



**CITY OF NEWARK
DELAWARE**

Newark Transportation Improvement District Committee Meeting

Date/Time: Wednesday, May 11, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

Location: Hybrid Meeting – City Hall Council Chambers and Virtual via Teams

Attendees

<u>Committee Members</u>	
Newark Planning and Development	Mary Ellen Gray, AICP
Newark Planning and Development	Mike Fortner, AICP
DeIDOT	Sarah Coakley, AICP
WILMAPCO	Heather Dunigan
University of Delaware	Neil Werner
Newark Planning Commission	Alan Silverman
BikeNewark	Bob McBride
Downtown Newark Design Committee	Joe Charma, PE
District 4 Representative	Jamie Magee
District 5 Representative	Jim Jones
<u>Other Attendees</u>	
Newark Planning and Development	Josh Solge
Newark Planning and Development	Kaitlin Dinsmore
Newark Public Works and Water Resources	Mike Falkowski, PE
<u>Committee Support</u>	
AECOM	David Athey, PE
AECOM	Mayuresh Khare, AICP, PP

Meeting Minutes

- The meeting started at 1:30 pm. Attendees present at City Hall introduced themselves. David Athey read the names of the virtual attendees.
- Minutes from the February 9, 2022 meeting were approved without exception.
- Sarah Coakley began her presentation by revisiting the Route 4 / Route 896 corridors and intersection improvements. See meeting materials. These are estimated to cost a little over \$10 million but approximately \$4 million is included in the Route 4 improvements. The portions south of Welsh Tract Road are estimated at about \$2.2 million with half apportioned to the shared use path. Heather Dunigan noted that BikeNewark has recommended a cross-road connector between Bloom Energy and Park Drive. David Athey asked if the shared use path would be part of the proposed flyover. Sarah said that it would be. Alan Silverman asked where the TID and non-TID improvements begin and end and that those limits should be clarified before presenting plan to City Council. Sarah indicated that the transition is south of Welsh Tract Road. Mike Falkowski asked if

the portions of the shared use path over the interstate were included in the costs for the interchange project. Sarah said they were.

- There was uncertainty over the start date of the I-95 / Route 896 intersection improvements. Alan inquired if new right-of-way would be needed and noted the proposed redevelopment of the former Howard Johnson's site. Mary Ellen Gray said she thought the redevelopment would work with existing entrances. Mike Falkowski furthered the response by noting that Public Works and Water Resources is requiring DeIDOT approvals as a condition of the redevelopment.
- Sarah continued her presentation by revisiting the Main Street McKee Connector and alternatives of a separated one-way shared use path or a separated on-road two-way bike lane. Cost estimates ranged from \$1 million for a separated shared use path and \$5.6 million for a separated on-road two-way bike lane. Alan noted that the two way path would result in the loss of 54 parking spaces. He asked if there'd be a physical barrier. Sarah replied that a curb would separate the path from the roadway. Consensus of the Committee was that they should make a recommendation to City Council. Joe asked how many poles would need to be removed, to which Sarah replied 13. Joe mentioned the possibility for instead placing the utilities underground. Alan noted that while trip generation rates were common as a justification for roadway projects, that type of information is lacking for paths and questioned where the users would come from. Joe said he thought the College Square (The Grove) redevelopment would result in usage and Heather said the connector was recommended in the New Castle County Bike Plan. Upon further discussion, the Committee felt that the less expensive single use path was the better option.
- Sarah then presented a revised plan for the Old Papermill Trail that would limit its length to portions west of Possum Park Road only. The limitation resulted in an overall cost savings of just \$300,000. Mike Fortner asked about floodplain impacts and Sarah said the trail would be mostly raised about flood elevation. Due to the small cost savings, Sarah and Heather thought the original plan was the better option. Alan asked if the path could be used by all two-wheeled vehicles including electric scooters. Josh Solge said he thought such scooters were banned in Delaware. Mary Ellen observed that three-wheeled vehicles are also available. Heather said that the use of paths by non-bicycle users is not desired but happens anyway. The Committee indicated that the original plan was the better option.
- Neil Warner asked about shared use path widths in general but also referred back to the McKee Connector. He said he thought an 8 foot wide path would be too narrow for pedestrians and bicyclists to share particularly if a two-way path was designated. It was clarified that the Committee recommended that the McKee Connector be a one-way path with directional lane markings for bikes and pedestrians to share the one-way facility.
- Sarah concluded her presentation by noting that the right-of-way table for the Kershaw Connector had been updated to fix some discrepancies.
- Sarah said the Route 273 right-turn lane, Possum Park Road improvements, and the Wyoming Avenue roundabout and bicycle improvements would be presented at the June meeting. She also said that DTC had recommended that 10% of the TID costs should be dedicated for transit options, not 5%. They do not know where new bus stops may be needed and therefore those costs were not directly reflected in the TID costs. But additional improvements would be needed. Alan opined that businesses would need to pay for bus stops but then also have to put up with the hassle. Joe said he thought bus stop locations could affect the TID design. Alan agreed and said that DTC should have some idea about potential bus stop locations.
- David Athey closed the meeting by reiterating the projects that would be discussed at the June meeting and stating the intent to begin presenting the fee program and monitoring program at the July meeting with the goal of making final recommendations to City Council in early fall.
- There were no public comments.
- The meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.