

In the Council Chambers of the Showers City Hall, Bloomington, Indiana on Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 6:33pm, Council President Dave Rollo presided over a Special Session of the Common Council.

COMMON COUNCIL
SPECIAL SESSION
May 22, 2019

Members present: Chopra (left at 9:33pm), Piedmont-Smith, Granger, Rollo, Volan, Sims, Sturbaum, Sandberg
Members absent: Ruff

ROLL CALL [6:33pm]

Council President Dave Rollo summarized the agenda.

AGENDA SUMMATION [6:33pm]

Councilmember Allison Chopra moved and it was seconded to adjourn the meeting no later than 9:30pm.

The Council discussed the motion.

The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 5, Nays: 3 (Rollo, Sturbaum, Sandberg), Abstain: 0.

Councilmember Steve Volan moved and it was seconded to structure deliberations on Resolution 19-01 to allow for: a staff presentation on the Transportation Plan (Plan); council questions on the Plan; consideration of amendments to the Plan that were placed on the consent agenda; consideration of amendments to the Plan not on the consent agenda; and consideration of a motion to adopt Resolution 19-01 as amended.

CONTINUATION OF
CONSIDERATION OF
RESOLUTION 19-01 – TO ADOPT
THE CITY’S TRANSPORTATION
PLAN AS AN AMENDMENT TO
THE CITY’S COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN [6:50pm]

The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Volan moved and it was seconded to take Resolution 19-01 from the table.

The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 6, Nays: 0, Abstain: 2 (Chopra, Sturbaum).

Beth Rosenbarger, Planning Services Manager, spoke about previously-voiced concerns and summarized amendments in the Transportation Plan (Plan) meant to address those concerns. She explained the Plan was important because staff referred to it when dealing with development projects. She noted that developers could not be required to build new street connections unless those connections were in an adopted Plan.

Volan asked if an ongoing planned unit development (PUD) project could be required to comply with the new Plan, once it was adopted.
Rosenbarger said she was not sure.

Council questions:

Councilmember Susan Sandberg asked if previous transportation plans took cost into account in a way that affected how certain amenities and projects were prioritized.

Scott Robinson, Assistant Director of Planning and Transportation, said that some costs would fall to private developers. He did not think previous plans examined the cost to the city for capital improvements. He also noted, in response to Volan’s question, that the filing date of a PUD was significant in determining what requirements could be placed on the development.

Sandberg clarified that the cost for a city project would be considered on a case-by-case basis as those projects came up.

Robinson said that was right. He noted decisions were also guided by priorities, which could be included in plans. He said any budget requests would come to the Council for consideration.

Councilmember Chris Sturbaum asked staff to comment on whether there was enough focus on sidewalk construction and maintenance in the Plan. He wondered if the Plan should include a recommendation to hire a consultant to examine the state of the city's pedestrian network.

Rosenbarger said the Plan would not preclude such an examination. She noted the Plan called for a more detailed pedestrian assessment that could be consistent with what Sturbaum was envisioning.

Rollo asked if a pedestrian assessment could be completed by city staff or whether that work would be more appropriate for a consultant.

Robinson explained previous staff efforts to assess and improve pedestrian infrastructure.

Rollo asked if there was a need to get a more comprehensive view of the sidewalk network, including its cost.

Robinson said it would be costly to get that information citywide.

Councilmember Isabel Piedmont-Smith pointed out that Amendment 44 addressed evaluating pedestrian facilities.

Daniel Bingham requested that the Council remove Amendment 21 from the consent agenda.

CONTINUATION OF
CONSIDERATION OF
RESOLUTION 19-01 – TO ADOPT
THE CITY'S TRANSPORTATION
PLAN AS AN AMENDMENT TO
THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN (cont'd)

Public comment:

Chopra requested that Amendment 21 be removed from the consent agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Piedmont-Smith requested to remove Amendments 20 and 22 from the consent agenda.

Volan moved and it was seconded to adopt amendments (03, 05, 06, 07, 08-R, 09, 10, 11, 12, 13-R, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27-R, 28-R, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39-R, 40-R, 41-R, 42, 43, 44, 45) listed under the revised consent agenda.

