately have. The City is open to considering additional outreach and/or potentially moving the PARC meeting time/date. Eric indicated that the quarterly meetings are a good interval but different times of the day could be considered.

This project will still be a big improvement in the corridor and there are many constraints that the City is under - particularly standards for roadway and streetscape items that the City is

responsible for long term maintenance of. Phase 1 doesn't really match current City standards and there are some features that are not well-liked by the community.

Nina indicated that Phase 1 was a total mess. However, the aesthetic features were planned through a local firm and that the community was able to pick out the features for Phase 1.

- 4. The question was asked if there are any temporary improvements that can be done in the interim before construction to address traffic calming issues especially for pedestrians walking to the stores along Penn Avenue.***

Eric S. indicated that the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI) does have a program for traffic calming. However, the wants have been exceeding the budgets available for these types of treatments. Since this is a big project that is coming in the near future it would not be anticipated that temporary measures would be considered for the project area.

- 5. Nina asked if there would be voting on design features. There was a question as to whether the current plans were available on-line from the last Public Meeting. Bruce asked when the next open Public Meeting would be held.***

Eric S. explained that community ideas will be incorporated into the Final Design and that the design will not necessarily forced on the community. The City will look for feedback and there will be some options to consider with public input.

The Public Meeting plans are available on-line through the City. There appears to be an issue with the web-link that BGC has and the City will forward a current link. The next Public Meeting is anticipated to be sometime in the spring.

- 6. Eric B. from Bike Pittsburgh asked if on-street parking would remain or if it would be removed and the sidewalk widened.***

Eric S. confirmed that the curb lines and roadway width would remain the same with the addition of bump-outs at the intersections. The bump-outs may take out a small amount of parking but there are no plans to eliminate parking and extend the sidewalk within the project area.

- 7. Larry asked about the bus detour routing.***

Eric S. confirmed that inbound busses would be maintained and that the outbound buses would be detoured and coordinated with the Port Authority of Allegheny County.

- 8. Bruce asked if for high-traffic driveways such as at Aldi if bump-outs or other treatments such as painting or bollards would be considered.***

Eric S. explained that this is typically not done with driveways within the City; however, they would look into it to see if it makes sense for this project.

9. *Allison asked if a good traffic study was completed that looked at how many trucks for Aldi and/or Family Dollar turn down S. Pacific. Bump-outs may make a tight turn impossible. Magda added that trucks are not allowed to go down S. Pacific but do so anyway and hit trees and cars.*

Eric S. acknowledged that this is a potential issue and that when Aldi went in the trucks were to be kept on Penn Avenue. In addition, the City agreed to look at turning templates to determine if expected vehicles can make anticipated turns.

Terence Olesniewicz compiled the above meeting minutes.

Date for next meeting: Virtual Meeting to be held on November 1, 2020 at 11:00 A.M. If a different time or day is better, Nina indicated that she should be contacted in advance.
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