

A. CALL TO ORDER:

A Special Joint Meeting of the Troy City Council and Planning Commission was held on Monday, November 9, 2015, at City Hall, 500 W. Big Beaver Rd. Mayor Slater called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

B. ROLL CALL:City Council Members

Mayor Dane Slater
 Jim Campbell
 Steve Gottlieb - Absent
 Dave Henderson
 Ellen Hodorek
 Ed Pennington
 Doug Tietz - Absent

Planning Commission Members

Chairman Don Edmunds
 Ollie Apahidean
 Karen Crusse
 Carlton Faison – Arrived at 6:06 PM
 Michael W. Hutson
 Tom Krent
 Padma Kuppa
 Philip Sanzica
 John J. Tagle
 Frencheska Brikho (Student) - Absent

C. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**C-1 Trails and Pathways (Introduced by: Brian Kischnick, City Manager)**

Mayor Slater opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance at this meeting. Chairman Edmunds thanked all in attendance and City Administration for putting together the joint meetings with City Council and the Planning Commission.

Mr. Brian Kischnick, City Manager, introduced the topic and began the discussion. He explained that the City Council has identified trails and pathways in the Top Strategies since 2014. He provided some background on this topic and spoke of some of the challenges Troy faces with trails and pathways.

Mr. Kischnick introduced Mr. Fred Phillips, President of the Friends of the Clinton River Trail. Mr. Phillips provided his background related to the topic. He explained that public engagement is important in developing a plan for trails because sometimes residents view trails negatively until they are informed about increased property values, safety and other positive aspects of living near trails.

Mr. Kurt Bovensiep, Public Works Manager, discussed the public input that has been sought by City Administration, as well as the history of the trails and pathways plan since 1972. Mr. Bovensiep also described the plan for creating and funding the trails and pathways plan.

Mr. Alex Bellak, GIS Administrator, discussed the development plan for trails and pathways in the City.

Ms. Jennifer Chehab, with Hubbell, Roth & Clark Inc., discussed the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant, a state-wide grant program for non-motorized trail funding. She added that public engagement is a big portion of the TAP Grant funding process.

Mr. Brent Savidant, Planning Director, discussed the public engagement process that the City has gone through up to this point. He added that feedback after the first public engagement meeting was difficult to quantify, so they implemented additional measures going into the second public engagement meeting. Ms. Ashely Levin, Project Manager with Public Works, described the notification process for the second public engagement meeting. Mr. Bill Huotari, Deputy City Engineer, discussed the feedback received from the public engagement meetings. Ms. Katelyn Sackner, NEXT Assistant, discussed the residential feedback from online comments, emails and conversations with resident and came up with 95 solid votes with a majority in support of the project with minor or major suggestions to the route. Mr. Mark Miller, Director of Economic and Community Development, discussed the three pathway options developed using public engagement input. Ms. Sackner described the pathway preference of the residents with a majority opting for the Transportation Pathway. Mr. Bovensiep described the pathway types and the plan for creating the pathways once the routes are decided.

Mr. Kischnick summarized the process and the history of the trails and pathways plan. He described the Transportation Pathway option, which is the pathway that received the most votes during the public engagement meetings. He added that this pathway option does not meet the TAP Grant guidelines and will not be funded.

Ms. Jennifer Chehab said that the project is not funded for what was requested in the TAP Grant application. She clarified that the City is still eligible for funding through the TAP Grant provided they use a different route.

Mr. Hutson said that he is disturbed that a small portion of the population can cause an adverse decision from the State regarding grant funding.

Mrs. Crusse said that she does not like the pathway plan that includes painted lanes on public roadways.

Council Member Hodorek requested clarification on the difference between the various routes and the phases. Mr. Kischnick explained that the goal this evening is to determine which route is preferred, and then the approved route will be completed in phases.

Council Member Henderson indicated that his decision is dependent on funding. He recommends seeking a larger sampling of the residents affected by phase 1.

Mayor Slater confirmed that the City sent mailings to 2400 residents. He added that the majority of survey responses over the years indicate that they want the project; however, the residents do not provide input until it affects them.

Mrs. Kuppa inquired what other communities have done to overcome resistance when applying for a TAP Grant. Mr. Phillips responded that Troy faces unique challenges. He recommends creating a portfolio of surveys and public input to determine the general population demand for the project.

Mayor Slater understood after many discussions with residents that the trails and pathways should connect the parks. He added that the proposed routes completely bypass a beautiful jewel, the Troy Nature Center. He expressed his disappointment with losing the funding for this project.

Council Member Pennington said he doesn't believe that the Transportation option should expect a large push back from the residents. He added that he thought that there would be paths through wooded areas and that he misunderstood that the routes were to connect the parks. Council Member Pennington asked about the different types of pathways. Mr. Bovensiep explained the difference between dedicated pathways, shared use arrows or "sharrows" and in-road pathways. He added that the Transportation option does not use any sharrows, as that option does not use residential streets. He said that Northfield Parkway is the only road that will have in-road pathways.

Council Member Hodorek inquired if the Transportation option can be altered. She said that if the purpose of tonight's meeting is to offer direction, she favors altering the Transportation option to include the Troy Nature Center.

Mr. Sanzica said in earlier discussions an option was to use trails to connect the Troy Farm to the Troy Nature Center. Mayor Slater explained that the option is cost-prohibitive and that the route contains wooded areas that would require a lot of trees to be cleared. Mr. Sanzica recommends looking at right of way and focus on the easiest and most cost-effective access route.

Mr. Krent agreed that pathways on South Boulevard to the Troy Nature Center is a terrific option.

The Mayor asked for consensus of City Council and the Planning Commission to pursue the TAP Grant again at the next available opportunity, and to modify the Transportation Pathway to include connection to the Troy Nature Center. That option would connect to four parks and four schools.

Mr. Tagle asked if there are downsides to this alternate option already known and studied by City Administration. Mr. Kischnick explained that every path has nuances. He added that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to gain direction for City Administration to pursue.

Mr. Apahidean asked if right of way acquisition is required for the grant. Mr. Bovensiep answered that all three plans shown do not require land acquisition.

Mayor Slater obtained consensus from the Board to alter the Transportation option to extend north on Coolidge to South Boulevard, adding connection to the Troy Nature Center in the option, and then continuing west on South Boulevard to Adams to connect to the Clinton River Trail.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dan Smith – Troy resident; Supports trails and pathways

Terry Lafontaine – Troy resident; Does not support bike paths through neighborhoods, supports the Transportation Pathway

James Andrew – Troy resident; Supports the Transportation Pathway

Bethany Baker – Troy resident; Spoke on behalf of the Hills of Charnwood, supports the Transportation Pathway

Denise Holland – Troy resident; Has concerns regarding traffic on the pathway near her house

Nick Best – Troy resident; Supports bike paths

David Ashland – Troy resident; Supports bike paths and also wants to see street usage for bike transportation not just leisure

E. ADJOURNMENT:

The Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 7:18 PM.



Mayor Dane Slater



M. Aileen Dickson, CMC
City Clerk