CITY OF DENTON
COMMITTEE ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
MINUTES
November 21, 2019

After determining that a quorum was present, the Committee on Persons with Disabilities of the City of Denton, Texas convened in a meeting on Thursday, November 21, 2019 at 6:01 p.m. in the City Council Work Session room at 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas.

PRESENT: Tammera Beckham, Beth Haswell-Kirkby, Joe Rivas, Sonia Redwine, Judy Thurmond, Alison Kelly, Rex King

ABSENT: Val Vera, Val Morgan, Sally Austin, Jessica Spears Williams

STAFF PRESENT: Marc Oliphant, Stuart Birdseye, Becky Owens, Karisa Richards, Catherine Clifton, Pritam Deshmukh, Brian Jahn, Caroline Seward, Melissa Jimenez-Bolin

OTHERS PRESENT: Michelle Bloomer, Vice President of Transit Operations at DCTA

1. PRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Beth Haswell-Kirkby spoke as a citizen regarding her neighborhood, Idiot's Hill and the work being done on Wilson Elementary. Wanted to express concern that the neighborhood was not given enough notice, not given time for feedback, and it is going to cause visibility and traffic issues. It is going to be an inconvenience to the disabled in the neighborhood. Would like better communication between other committees.

2. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

A. CPD19-037 Consider the approval of the meeting minutes of October 17, 2019

Haswell-Kirby motioned and Thurmond seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

B. CPD19-040 Receive a report and hold a discussion about the Parks & Recreation Department's Adaptive Recreation Program.

Seward and Jimenez-Bolin gave a presentation and discussion followed.

The City's Parks and Recreation department provides program called Adapted Recreation to serve the entire Denton Community. These classes and events provide individuals with physical and developmental differences a chance to participate in recreation programs with their peers while enhancing physical, social, and emotional well-being. The whole community is invited to join in the fun!

The programs vary and some are targeted to certain age groups. Example programs are

Zumba, games & activities, sensory experiences, outings/field trips, social dances, pool parties, and art classes.

For program specific questions, call (940) 349-8287. Visit this website for program offerings: https://www.cityofdenton.com/en-us/residents/parks-recreation/activities-programs/rec-programs/adapted-rec/adaptive-rec-programs

Visit this website for program events: https://www.cityofdenton.com/en-us/residents/parks-recreation/activities-programs/rec-programs/adapted-rec/adapted-rec-dances

C. CPD19-043 Receive a report, hold a discussion and give staff input about current and future projects of the City's Capital Projects department and how they can be inclusive for person of all abilities.

Deshmukh gave a presentation and discussion followed.

The Capital Projects department makes improvement to the city by building new infrastructure or renovating existing infrastructure. It focuses on large projects to improve the quality of life in Denton.

Major projects currently underway, among others, that include sidewalk and pedestrian components of interest to the committee include:

Bonnie Brae South – widening to four lanes. Estimated cost $120 million. Projected completion 2024.

Mayhill Road - Roadway improvement project widening to 4-lanes from I I-35E to US380. $75 million estimated cost. Projected completion 2022.

McKinney Widening – Widen to four lanes. Projected Cost $18 million. Completion 2021.

Hickory Street Improvements

The Capital Projects department wants to make the committee aware of current and future projects so that it can be sure to consider all aspects of accessibility in their design and construction.

D. CPD19-044 Receive a report, hold a discussion and give staff input regarding the City's 2019 general obligation bond package and specifically discuss the sidewalk portion.

Deshmukh gave a presentation and discussion followed.

The 2019 general obligation bond went before voters on November 5th. There were four bond proposals: A- Roads and Sidewalks, B- Public Safety/Law Enforcement, C- Parks

and Recreation, and D- Public Art. Bonds A, B, and C all passed. Bond proposition D did not pass.

As part of the development of the proposed bond program, the Special Citizens' Bond Advisory Committee (SCBAC) considered potential bond program projects and developed funding levels for the bond program based on the cost of the potential projects. The City Council further evaluated the SCBAC list of potential projects and their cost to arrive at the bond proposition amounts. The City council considered the projects and their associated cost to develop the proposition funding levels.

The bond covers a large amount of work that will be undertaken by the city in the next few years. This agenda item will give an overview of the funded projects and allow the committee an opportunity to discuss how persons with disabilities may be benefited.