The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Vote on Consent Agenda Items
[7:31pm]

Rollo moved and it was seconded to adopt Amendment 32.

Amendment 32

Rollo described the amendment and its purpose.

Piedmont-Smith asked if the amendment was necessary as the street typology had already been changed by another amendment to make it a shared street.

Council questions:

Rollo thought the amendment was still appropriate. He said nearby property owners were still concerned about the proposed connection.

Rollo asked if staff wanted to comment on the amendment.

Rosenbarger said staff opposed the amendment and opposed removing the proposed connection from the Plan. She said staff supported changing the typology of the portion of Hunter Avenue east of High Street to be a shared street. She spoke about the importance of connectivity, especially for the area in question.

Rollo asked why the portion of Hunter Avenue east of High Street was not proposed to be a greenway.

Amendment 32 (cont'd)

Rosenbarger said that typology was not used because of the nature of development and land use that was expected in the area. She noted the area would include commercial developments, so a different typology was appropriate.

Piedmont-Smith clarified that the typology had not yet been changed by Amendment 21, as that amendment had been removed from the consent agenda.

Volan asked Rollo to elaborate on why the neighbors were concerned about the proposed connection.

Rollo explained that Hunter Avenue west of High Street was a very calm street, which was why it was considered a greenway. He said they were concerned with the disconnected typologies.

Volan pointed out there were other instances of a street with a change of use and multiple typologies.

Greg Alexander, Matt Flaherty, Daniel Bingham, and Eric Martin spoke against the amendment.

Public comment:

Janet Dunigan and Carole MacKey spoke about the concerns of the neighbors and in support of the amendment.

Volan asked if just the new portion of Hunter Avenue east of High Street would be a shared street.

Additional council questions:

Rosenbarg said the shared street type would just apply to the new portion of Hunter Avenue, if it were developed. She said the portion of Hunter Avenue west of High Street would remain a neighborhood greenway.

Chopra asked whether connectivity encouraged people to use roads inappropriately.

Rosenbarger said people tended to take the fastest and most convenient route.

Volan did not think the proposed connection would become the default route to College Mall as it would not improve connectivity for most drivers. He said he appreciated the concerns voiced by the neighboring property owners but did not think a shared street would generate the kind of traffic they thought it would.

Council comment:

Chopra said she would vote no on the amendment. She thought street connectivity for all residents was important.

Rollo said that the typology of a shared street was more appropriate than the original typology of an urban connector, but said he would continue to support the amendment.

The motion to adopt Amendment 32 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 2 (Rollo, Sandberg), Nays: 6, Abstain: 0. FAILED.

Vote on Amendment 32 [8:04pm]

Rollo moved and it was seconded to adopt Amendment 20.

Amendment 20

Sturbaum read and described the amendment.

Piedmont-Smith explained that she wanted the amendment to be discussed because she thought it would alleviate concerns about new street typologies being applied retroactively in older neighborhoods.

The motion to adopt Amendment 20 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Vote on Amendment 20 [8:08pm]

Sturbaum moved and it was seconded to adopt Amendment 21.

Amendment 21

Sturbaum explained that the amendment changed street typologies to better match the desired context of the streets.

Rosenbarger said staff supported the amendment. She noted that most of the changes led to the affected streets receiving a lower-intensity typology

Piedmont-Smith asked if the amendment included the proposed new connection on Hunter Avenue from High Street to Woodcrest Drive.

Council questions:

Rosenbarger said that was correct.

Piedmont-Smith asked Rosenbarger to comment on the streets proposed to change from neighborhood residential to neighborhood connector.

Rosenbarger explained that the streets in question were expected to have higher traffic volume for various reasons.

Greg Alexander spoke about Maple Street.

Public comment:

Daniel Bingham spoke about street typologies and the importance of adding protected bicycle lanes to streets.

Volan asked staff to comment on the difference between neighborhood connector and neighborhood residential typologies.

Additional council questions:

Rosenbarger explained the difference in typologies. She noted that one difference was the type of pedestrian facility that was called for with each typology.

Volan asked if changing Covenanter Drive to neighborhood residential would hurt efforts to install a protected bicycle lane on that street.

