

MINUTES
PRINCETON TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
December 9, 2013
Meeting Room A
Witherspoon Municipal Building

Present: Robert Altman, Jo Butler (Council liaison), Pamela Hersh, Robert Kiser (staff liaison), Anton Lahnston (Chair), Sgt. Tom Murray (police department liaison), Surinder Sharma, Deanna Stockton (engineering staff), Jack West (staff liaison), and Ralph Widner. **Absent:** Kristen Appelget (Princeton University liaison), Murali Balasubramanian, Jan Weinberg. **Guests:** Carolyn Barnshaw (Terhune Road resident) and Daniel Rappaport.

Chairman Anton Lahnston convened the meeting at 5:15 p.m. He said that Jan Weinberg has informed Mayor Lempert that he has resigned from the committee now that he has completed his one-year appointment.

1. Review and Approval of Minutes of November 18, 2013 Meeting.

Robert Altman moved that the minutes of the November 18 meeting be approved. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

2. Police Reports for October and November 2013

Sgt. Tom Murray reported that there were 88 accidents in October, for seven of which no reports were filed. Five motor vehicle accidents involved injuries. In addition, one pedestrian and three bicyclists were injured in accidents with motor vehicles. A turning driver failed to see a pedestrian in the crosswalk and was issued a summons. In two of the bicycle accidents, the drivers were cited at fault for failing to see the rider. In the third, which involved a minor, the biker was at fault, but the driver was cited for not reporting the accident. Four accidents with deer involved no injuries.

Ninety-four motor vehicle accidents occurred in November, for seven of which no report was filed. Twelve involved injuries. There were no pedestrian accidents, but a motorist making a left turn hit and injured a cyclist. Eight accidents with deer were reported, none involving injuries.

Both police reports are appended to and made a part of these minutes.

John Street Sign Project

Jo Butler and Anton Lahnston both said that they have heard high praise for Sgt. Murray's meetings with residents on John Street about their traffic and safety concerns. Sgt. Murray said that this is part of a coordinated effort to both educate the community about safety and clean up the sign clutter on John street between Nassau Street and Community Park School. Many of the

signs are duplicative or confusing. The objective is to reduce the number and ensure that they are consistent and understandable.

Anton Lahnston suggested that this could be a good “before and after” initiative, the lessons from which can be applied to a sign cleanup campaign community-wide.

He then asked about the “Stop for Pedestrians” signs posted in the crosswalk on Chambers Street near the parking garage entrance. Sgt. Murray said that motorists have hit the signs several times. The crosswalk and the signs are probably too close to the parking entrance, so he thought re-locating the crosswalk might be a good idea. The installation of standardized international crosswalk markings community-wide – and specifically on Chambers Street -- should also help reduce the problem.

Safety Education

Ralph Widner argued that most of the pedestrian and bicycle accidents are the result of human behavior rather than engineering issues and that, until we coordinate and focus our many traffic safety education initiatives in a sustained multi-year campaign, we are unlikely to see much of a decline in bicycle and pedestrian accidents.

Sgt. Murray responded that the American League of Bicyclists is working with West Windsor to educate the public about “rules of the road” for bicyclists and motorists and they are interested in assisting in Princeton as well. He said that Princeton University has asked for help to educate cyclists on campus. Deanna Stockton said that the engineering department has provided educational help to Princeton’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee also.

Jo Butler added that we should have a way to measure progress in such educational efforts.

3. Public Comments

Daniel Rappaport said that significant numbers of accidents are reported at the intersection of Hamilton and Snowden. He asked if a four-way stop could be set up there.

Sgt. Murray said that is ruled out because the intersection is under study for a traffic light. In any event, because New Jersey drivers are unaccustomed to four-way stops, the accident rate actually increases rather than decreases when they are installed.

4. Bus Shelter Installation

Pam Hersh said that she and Bob Kiser propose that a competition be held to design two bus shelters on Witherspoon Street, one across from Community Park School, the other at the Arts Center.

This could initiate a \$10,000 pilot program, possibly financed by the Transit Trust Fund created by Princeton University. Proposed shelters on Nassau Street must await approval by the Historic Preservation Commission because the street is part of the Lincoln Highway Historic District. The list of the six initial bus shelters proposed at the November meeting of the Traffic and Transportation Committee has been expanded to seven in response to Ralph Widner's suggestion at that meeting that workers waiting for a bus at Stockton and Library Place very much need shelter.

Jo Butler renewed her recommendation that we invite a person from the Historic Preservation Commission to serve on the bus shelter planning initiative and that she is willing to make the contact. She also asked why we shouldn't just take advantage of the standard free bus shelters available from the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

Anton Lahnston responded that he personally finds Plainsboro's specially designed shelters appealing and that Princeton certainly favors attractive design. The hope is that through a public-private partnership with architectural firms in town we can get good design and private funding for installation, with a plaque naming the contributor placed on the shelter.

Bob Kiser recommended that he get New Jersey Transit's minimum standards for shelters so that they can be incorporated into the specifications for the design competition. Pam Hersh, Bob Kiser, and Anton Lahnston will meet with planner Jim Constantine to prepare the prospectus for the competition and the request to the Transit Trust Fund.

5. Arts and Transit District Update

Jack West reported that new rotary at the intersection of University Place and Alexander Road will be operational sometime in early February and that striping will be done shortly thereafter as soon as the weather and temperature permit.

Council is scheduled to act on the license for the pilot test of new parking meters in the Dinky and WAWA parking lots.

