

CITY OF BOULDER, COLORADO
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS MEETING SUMMARY FORM

NAME OF BOARD/COMMISSION: Transportation Advisory Board
DATE OF MEETING: May 11, 2009
NAME/TELEPHONE OF PERSON PREPARING SUMMARY: Suzanne Lieberman, 303-441-3266
NAMES OF MEMBERS, COUNCIL, STAFF AND INVITED GUESTS PRESENT: BOARD MEMBERS: TAB –Myriah Conroy, Spenser Havlick, Michael Deragisch, David Driscoll, Matt Moseley STAFF – Michael Sweeney, Bill Cowern, Martha Roskowski, Ken Baird, Noreen Walsh, Debbie Ritter – Transportation Project Manager, Jeff Arthur – Engineering Review Manager, [Suzanne Lieberman, Secretary – absent]
WHAT TYPE OF MEETING [REGULAR]
Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.
Agenda Item 3 – Meeting Minutes from April 13th for approval. Motion: Havlick moved to approve the April 13th minutes as amended. Seconded: Moseley Vote: 4-0, Passed [Deragisch abstained because he was absent from the April 13 th meeting.]
Agenda Item 4 – General Public Participation. Kurt Nordback: Safety concerns about multi-use path south of Table Mesa Drive; doesn't seem designed for safety. Constructed before there was significant traffic or understanding about safety design needs. Would like the city to determine whether there are actual safety issues and to think about possible alternatives. His wife, Krista Nordback, researching Highway 93 safety, of which this path is an extension: Ludlow to Table Mesa Drive; twelve accidents over four years: not significant, but Bill Cowern dubious about CDOT data. Driscoll: Concern about vehicles leaving shopping center and turning onto Broadway without looking for cyclists? Nordback: Concerns with cars leaving and entering shopping center. Two curb cuts at the corner gas station and at least two curb cuts at the shopping center where vehicles are obscured. Also had two vehicles hit him simultaneously at Ludlow. Car turning left off of northbound Broadway not looking for cyclists. Cowern: City looked at this area two to three years ago. Marni Ratzel and Cowern identified the location as a high-accident location. City designed and implemented plans to substantially improve signing, striping, and clearing site obstructions at driveways. But city can go back and look at whether improvements have worked, although more time usually needed to find trends. Conroy: Someone called her about Darley/Grinnell intersection safety issues. Would be helpful to see whether city's improvements have contributed to decreased accidents and expected outcomes. Cowern: City currently conducting before-and-after study on 17 th Street improvements and other areas. Deragisch: Boulder bicycle commuters have suggested and implemented improvements on 29 th street; would like north-south traffic on Broadway to be shunted over to Lashley Lane with similar improvements. Moseley: Where are 17 th Street improvements located? Cowern: University to Walnut.
Agenda Item 5 – Public hearing and consideration of a recommendation regarding proposed changes to the Boulder Revised Code (BRC) and the Design and Construction Standards (DCS) associated with work area traffic control. Cowern gave the presentation. Transportation impacts resulting from construction activity is a frequent and understandable concern from residents. As construction activity has increased over the past few years, concern about the transportation related impacts of that construction have increased as well. In response to these concerns staff began a process to review and amend city ordinance, standards and policies that guide work zone traffic control.

Currently, city of Boulder work zone traffic control policy is detailed in a document titled “Work Area Traffic Control and Safety Handbook” (WATCaSH). This document was drafted in 1981 and has not been modified since. Few people were aware of this document and it was not being used for public or private projects. Initially, staff intended to update this document with current practices and procedures. However, as this project advanced it was determined that the best way to accomplish the goals of the project were to incorporate work zone traffic control policy into the Design and Construction Standards (DCS). The new DCS section would provide policy on the process for approving and implementing Method of Handling Traffic Control (MHT) plans and would replace the stand alone handbook (the WATCaSH). Several associated changes to the Boulder Revised Code (B.R.C.) are also recommended. Many of these changes are intended to clarify legal requirements for work zone traffic control and to make it easier to enforce against violations of these requirements.

Staff was seeking a TAB recommendation on the proposed BRC amendments and the new section of the DCS, pertaining to work zone traffic control policies and procedures. After TAB recommends the proposed changes, staff will present these proposals to the Planning Board for their review and recommendation. Following that, staff will present these proposals to the City Council for their review and approval. It is anticipated that this will occur over the summer 2009.