Rosenbarger said a protected bicycle lane could be inconsistent with neighborhood residential streets, as those streets were meant to be calm and comfortable for pedestrians.

Sturbaum asked if the neighborhood connector typology reflected the intensity of automobile traffic.

Rosenbarger said that was correct.

Sturbaum commended staff for their work in developing and amending the Plan.

Council comment:

The motion to adopt Amendment 21 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Vote on Amendment 21 [8:24pm]

Volan introduced and described the amendment. He said that the amendment came at staff's request, and asked Rosenbarger to further explain it.

Amendment 22

Rosenbarger said the amendment was created in response to calls for more space for pedestrians when a street was created or changed. She described the cross section examples for main street and general urban street typologies.

Piedmont-Smith wondered if it was appropriate for the amendment to say that the city's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) would be updated when updating the UDO was a process separate from approving the Plan.

Council questions:

Rosenbarger said the UDO changes would still be subject to a vote. She said the Plan was guiding language that stated the city's intent.

Piedmont-Smith moved and it was seconded to adopt Amendment 01 to Amendment 22.

Amendment 01 to Amendment 22

Piedmont-Smith suggested amending Amendment 22 to state that the UDO should be updated rather than would be updated.

The motion to adopt Amendment 01 to Amendment 22 was approved by voice vote.

Vote on Amendment 01 to Amendment 22 [8:33pm]

Daniel Bingham spoke in support of the amendment.

Public comment:

The motion to adopt Amendment 22 as amended received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Vote on Amendment 22 as amended [8:35pm]

Sturbaum moved and it was seconded to adopt Amendment 30b.

Amendment 30b

Sturbaum introduced and explained the amendment. He said that he intended to ensure that resident input was considered during development of neighborhood greenways and other traffic calming policies.

Rosenbarger said that staff supported the amendment.

Chopra asked if Amendment 30b was the only version of the amendment that Sturbaum intended to introduce.

Council questions:

Sturbaum said yes.

Volan asked if Amendment 30b made much of a difference in the language of the Plan.

Sturbaum said it encouraged citizen participation without dictating how that would be accomplished by staff.

Councilmember Jim Sims asked for information about the normal process for engaging the public on city projects.

Rosenbarger said there was no set process that staff followed, though staff would be interested in developing such a process. She noted that the city did notify the public of projects through various methods.

Chopra asked if the amendment was superfluous since the city already engaged in public outreach for projects.

Amendment 30b (cont'd)

Rosenbarger said the amendment clarified that public outreach should be a part of the process for any project moving forward.

Chopra asked how staff interpreted the term "due regard."

Rosenbarger said it meant staff would consider and weigh different options based on public input.

Greg Alexander spoke against the amendment.

Public comment:

Sturbaum said there used to be a process for public outreach through the neighborhood traffic safety program (NTSP), and the amendment made sure there would be an emphasis on public input moving forward.

Council comment:

Councilmember Dorothy Granger liked that the amendment included the public in the Plan.

Sims said he wanted to get a higher participation rate when engaging with a neighborhood.

Piedmont-Smith said she could support the introduced version of the amendment.

Sturbaum said it was a balance between engaging the public and not having a process that was too burdensome. He said it was important that staff work in good faith with the public.

Rollo thought the NTSP was effective and led to well-supported projects.

Sturbaum pointed out that the NTSP allowed neighborhoods to initiate projects, which he suggested could be something to include in future processes.

The motion to adopt Amendment 30b received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Vote on Amendment 30b
[8:55pm]

Sturbaum introduced and described Amendment 29-R.

Amendment 29-R

Rosenbarger said staff did not support the amendment as written, but would support changing the language to call for redesigning Kirkwood Avenue with a focus on pedestrians. She said staff was aware of how the street functioned, and she described how it could be improved to better serve pedestrians and businesses. She explained that the design charrette called for in the Plan would look at different design options.

Chopra pointed out that the city just paid a consultant to develop the Plan, which included the recommendation for turning Kirkwood Avenue into a shared street.

Council questions:

Rosenbarger said that was correct.

Chopra asked if staff would consider another corridor study to be redundant.

