

Arlington Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC)  
Wednesday May 13, 2015  
Courthouse Plaza, Cherry & Dogwood  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard

Minutes (approved June 10, 2015)

Attending: Dennis Jaffe, Chair; John Armstrong; Jim Feaster; Dan Foster; Eric Goldstein; David Goodman; Eric Goodman; Tom Korn; Christine Ng; David Patton; Pamela Van Hine; Collin Weber  
Guest: Bill Braswell, Chair NCAC

Public Speakers: None

Invited Speaker: Bill Braswell, Chair, Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC), Proposed flexibility in neighborhood sidewalk widths

B Braswell proposed increasing the flexibility of situations in which the clear zone sidewalk widths in low-density residential areas could be reduced from five feet to four feet. He reviewed the process of how sidewalks are proposed and developed in residential areas and noted that the NCAC has exclusive responsibility for these proposals via the Neighborhood Conservation Program. He also noted that 60% of homes on the block had to approve the sidewalk proposal, possibly an historic requirement from the time that homeowners had to pay for the sidewalk. Currently the County pays for the new sidewalk. He also noted three recent cases that eventually declined the proposed sidewalk project in their area – and claimed that having the flexibility of a four foot sidewalk might have made a difference in the vote.

PAC members expressed continuing support for five foot sidewalks, including pedestrian safety, ADA issues, ability to pass slower pedestrians, pedestrians who needs more space, such as people walking with strollers, family members, friends, luggage, shopping carts, etc. PAC members also expressed skepticism that allowing some of these projects to have four foot widths would ensure approval and suspected that it could be a slippery slope towards increasingly shorter widths and other exceptions. D Goodman expressed concerns about allowing too much flexibility, the motivation of the groups, and why a proposal was put forward that included a four foot sidewalk initially. D Goodman suggested working for sidewalks through other mechanisms, such as Complete Streets. D Jaffe noted that the PAC needed a specific list of potential issues for consideration. Several PAC members suggested alternative ways to change the process.

B Braswell's final request was for PAC to sign on to a letter about the issue. D Jaffe indicated that the PAC had far too little information to do so at this time. B Braswell noted that he would send the draft for our comments soon.

Approval of minutes from April 8 PAC meeting will be postponed until the June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Upcoming meeting of Dennis Jaffe and David Goodman with Mark Schwartz, Deputy County Manager

The PAC Chair addressed several agenda items that he proposed including in an upcoming meeting with M Schwartz:

- The first topic was submitting a current PAC membership list and selection of Chair and Vice Chair. PAC members approved the list of names that will be submitted for PAC membership for 2015-2016 and approved D Jaffe's continuing role as PAC Chair and selection of P Van Hine as Vice Chair.
- The Chair also proposed discussing the news boxes issue at the meeting, including offering to provide a letter with supporting documentation. PAC members thought this was a reasonable approach.
- The Chair indicated that one of the primary purposes of the proposed meeting was to discuss ways to improve PAC input into relevant Arlington budget decisions, preferably in a more proactive way.
- Finally, the Chair asked for additional topics that might be appropriate for this meeting. T Korn suggested possible role of PAC as a conduit for Arlingtonians to submit problems – and praise, and how PAC activities could be better integrated with the work of other Arlington organizations.

## Pedestrian Safety and Access during Construction Projects

E Goodman briefly described his experience with an Arlington staff repair of a sidewalk problem that created a pedestrian hazard. He wondered what the regulations for protecting pedestrian access during construction are and how these regulations are implemented. P Van Hine read the section on maintenance of pedestrian traffic during construction from the MTP Pedestrian Element (p. 19). D Goodman briefly discussed the complexity of enforcing these guidelines and indicated that he hoped to have a DES speaker on this issue at a future PAC meeting.

## 2016 Budget Approved!

The Chair briefly noted the County Board approval of the Arlington County 2016 proposed budget, including the elimination of contingency cuts that would have severely impacted bike-ped staffing and projects. He proposed sending a thank you note to the Board and asked D Goodman to draft the key projects and activities that would now continue.

## Neighborhood Complete Streets Commission

E Goodman, the PAC representative to NCSC, briefly reported that the NCSC was currently reviewing results of the complete street survey from earlier this year.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:03 PM. The next PAC meeting will be held Wednesday June 10 and will feature Ms. De la Barrera, our June guest speaker, who will expound on a new online mapping tool. At the June meeting, we also hope to address some of the other agenda topics that could not be addressed tonight.