TAB discussion included: Feedback: Request that pedestrians and cyclists be given same advanced notice/level of courtesy as vehicles when roads, sidewalks and paths are closed due to damage or construction as part of overall policy, and suggestion to include clarification of this policy in memo or as part of a motion; confirmation that staff still follows the “hierarchy of modal priorities” (i.e. pedestrians, cyclists, transit, vehicles) as part of the TMP (“Transportation Master Plan”). Discussion of discrepancy in standards for state and federal signage for traffic closures versus those for the city and confirmation that city intends to improve its standards after adoption of work area traffic control changes in the BRC (“Boulder Revised Code”) and DCS (“Design and Construction Standards”). Staff’s desire to use proposed changes to achieve a balance among modes for non-standard closures so that traffic engineer becomes involved in decision-making (versus just project managers and right-of-way inspectors being involved); staff’s expectation that an increased focus on non-standard closures will improve the overall work area traffic control system. Discussion of whether the proposed changes would increase permit costs. Discussion of whether TAB should monitor the work area traffic control standards after Council approves them. Suggestion to provide more detail on quantifying “additional costs” in “Fiscal Impacts” section. Request for examples of modifications staff made based on public feedback in “Public Feedback” section of memo (Page 2): difficult for staff to identify stakeholder feedback due to substantial changes made, particularly in DCS component. Concern with lack of limits to city’s discretion on requiring plans for any work impacting rights-of-way (Section 8.04a): suggestion to either change “*may* require a plan” to “*will* require a plan” or otherwise reference relevant areas of the code for which discretion can be limited. Driscoll gives hard copy of suggested punctuation/word choice revisions to Cowern. Request for TAB to express its gratitude to CDOT for thorough bicycle and pedestrian signage for the Cherryvale Bridge construction. In response to public comment, TAB request for staff to clarify that it treats the Boulder Valley School District the same as other applicants in terms of permit requirements for public rights-of-way and easements.

Clarifications: Question about waiver from CDOT Region 4 on lane closure strategy requirements: CDOT agrees to the waiver in principle but wants to review the city’s policies and procedures and ensure the city’s proper handling of work zone traffic control before it agrees to the waiver; staff expects CDOT to grant waiver. Question about reference of “person performing work or permittee” in terms of fines incurred: language gives city broad discretion to fine responsible individuals, whether traffic control company or general contractor. Question on where penalties under “Fiscal Impacts” are paid: General Fund.

Public Comment: Kurt Nordback: Acknowledges traffic engineer’s need for discretion during closures, but feels standards are missing clearly-articulated policy on equity among modes during closures or else a policy reflecting TMP prioritization of modes (i.e. pedestrians, cyclists, transit, vehicles). 29th Street construction an example of inequitable treatment in which pedestrians were forced to cross a very wide street given sidewalk and multi-use path closures while two motor vehicle lanes were left open to vehicles.

Motion (Havlick): Move that TAB recommend approval in principle the changes to the Boulder Revised Code and Design and Construction Standards in terms of work staff has done but to include a preamble in the preface

of the memo with a restatement of the TMP (“Transportation Master Plan”) priorities where the pedestrian is given the highest priority followed by cyclists, transit users, and vehicles, understanding that balance must be achieved but hoping that that balance can favor the TMP priorities.

Discussion of motion: whether to include suggested “hierarchy of priorities” language in standards preamble, in TMP, or elsewhere; suggestion to include language in “Intent” section of Traffic Control Plan.” Issues of “inconvenience” not the same as issues of “inequity”; staff should be able to exercise more discretion over non-safety issues/issues of inconvenience than safety issues. Staff concern that standards need to include less legalese and more practical information for the public in terms of internal guidance documents to explain code changes since public rarely consults Code or DCS; confirmation that changes in standards will enable operations personnel to understand and implement such equitable considerations because they will have to consult with the city’s traffic engineers, who are well-versed in the TMP.

Friendly amendment (Deragisch) (to be added to “Intent” section of memo): Move that TAB recommend approval in principle the changes to the Boulder Revised Code and Design and Construction Standards in terms of work staff has done but to include a preamble in the preface of the memo with a restatement of the TMP (“Transportation Master Plan”) priorities where the pedestrian is given the highest priority followed by cyclists, transit users, and vehicles, understanding that balance must be achieved but hoping that that balance can favor the TMP priorities.