Rosenbarger said yes.

Piedmont-Smith asked what problem on Kirkwood Avenue was being addressed by turning it into a shared street.

Amendment 29-R (cont'd)

Rosenbarger said the goal was to improve the space so that it functioned better.

Piedmont-Smith asked how much it would cost to turn Kirkwood Avenue into a shared street.

Rosenbarger said it would likely cost several million dollars.

Sandberg asked if the consultant who developed the proposed Plan got feedback from the merchants along Kirkwood Avenue.

Rosenbarger said staff had attended a meeting of business owners along Kirkwood Avenue. She said one concern was the impact of construction rather than the design outcome.

Sandberg asked if the consultant considered the impact of such a project on the traffic patterns in surrounding areas.

Rosenbarger said she did not anticipate much impact because the area in question was already meant to be a destination.

Sandberg asked what additional information a corridor study could provide to the city.

Rosenbarger said a corridor study was typically larger in scale. She said the proposed project was more focused on design.

Sturbaum pointed out that the proposed Plan called for the street to be redesigned as a shared street, whereas his amendment just recommended a corridor study. He asked whether that gave the city more flexibility in deciding the design of the street and the priority of the project compared to other pedestrian facility projects.

Rosenbarger agreed the amendment might allow for more flexibility in the design of the street. She said that the project, like all projects, depended on funding, and she could not say whether the Kirkwood project would happen at the expense of other projects. She said that the corridor study would be more information than the city needed to look at the space.

Marc Haggerty spoke about designing Kirkwood Avenue as a pedestrian mall.

Public comment:

Christopher Harell spoke against the amendment.

Steve Volan said a corridor study was not needed for Kirkwood Avenue. He said there was plenty of space available to make the street more attractive to pedestrians without turning the street into a pedestrian mall.

Council comment:

Granger said she did not support the amendment.

Sturbaum said the amendment gave the city more flexibility in deciding how to spend money and improve pedestrian facilities.

Piedmont-Smith said she had concerns about whether redesigning Kirkwood Avenue was the best use of public money, but thought the original language in the Plan provided enough flexibility for the city to make decisions about the scope of such a project.

Volan said that the Plan was a guiding document and was not code. He said shared streets were not as problematic as some thought.

Sandberg said she was worried about the fiscal impact of a project along Kirkwood Avenue, but thought a corridor study was not needed. She said there would be more discussion about the design and the parameters of any project.

Sims said that city staff members were experts and deserved some deference. He also said that he had seen a pedestrian mall in Muncie, Indiana fail. He cautioned the city to listen to the concerns of stakeholders.

Amendment 29-R (cont'd)

Rollo said he had concerns with the cost, but was comfortable with the idea of a shared street.

The motion to adopt Amendment 29-R received a roll call vote of Ayes: 1 (Sturbaum), Nays: 7, Abstain: 0. FAILED.

Vote on Amendment 29-R
[9:24pm]

Sturbaum moved and it was seconded to adopt Amendment 31.

Amendment 31

Sturbaum described the amendment.

Rosenbarger said staff supported the intent of the amendment, but opposed the amendment as written. She said staff opposed specifying that pull-in angle parking was preferred, as that was a design decision that would be based on the context of an area.

Piedmont-Smith moved and it was seconded to reconsider adjourning the meeting no later than 9:30pm.

Motion to reconsider adjourning meeting at 9:30pm

The motion to reconsider adjourning the meeting no later than 9:30pm received a roll call vote of Ayes: 5, Nays: 3 (Chopra, Volan, Sims), Abstain: 0.

Vote on motion to reconsider adjourning meeting at 9:30pm
[9:32pm]

Volan said he did not think the amendment was necessary and he opposed it.

Council comment:

The motion to adopt Amendment 31 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 1 (Sturbaum), Nays: 6, Abstain: 0 (Chopra absent). FAILED.

Vote on Amendment 31 [9:34pm]

Piedmont-Smith moved and it was seconded to adopt Amendment 01-R.

Amendment 01-R

Piedmont-Smith described the amendment and explained it was meant to emphasize the importance of greenhouse gas reduction and support for modes of transportation other than individual passenger vehicles.

