

Complete Streets Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

April 26, 2012, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Capitol Commons Building

Present:

Kirk Steudle, Rochelle Hurst, Lt. Gary Megge, Linda Miller-Atkinson, Andrea Brown, Carolyn Grawi, John Niemela, Gary Piotrowicz, Suzanne Schulz, Felicia Wasson (for Karen Kafantaris), Barbara Schmid, Rory Neuner, James Tischler, Jon Mayes (for Steve DeBrabander)

Not Present:

Kelli Kavanaugh, Christopher White, Ken Fletcher, Megan Olds, Karen Kafantaris, Steve DeBrabander

Welcome – Suzanne Schulz

Chairwoman Suzanne Schulz welcomed everyone to the sixth Complete Streets Advisory Council (CSAC) meeting. She informed the group that there would be a public comment period at the beginning as well as at the end of the meeting. Those wishing to speak were asked to fill out a public comment card and return it to a staff member. Suzanne also stated that there was a conference line available for those who would like to listen to the proceedings. Public comments can be received by email at MDOT-CompletestreetsAC@michigan.gov.

All the council members and/or their representatives were asked to introduce themselves. It was reiterated that, although representatives are welcome, it was agreed at the first meeting only appointed council members are allowed to vote.

Approval of Minutes

James Tischler made a motion to approve the January 25, 2012 draft meeting minutes and Gary Megge seconded the motion. Motion was approved. Ms. Schulz announced that draft meeting minutes are posted on the website: www.michigan.gov/completestreets.

Public Comment

Frank Kalinski from Livonia, MI stated he drives a bus in greater metro Detroit area. He spoke about design features of intersections and the effect on pedestrians. He recommended several improvements including limiting right-turn-on-red and reducing median strip width. He stressed complete streets is a long-term design effort, but could be accomplished if the idea were started now at the concept stage.

Sherry Jousma spoke next. Her topic was why we need complete streets throughout Kent County. She gave a personal account of her difficulty, as a visually-impaired individual, getting to the doctor's office for treatment. From personal experience, she said complete streets give independence to all.

Rae Bower described her difficulty, as a wheelchair user, getting to the dentist office on 28th Street. She stressed her support of complete streets, by citing her personal experiences and struggles.

Kim Menninga works with disability advocates in Kent County. She stated they need access to jobs, doctors and more. She highlighted many design issues, such as curb ramps on only one side of an intersection, that make travel difficult for disabled pedestrians. She stressed the need for clarity in the design process, for roadway networks that do not end at municipal boundaries, and for stricter standards for all intersections.

Correspondence

Ms. Brown presented six pieces of correspondence that have been submitted to the council. These were accepted by the council without comment.

Ms. Schulz gave an update of progress on legislation proposed in response to the Governor's Infrastructure Message, including language that would sunset the council in December 2012, provided the State Transportation Commission enacts a complete streets policy. Carolyn Grawi voiced concern that sunsetting the council might mean no one would be there to see the ideas through to implementation.

Revision to CSAC Vision Statement

Changes suggested at the previous meeting were shown and discussed. Barbara Schmid moved to adopt and approve the new complete streets vision wording, and was seconded by Carolyn Grawi. Motion was approved.

Work Session

The discussion turned to the presentation for the STC. Director Steudle said 20 minutes was ideal, and encouraged them to keep the presentation high level, making the points they needed to make, but not being redundant.

It was agreed that Carolyn Grawi, Gary Piotrowicz, and Suzanne Schulz would make the presentation to the State Transportation Commission.

Suzanne asked members to share the three most important items they wanted to see in the presentation. There were a variety of answers and several that were common to all members such as access, safety, funding, context, and flexibility. Before the work session began, Ms. Schulz referred to the draft presentation that was sent via email to the council prior to the meeting, and was included in the packets. The content of the draft presentation was based on the brainstorming that took place during the January meeting of the council.

The CSAC was then divided into four pre-selected work groups: success stories; liability; policy language review; and outreach. The groups were asked to develop additional slides for these topics, delete undesired slides and discuss. The slides were then given to an MDOT member to assemble for the council to discuss further.

Presentations

Suzanne introduced Darrell Harden – Co-chair of MDOT Complete Streets Internal team (CSIT). Darrell introduced Drew Buckner, CSIT Co-chair and asked other members of the team to stand for recognition. Darrell presented the internal team's items for consideration, including:

- A refined list of five categories based on the National Complete Streets Council's 10 elements: Vision, Network, Context, Applicability, and Exceptions.
- Network analysis: Sometimes the best project might not be in MDOT right-of-way
- Want to convey an atmosphere of inclusiveness
- CSS is an excellent way to incorporate CS principles

- MDOT should include CS principles in all projects
- Develop clear “exceptions” to be considered in limited circumstances.
- Propose MDOT develop internal guidance and report annually to the STC

Suzanne then introduced Polly Kent. Polly asked members to review the chart of local policies for their July meeting, to identify model policies that they can recommend to the State Transportation Commission. Polly briefly touched on the spreadsheet:

- Includes a list of recommended sample complete streets policies from Michigan, as well as Minnesota, Maryland and other states.
- All of the policies include a vision for complete streets, and include some recognition of the importance of context in their complete streets approach.
- Charge of CSAC is to provide examples of policies to the STC for other communities to draw on as they consider their own policy.
- The spreadsheet contains links to each policy referenced, and the list will be emailed to members at the end of the meeting.

Polly again asked members to look over these policies, send in other local policies they are aware of, and come back in July ready to recommend a set of local policies to the STC.

STC Presentation

Polly walked council members through the revised STC presentation. Discussion and suggestions from the work groups had already been incorporated. The council reviewed each slide and discussed changes/improvements.

- Gary Piotrowicz pointed out that the council needs to cut some of the slides, the video itself takes up 4 minutes. Director Steudle had previously suggested the presentation be 20 minutes in length. STC Commissioner Linda Atkinson said it could go longer, as there are three new commissioners who don't know anything about CS and it would be helpful for them. Barbara asked if the video break might be better placed elsewhere in the presentation. Michelle will move it to later in the presentation.
- As previously noted, presenters will be **Suzanne, Carolyn and Gary**.

Several other changes were discussed, and the following “homework” assignments were agreed to:

- Suzanne and Andrea Brown will provide additional data for the safety slide
- Megan Olds to be contacted for a possible rural CS example from Traverse City
- Bill Shrek and Jim Tischler will provide additional information on the Intergovernmental Coordinating Council.

Council members agreed that the presentation would be changed as discussed and sent to the group for one more opportunity to comment or suggest changes.

Public Comment

There were no additional public comments.

Wrap up – Suzanne Schulz

Mrs. Schulz reviewed what had been presented and discussed, and noted items for follow up. A reminder was given for the Transportation Commission meeting on May 17th at 9 a.m. at the Office of Aeronautics Auditorium, 2700 Port Lansing Road, 1st Floor, Lansing,

Michigan. A reminder was given about homework: each member was asked to review the chart and the examples of submitted local policies prior to the July meeting, keeping in mind whether the language was consistent with the CSAC vision. Changes or concerns will be discussed at the July meeting. There were no more items to discuss and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for July 26, 2012, from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Capitol Commons Building.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Transportation Commission Meeting:
May 17, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.
Location: Office of Aeronautics Auditorium,
2700 Port Lansing Road, 1st Floor, Lansing, Michigan

For More Information: www.michigan.gov/completestreets

*“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success.” -- Henry Ford*