Intent Section:

B...and accommodates all modes of transportation...

And ensures that when roads, sidewalk and/or multi-use paths are closed due to damage (man-made or act of nature) or construction, that pedestrians, bicycles, mobility impaired individuals and transit users are given the same consideration as motorists. Specifically:

- All closure signage gives each group appropriate advanced notice of required detour
- Safety of each user group drives all decisions
- Inconvenience is no greater for bikes and pedestrians than motorists

Seconded: Havlick

Vote: 5-0, Motion passed.

Agenda Item 6 – Staff briefing and TAB input regarding transportation finance options.

Roskowski gave the presentation. TAB recommended adoption of amendments to the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) at its November 17, 2008 meeting to reflect the work of the FasTracks Local Optimization Task Force. The Complete Streets investment program identifies the highest priority transportation investments which would be undertaken should additional funding become available. Since the beginning of 2009, TAB has been hosting a process to explore a short list of potential funding sources and develop a report on them. A draft of the report will be distributed to TAB prior to the board meeting on June 8th. TAB is asked to provide initial feedback on the draft. A final draft will be brought to the board for consideration of approval at the June TAB meeting.

Staff requests that TAB consider developing a recommendation to be included in the report. Ideally, recommendation language would be finalized at the June meeting. Staff also requests input on two questions on the draft report:

- Does the report provide an appropriate level of information and analysis?
- Does the report accurately and adequately communicate the process and the input received?

TAB discussion included: Feedback: Suggestion to clarify to council that TAB is well-informed on the options and that council can turn to TAB for feedback on what TAB considers viable and non-viable options; making it clear that TAB has considered the politics of trying to get preferred transportation finance options on the ballot this year and that council should take action on the options now; TAB should choose which items it wants council to move forward on in terms of the ballot, whether in the form of taxes or fees, with the understanding that council is not likely to put these items on the ballot this November. Staff suggestion to have TAB make recommendation more general so that preferred options still relevant and clear for council in the future and providing more immediate specifics for council in the form of a cover letter. TAB suggestion to break out the

TMF (transportation maintenance fee) in terms of square footage versus charging a flat fee. Suggestion to include in a recommendation to council that TAB has studied the DET (development excise tax) and that TAB thinks the DET is a good idea for what it is worth.

Clarifications: TAB should provide recommendation for council before May 12 Study Session. If fee option went forward (Page 8 “Draft Executive Summary of Report”), it would need to be related to specific expenses, but could be incremented.

Conclusions and next steps: Staff will return to TAB in June for more feedback. In the meantime, TAB Chair asks TAB to send her comments on the immediate recommendation on preferred transportation finance options by May 12th prior to the council study session on June 2nd, remembering to keep the DET (the development excise tax) in mind at June 2nd meeting. TAB will also work on the longer-term recommendation to council, with Chair sending out a draft by the end of the week; TAB will finalize this recommendation at its next meeting.

Agenda Item 7 – Staff briefing and TAB input regarding the 2010 – 2015 Transportation Capital Improvements Program.

Sweeney and Baird gave the presentation. Every year the city goes through a budget process that creates a six-year planning budget, this year for the time period of 2010 through 2015. Within this process, funds are appropriated for the first year, 2010. The Transportation Advisory Board’s (TAB) role in this process is defined in the Boulder Revised Code (BRC) TITLE 2 GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION, Chapter 3 Boards and Commissions, Section 14 - Transportation Advisory Board; “. . . to review all city transportation environmental assessments and capital improvements.” It is within this context that the board is asked to hold a public hearing and provide a recommendation on the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to Planning Board and the City Council.

TAB discussion included: Feedback: Discussion of examples of “sustainable” cuts in terms of staff and services; questions on transportation department’s fuel-efficient vehicle supply and acquisition: ongoing.

Clarifications: Questions on methodology for budget cuts: partly in terms of leveraging funding; TAB may choose whether staff made the wrong choices in cuts.

Conclusions and next steps: Staff will return to TAB in June for further discussion and a final TAB recommendation on the 2010-2015 Transportation Capital Improvements Program.