Rosenbarger said staff supported the amendment.

Sturbaum asked why the amendment removed a passage extolling certain values.

Council questions:

Piedmont-Smith said the passage had nothing to do with transportation, which should be the focus of the Plan.

Eric Martin, Matt Flaherty, and Daniel Bingham spoke in support of the amendment.

Public comment:

Volan said he supported the amendment.

Council comment:

Granger thanked members of the public and Piedmont-Smith for keeping the focus on climate change.

Sandberg said she supported the amendment, but had some reservations about neglecting automobile transportation, which she said was still necessary for many people in the community.

Sims said he had learned a lot about the issue of climate change and thought there was still more progress to be made. He said he would support the amendment.

Amendment 01-R (cont'd)

Volan said prioritizing transportation modes other than automobiles did not mean that automobiles would go away.

Sturbaum thanked Piedmont-Smith for all the work she had put into amending the Plan.

Piedmont-Smith pointed out that the amendment also included language that Councilmember Andy Ruff had prepared in Amendment 18.

Rollo said he supported the amendment.

The motion to adopt Amendment 01-R received a roll call vote of Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0 (Chopra absent).

Vote on Amendment 01-R [9:53pm]

Piedmont-Smith moved and it was seconded to adopt Amendment 02.

Amendment 02

Piedmont-Smith explained the purpose of the amendment.

Rosenbarger said staff supported the amendment.

The motion to adopt Amendment 02 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0 (Chopra absent).

Vote on Amendment 02 [9:56pm]

Volan moved and it was seconded to adopt Amendment 46.

Amendment 46

Volan explained that he had prepared the amendment at the request of staff. He noted it eliminated some unnecessary material in the Plan.

Rosenbarger explained that more work was needed on the pedestrian network and the material removed by the amendment failed to provide clear direction on how to do that.

Granger asked if the amendment was relevant to the work done by the Council Sidewalk Committee.

Council questions:

Rosenbarger said both dealt with similar ideas.

Rollo asked if the information removed by the amendment would still be considered when the city discussed improvements to its pedestrian network.

Rosenbarger explained that there should be a more descriptive approach to assessing the pedestrian network before the Plan placed value on or weighted certain factors.

Rollo asked if the material should be placed in the appendix rather than eliminated.

Volan suggested having multiple maps with factors weighted in different ways.

Rosenbarger said staff preferred to remove the material because it could be misleading. She pointed out the maps would still exist for city use, even if they were not included in the Plan.

Piedmont-Smith said she supported the amendment because the map currently in the Plan was confusing and needed more work.

Council comment:

Volan spoke in favor of the amendment.

Amendment 46 (cont'd)

Rollo said he was glad to hear there would be more analysis of where improvements to the pedestrian network should be made.

The motion to adopt Amendment 46 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0 (Chopra absent).

Vote on Amendment 46
[10:08pm]

Volan asked what the next steps were after the Council passed the Plan.

Council questions on Resolution 19-01 as amended

Dan Sherman, Council Administrator/Attorney, explained the process after the Council passed the Plan.

Alex Goodlad spoke about improving public transit.

Public comment:

Granger said the process of reviewing the Plan was hard work and thanked all those, including the public, who had provided input.

Council comment:

Sturbaum thanked staff and the Council for their work on the Plan.

Volan said he was pleased with having a more robust transportation plan that was not as car-centric as previous plans.

Piedmont-Smith thanked staff who had worked on the Plan, but said she was disappointed that so many amendments were required.

Rollo thanked staff for their work and said the Plan was a good document.

The motion to adopt Resolutio19-01 as amended received a roll call vote of Ayes: 7, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0 (Chopra absent).

Vote on Resolution19-01 as amended [10:21pm]

There was no other business.

OTHER BUSINESS

There were no changes to the council schedule.

COUNCIL SCHEDULE [10:22pm]

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22pm.

ADJOURNMENT

APPROVED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana upon this 14 day of August, 2019.

APPROVE:

ATTEST:

Dave Rollo, PRESIDENT
Bloomington Common Council

~~Nicole Bolden, CLERK~~ Stephen Lucas,
City of Bloomington Chief Deputy Clerk