Proposition A includes $154,000,000 for "constructing, reconstructing, restructuring and extending streets, roadways, bridges, overpasses, pedestrianways, sidewalks, landscaping, streetscapes, collectors, storm drains, signalization , signage, other traffic and signal controls, traffic control and transportation facilities, street lighting and median improvements".

The proposed sidewalk improvements can be seen here: http://arcg.is/158SCb . The focus for sidewalk construction will be on areas around elementary and middle schools where the city can leverage federal Safe Routes to Schools funds to multiply the effect of the bond dollars.

Proposition B provides $61,900,000 for renovation of the police headquarters, substation, and the construction of an indoor firing range.

Proposition C provides $5,000,000 for the acquisition of between 50 and 75 acres of land for current or future parks.

More info: https://www.cityofdenton.com/en-us/2019bond

The passage of bond propositions A, B, and C provides an opportunity for the city to improve quality of life for persons with disabilities.

E. CPD19-046 Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding updates from the Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA) and how it interacts with persons with disabilities.

Bloomer gave a presentation and discussion followed.

DCTA and the North Texas Mobility Corporation (NTMC) employ the operators (bus and train). The operators are given training in how to assist persons with disabilities. DCTA will provide information about training to ensure that operating have a correct understanding of special fares/policies for persons with disabilities.

F. CPD19-047 Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding the implementation of an exclusive pedestrian phase pilot program at certain downtown intersections around the square.

Jahn gave a presentation and discussion followed.

In an effort to improve the pedestrian safety in downtown, staff is proposing to implement an exclusive pedestrian phase at the four traffic signals around the square. An exclusive pedestrian phase is a type of traffic signal movement that temporarily stops all vehicular traffic, thereby allowing pedestrians to cross an intersection in every direction safely at the same time. This type of traffic control provides a clear priority for pedestrians over vehicles at intersections and reduces confusion for both drivers wishing to make right or left turns and pedestrians crossing the intersection. This type of intersection control significantly increases pedestrian safety while at the same time can provide more effective movement of vehicles through the intersection as the pedestrians are not allowed to cross during the vehicular phase of the signal.

Staff presented this proposal to the Main Street Association on October 21st, the Traffic Safety Commission on November 4th and to the DEDC on November 7th. All support the implementation of a pilot program lasting through the end of 2019. After that time, the effectiveness of the exclusive pedestrian phase will be evaluated and staff will bring a recommendation to City Council for consideration to either eliminate the pedestrian phase or make it a permanent operational change.

Staff has presented this information to the Main Street Association, the DEDC, Traffic Safety Commission, and City Council. Support/concurrence was received from each of these groups.

Fiscal impacts for this change are negligible and are within the existing traffic operations budget.

The committee is in favor of the implementation and thinks that it is a great idea.

G. CPD19-045 Staff Reports

Staff provided information and updates relating to several issues of interest to the committee and discussed in past meetings. The following is a listing and brief staff response to the matter brought forward.

Agenda Accommodation Language Change Request: The committee's request was reviewed and approved by the city manager's office and legal counsel. Language is in the process of being updated by the city secretary's office. Notice will be sent to the City Council as soon as the change is fully implemented.

DCTA Bus Stop Improvements: As of 11-6-19, DCTA had poured concrete to improve

the two bus stops on McKinney in front of "The Veranda" and "Fountains" housing complexes.

Meeting Captioning: The October committee meeting was recorded and uploaded to YouTube. Captioning was added via YouTube's captioning tool. The City will continue to utilize this YouTube feature for the foreseeable future. The October recording can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kt-jpJeV9hc

Proposed Dedicated Pedestrian Phase on the Square: The traffic engineering department is working with City Council to implement a proposed dedicated pedestrian phase at the four intersections on the square. This will allow pedestrians to cross all four sides of the intersections at the same time while vehicular traffic is held at a red signal. The committee can provide feedback about their impressions of the crossings during the proposed six month pilot.

Upcoming Events:

December Committee Meeting: Thursday the 19th at 6pm.

3. CONCLUDING ITEMS

Committee members expressed items of interest for future meetings. Staff to provide list of items on meeting matrix for future meeting topics and new business items requested.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

The next committee meeting will be held on Thursday, December 19, 2019 at 6:00 pm.

Val Vera

VAL VERA
CHAIR
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS

Karisa Richards

KARISA RICHARDS
RECORDING SECRETARY
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS

MINUTES APPROVED ON: 12/19/19