Jack West said he has personally counted parking spaces available before construction and now during construction. Prior to the start of the project

there were 275 parking places available between Berlind Theater and Skillman Furniture. There will be 295 when construction is complete, but 95 of those are not presently available.

6. ASUP Task Force

Bob Kiser and Jack West said that on Thursday, December 12, Kevin Wilkes will brief the Planning Board on the current state of work by the Alexander Street/University Place Task Force. Interested Traffic and Transportation Committee members were invited to attend.

7. Council Vote on Crosswalk Design

Anton Lahnston reported that on November 25, 2013, Sgt. Murray presented the background and reasoning for the Traffic and Transportation Committee's recommendation that the town adopt international standards for crosswalks and markings. Council adopted the resolution. When weather and temperatures permit, the first installations will be on Vandeventer and Moore once the sewerage renovation work is completed on those streets and they are re-paved.

8. FreeB

Marvin Reed and Anton Lahnston reported that the FreeB is operating on a new six-loop cycle and that ridership is holding steady. During the holiday season, the FreeB operates on Sundays as well.

9. Action Register

Anton Lahnston asked all committee members to help update the Action Register and recommend additions, deletions, or changes either to Surinder Sharma or to himself.

He said he was much surprised when he reviewed Council's Action Register and found several Traffic and Transportation tasks about which he had forgotten. He asked for volunteers to review the Council register and Robert Altman offered to help.

Jo Butler suggested that we should review the Action Register for 2014 as well.

Robert Altman asked if the committee's purview includes "traffic calming." Sgt. Murray said that we are already doing it using Ewing's example. Marvin Reed mentioned that the former borough used a catalog of traffic calming measures.

10. Subcommittee Actions

Bob Kiser reaffirmed his report at the November committee meeting that, in early 2014, a staff member knowledgeable about signage will begin an inventory of the overabundance of signs in Princeton. He will begin with downtown and work outwards.

He also said that the subcommittee is examining parking ordinances for the Central Business District. Jack West is examining 7-8 ideas and Deanna Stockton is preparing a map.

He and Anton Lahnston will focus on critical crossings on Nassau Street and Robeson-Wiggins-Hamilton to determine where lighting must be improved for pedestrian safety. He said that engineering has obtained a light meter and expects support from PSEG to improve lighting.

Unfortunately, lamp post/light standard replacement on Nassau is complicated by the fact that the street is in the Lincoln Highway Historic District and the Historic Preservation Commission must approve any changes. Robert Altman urged that the subcommittee also look at Witherspoon Street between Quarry Road and Valley Road. Pam Hersh commented that many accidents seem to occur when motorists are making a right turn and that maybe lighting should take that into account.

11. Cross-Town Bicycle Trail

Deanna Stockton said that she, Murali Balasubramanian, and Anton Lahnston met with BPAC representatives on November 18 to discuss a portion of the cross-town bike trail proposed by BPAC. They urged breaking the proposed route into “chunks,” for example from Mountain lakes to the bridge on Province line road and the intersection with the Hopewell – Lawrence trail. Anton Lahnston said some portions were viable, others problematic. In response to a question from Ralph Widner, Deanna Stockton and Anton Lahnston said that proposed funding would come from the capital budget and perhaps some additional funding from the Transit Trust Fund.

12. Meeting Schedule for 2014

Anton Lahnston set the meeting dates for the first half of 2014 for January 13, February 10, March 10, April 21, May 12, and June 9. All meetings will begin at 5:15 at the Witherspoon Municipal complex.

The meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ralph R. Widner, Secretary

**MONTHLY PRINCETON ACCIDENT SUMMARY TO DATE
2010-2013**

Total Accidents Involving Motor Vehicles, Pedestrians and Bikers, Jan -July

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
2010	85	96	91	94	96	108	88	97	91	83	111
2011	146	118	83	85	99	88	100	99	91	85	104
2012	77	91	81	75	112	100	74	76	81	111	89
2013	77	91	67	79	83	79	86	66	77	88	94

Total Persons Injured in Accidents, Jan -May

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
2010	5	11	8	18	9	7	7	16	9	14	13
2011	11	7	14	8	8	6	16	12	13	14	19
2012	7	14	11	9	16	9	8	11	10	9	11
2013	5	10	6	7	7	10	9	7	6	7	13

Total Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving Pedestrians, Jan -May

Pedestrian Accidents	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
2010	0	1	0	3	1	1	0	2	2	1	0
2011	0	2	1	1	0	1	4	0	1	0	2
2012	0	5	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	3
2013	3	1	*2	1	3	0	0	2	1	1	0

* One Bicycle/pedestrian accident (no mva)

Total Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving Bicycles, Jan -May

Bicycle Accidents	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
2010	0	2	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	3	0
2011	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	3	3
2012	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	2	1	0	0
2013	3	1	0	2*	1	2	1	0	2	3	1

* One Bicycle/pedestrian accident (no mva)

Causes of Bicycle/Pedestrian Accidents, 2013

	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
Pedestrian Accidents								
<i>Engineering</i>								
<i>Behavior</i>	1	3	0	0	2	1	1	0
Bicycle Accidents								
<i>Engineering</i>			.5					
<i>Behavior</i>	2	1	1.5	1		2	3	1

Motor Vehicle Accidents with Deer

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
2013	3	2	3	0	2	1	1	0	2	5	8

Total Citations for Speeding

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
2013	131	116	67	84	50	57	65	33	56	53	57

Total Citations for Cell Phone Use While Driving

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
2013	50	64	46	35	34	36	37	16	34	42	23

Total Citations for Not Wearing Seatbelts

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov
2013	10	13	12	15	70	21	16	11	8	8	7