**Common Council Sidewalk Committee**
**25 January 2011, Noon**
**McCloskey Room**
**401 North Morton Street**

**MEMORANDUM**

***In attendance***:
**Committee Members**: Mike Satterfield (Chair), Chris Sturbaum and Dave Rollo

**Staff**: Steve Cotter (Parks & Recreation), Jane Fleig (Utilities), Bob Woolford (Housing & Neighborhood Development), Justin Wykoff (Public Works), Dan Sherman (Council Office) and Stacy Jane Rhoads (Council Office).

## I. PRELIMINARY

Satterfield briefly reviewed the *Agenda*. The goal of today's meeting is to review the 2011 process – what worked well, what needs fixing. He turned the meeting over to Sherman.

## II. APPROVAL OF TODAY'S MEETING NOTES

- The Committee authorized the Chair to approve notes from today's meeting, after the Committee has had a week to review and comment on draft notes.

- Sherman said the group should thank staff – Wykoff, Fleig, Cotter, Robinson and Woolford – for all the in-meeting and behind-the-scenes work they do to make this process a success.

## III. 2011 PROCESS

### Meetings
Sherman reviewed that the Committee met four times. Each meeting lasted about an hour. The Council adopted the Sidewalk Committee Report last Wednesday.

### 2011 Changes
Sherman highlighted some 2011 process changes. Notably:

- the inclusion of determinate sidewalks in the inventory
- the loss of Greenways funds
- the loss of Utilities stormwater funds.

**Comments**

- Sturbaum said that he appreciates CBU's offer to help out with stormwater when they can. He understands that there are budget constraints and that CBU has certain stormwater priorities, but is thankful for their cooperation.

- Satterfield asked the group how they feel about large projects. The East Third Street project is ambitious and commands a big chunk of the budget. Funding big projects like this does not leave the Committee with much funds for other sidewalk projects.

- Sturbaum responded that East Third is really an exception to past practice. East Third was funded because the need was so great.

- Rollo echoed that, in his memory, East Third was an exception.

- Wykoff reminded the group that the project on Fifth Street, in the Green Acres neighborhood, was also pretty big and consumed much of the Committee's fund over a few years.

- Wykoff said that the Rockport Road project is analogously big, but is funded through MPO and TIF money.

- Sturbaum asked why the City didn't pursue MPO or TIF funds for the East Third Street project? Wykoff replied that East Third is not in a TIF.

- Sturbaum pointed out that Kinser (north of 17th) and 17th Street (Madison to Woodburn) are two other big project that rank high on the Committee's list.

- Rollo relayed that he thinks the *Prioritization Sheet* is very helpful. It helps the Committee make needs-based decisions and makes it clear to the public that this is not an arbitrary process.

- Rollo requested that the *Prioritization Sheet* be posted prominently on the Committee's webpage. Rhoads said the document should probably be prefaced with some sort of language making clear that the document is a guide to decision making, not a mandate.

- Rollo pointed out that a lack of sidewalks in certain areas make it impossible for people to walk to common destinations. For example, at Moore Pike and Sare Road, there is no way for people living in the area to easily walk to College Mall. If residents in Renwick want to go to the movies, they pretty much have to drive two blocks. Unless a crosswalk is installed, the only option is to put in a sidewalk. Otherwise, residents in this area are essentially "trapped." Rollo asked if there is any way to account for/evaluate these sorts of situations.

- Woolford pointed out that some projects are just beyond the scope of the Committee. For example, the 17th Street project (#2 on the Committee's list) really needs to extend from Madison all the way to Crescent. If the Committee put money toward this project, it would be a long time before the project was completed. Instead, this project seems like it should be put in a bigger City budget – the Sidewalk Committee's $225,000/year budget is not going to cut it.

- Woolford further pointed out that 17th Street project is really a community project, not a neighborhood-based project. Wykoff added that I-69 will go underneath SR 37 on 17th Street. The Committee might want to recommend this project to the MPO.

- Satterfield asked how these big, community-based, project might be moved "up the food chain" into a bigger budget.

- Sherman said that the Council is the City's fiscal body and can always make a request for bigger sidewalk projects be included in bigger budgets.

- Wykoff said that Ruff is on the MPO. The MPO calls for projects to be included in its 4-year *Transportation Improvement Plan* (TIP). TIPs usually entail comprehensive changes to an area, including sidewalks, sidepaths, right-of-way acquisition, curbing and stormwater. Usually a project has to be located on an arterial to be considered for MPO funding.

- Satterfield suggested that the Committee might consider identifying projects that might be better candidates for other funding sources as part of its annual set of recommendations.