Agenda Item 8

A. Matters from Staff

- **CAP/TMP Action Plan Update.** Council discussed whether to raise the climate action tax at April study session; asked staff to work with citizen’s group, BCAN (Boulder Climate Action Network); working with Chris Hagelin and others as part of a task force to brainstorm transportation component; still deciding whether to focus on programmatic (e.g. EcoPass subsidies) versus regulatory use of funds. Staff suggests a TAB representative attend the BCAN meetings. Driscoll part of Shanahan Neighbors for Climate Action; using household data to promote neighborhood competition on reducing carbon footprint; will meet with council and planning board members in May to further discuss.
- **Update on 29th Street Improvements.** Staff working through fall to finalize improvements, including multi-use path and transit stop improvements; discussion of feedback from public meetings. TAB request to not discourage cyclists from shopping center; TAB request for more visibility for cyclists on path; TAB request for yield signs.
- **Boulder Valley Employee Survey.** [Staff distributes handout]. Modal shift in non-Boulder residents driving alone in 2008 (page 3): 80% to 74% in the last year: likely due to price of gas but also due to regional RTD improvements. Despite problems in data collection methodology, continued downward trend in drive-alone trips.
- **Regional studies update. Amtrak project:** Amtrak doing feasibility study of restoring the “Pioneer Service” (Denver to Portland via Wyoming, Oregon, Washington); Matt Applebaum wants city to write letter of support routing train through Boulder, Longmont and Fort Collins rather than straight through

Greeley and Denver. Probably a no-brainer for council; staff will carbon copy TAB on correspondence sent to Applebaum.

- **CMAQ (Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality) funds:** Federal funds that DRCOG (Denver Regional Council of Governments) allocates for transportation demand management every few years; next application deadline end of May. Funds awarded to projects in terms of lowest VMTs (vehicle miles traveled); staff still determining which projects can score well.
- **Other matters.** Staff will do a better job about conveying council items through TAB first. Tracy Winfree officially returns as Transportation Director in June. TAB Bike Tour date: May 29 or June 5.

B. Matters from Board

- **2009 Retreat summary. Conroy:** Request for TAB members to look at action items and committee suggestions for discussion at June meeting.
- **Set up committees from retreat. Conroy:** Will consult with Board Secretary and send the committee assignments to TAB members before the June meeting for discussion at that meeting; Lynn Guissinger's committee position open.
- **Set up 2009 TAB Town Hall session. Conroy:** Request that TAB bring potential invitees themes and ideas for the Town Hall session to the June meeting; formalize committees not yet formalized. **Driscoll:** Suggestions for invitees: Will Toor; Jennifer Finch (runs CDOT planning office), Jim Charlier (consultant): together or separately. **Havlick:** Casey Jones (University of Colorado).
- **Broadway/College Avenue Underpass coop safety project update. Havlick:** Waiting for staff on next steps; will then approach CU for funding.
- **Proposal for CU Boulder ex-officio on TAB. Sweeney:** Staff learned that because creating an ex-officio role requires Boulder Revised Code changes, should go with alternative: unofficial representative through town hall meetings or as needed.
- **Position of Matters from Board within TAB agenda. Deragisch:** Request to move Matters from board directly after Public Comment period. TAB should drive meeting through its advice to council, and not just serve a reactionary function. **Conroy:** After Public Comment but before Matters from Staff.

Motion (Deragisch): Move that TAB restructure the agenda to put Matters from Board after all public hearing issues are done.

Second: Havlick

Vote: 5-0, Motion passed.

- **Joint informal board meetings. Conroy:** Initiating informal monthly meetings for coffee with chairs of other boards and up to two members of each board and interested staff so individual boards not acting in such a vacuum. **Deragisch/Driscoll/Moseley/Havlick:** Great idea.
- **Commuter-of-the-Year Event at the Peloton: Conroy:** Event will take place May 12th; Conroy to speak. Will check in with Board Secretary to make sure TAB receiving Andrea Robbins's mails.

Agenda Item 9 – Discussion on future schedule.

- Discussed above.

Agenda Item 10 – Adjournment.

Motion to adjourn: Havlick

Second: Deragisch

Vote: 5-0, Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Date, Time, and Location of Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be a regular work meeting on Monday, June 8, 2009, 1777 Broadway, Council Chambers, at 6 p.m., unless otherwise decided by staff and the board.

Approved by: _____

Date: _____

*Verbatim public comments are available in audio recordings posted on the website.