- Rollo stated that he would like the Committee to go even further. The City needs to be thinking about a low-energy future and should be dedicating more money to alternative transportation. In the interest of making alternative transportation facilities more extensive, he thinks it would be useful to explore low-budget alternatives, such as laying down asphalt for sidewalks instead of the much-more expensive curbing, stormwater, tree plots, etc. He said that he understands that there may be stormwater and safety concerns with such alternatives in certain areas, but thinks it is nonetheless worth thinking about when such alternatives might be feasible. He said that the Committee should discuss such options more closely with the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Commission.

- Sherman noted that the PLOS entries in the prioritization sheet previously differentiated between kinds of sidewalk installations and perhaps will be used to rate thee new kinds of installations.

## IV. PROJECT LIST – ADDITIONS & DELETIONS

Sherman asked if the Committee want to add or delete projects from the list.

**<u>Deletions</u>**

**Covenanter Drive (Ruby to High) -- Delete**

- Rollo said that he thinks the Covenanter Project from Ruby to High can be deleted. He said that the problem in this area has been partially solved by having the Marilyn Street project run parallel. Part of the *Safe Routes to School* plan is to get kids from Ruby to Covenanter, but it is not practical to go all the way to High Street. High Street presents an impossible grade. Furthermore, residents want the culvert on Ruby covered. Rollo stated that maybe the Committee can re-visit the project later, when it can afford to cover the culvert.

- The Committee voted to delete this project for the following reasons:
  1) The parallel Marilyn Street project provides and adequate alternative
  2) The Convenanter project would not deliver pedestrians onto an existing sidewalk on High Street.

**Kinser Pike (north of Acuff) -- Retain**

- Satterfield asked why Kinser Pike, north of Acuff is on the list.

- Wykoff responded that the residents in the area requested this.

- Sturbaum said that the issue is all the right-of-way acquisition required makes this project very expensive. However, since this is a citizen request, he would like to keep in on the list.

- Woolford pointed out that this project is in a TIF. Why would the Committee want to spend money on a project located in a TIF? Woolford added that the TIF is not generating much money.

- Sturbaum said that perhaps next year, the Committee should include this project in its MPO and TIF recommendations.

- Sherman said that some projects are listed, just so the Committee can monitor them.

**<u>Addition</u>**

**Mitchell (east side) between Maxwell and Circle**

- Rollo said that neighbors in SoMax have requested the inclusion of a pedestrian facility on Mitchell (east side) between Maxwell and Circle. Such a facility would provide a way to get from Hillside to campus.
- The Committee voted to add this project to the list for analysis and consideration.

## V. RIGHT-OF-WAY DONATION

Sturbaum brought up the issue of right of way donation. He said that the matter of encouraging people to donate right-of-way has come up for the past few years, but has not gone anywhere. He would like to work closely with Legal to find out how the City might encourage such donations. In addition to encouraging individual donations, he would also like to know about some sort of public awareness effort more generally.

## VI. FORWARDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO NEXT YEAR'S COMMITTEE

As Committee membership in 2012 is the same as the 2011 Committee, the group agreed that there is no need to forward any formal recommendations on to the 2012 body.

## VII. OVERAGE POLICY

Sherman explained that the Committee's current practice is that if a project runs 10% over the estimated amount, then Engineering has to go to the Chair. If the absolute amount of the overage is $20,000 or more, the Committee as a whole must approve the excess.

## VIII. SCHEDULE

Satterfield suggested that the Committee wrap up its work before the end of the year, since it will be an election year. This means starting the 2012 process earlier.

## IX. CBU'S 5-YEAR STORMWATER PLAN

Fleig distributed a draft of CBU's *Stormwater Utility Maintenance & Improvements Five Year Plan* and encouraged the Committee to review the document and contact her with any questions. She is happy to provide background information and/or meet with anyone about the Plan. (The document is attached hereto.)

## X. SIDEWALK COMMITTEE WEBPAGE

- In addition to posting the working list of projects and the Committee's history of funding, Rollo said that the group should inform the public that the requirement that developers install sidewalks as a condition of development has only been common practice for the last 40 years or so. In the 1950s and 1960s, no such requirement was made of developers. As a consequence, many mid-century neighborhoods do not have the sidewalk infrastructure more recent ones do.

- Rhoads said that sometimes the public is under the impression that, because there is a "Council Sidewalk Committee," the Committee is the conduit for all sidewalk projects. The public does not necessarily understand that the Committee is one of many City entities that makes sidewalk funding decisions.

- Sturbaum said that it would be good to add a description to the Committee's page to make it clear that the Sidewalk Committee is one of many City entities that makes decisions about where to build new sidewalks.

## XI. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 1:08pm.