Safe, Vibrant, Walkable Streets Committee Meeting Agenda

September 24, 2015

1401 Hollins Street, Baltimore MD

7pm to 9pm

Present

Biff Browning

Eric Clay

Caitlin Doolin

Talib Horne

Sandra Matier

Bill Pickens

Chris Redwood

Daniel Rodenburg

Sarah Roberson

Lionel Terrell

Elizabeth Weber

**Baltimore City Bike Plan Updates for SWP neighborhoods** (Caitlin Doolin):

The West Baltimore Bike Boulevard project received funding last year, the City is in the 60% design phase now and should have design done by the end of the year and start implementing the project next spring.

Bike Boulevards take existing low stress streets (streets without a lot of traffic) and add infrastructure to make it clear that bikes are a priority for using the streets and to make the streets safer for bikes. The proposed bike boulevards in the SWP area are Carrollton, , Stricker, Hollins, and Lexington.

Examples of infrastructure changes are speed bumps, stop signs, intersection controls, a forward stop bar for bikes to make street crossings easier and mini roundabouts at major intersections. All improvements will happen in the same season and the proposed plan is included in the minutes.

The plan proposes adding mini roundabouts where Stricker and Carrolton cross Baltimore St, which will mean the removal of one parking space on each intersection for roundabouts. Roundabouts are mountable for heavy vehicles which means that busses can go over them. The project will require no paving or milling of streets except around the mini roundabouts.

They are out today to get feedback on what is being proposed. The deadline for public comments is the end of November.

The City is also looking for grant funding to improve the MLK side path and has received funding for a cycle track on W. Pratt St. The goal is to create a connected network that someone with limited biking experience would feel comfortable getting around via bike.

Bike racks will be added through a city wide free bike rack program. Community members can email Caitlin ( an address and a contact name and phone number and racks are installed within two to six months. They will be the Green U Racks which park 2 bikes each.

Bill Pickens: DC has added lots of bike infrastructure and biking has picked up. In his experience, One way street crossings works well, bicycle forward stop bars don’t work as well.

Biff Browning: invited Caitlin to come to the Union Square Meeting, and requested bike racks in Union Square Park. As Recreation and Parks is working on the comfort stations in the park, it would be great if the design could be integrated.

Sandra Mattia: is here from the Department of Transportation. The destination signs throughout the city are very old and belong to DOT. The Committee expressed interest in having signs for the area.

A question was asked about improving the safety of crossing MLK. The City is scoping a study looking at 10 intersections along MLK for pedestrian and bike crossings.

**Crime and Grime sub-committee for SWP Commercial Development Committee:** The Commercial Development Committee established three subcommittees. One was Crime and Grime, which is focusing on the direct impact of crime and trash on commercial properties. Chris is the chair of that committee and will be integrating their work and the work of the SVW committee. The idea is to provide that committee with what they need to address crime issues and connect larger public safety strategy with the SVW Committee.

Chris and other members of the subcommittee identified some problem spots in the sector that is between Fayette and Pratt and Arlington and Calhoun. Issue spots include corner of Pratt and Carey, Carey street, and the corner of Arlington and Pratt, which leads into the Mount Clare shopping center. The 1100 block of Baltimore St. has a lot of blight. This area will be the first area looked at by the subcommittee.

One strategy is to have the Southern District come out to talk to the committee. They are agreeing to do a meeting in October to sit down with community and police to discuss issues. It will be similar to Citizen on Patrol walk, but will instead be a sit down and talk.

One of the known challenges is that officers are supposed to get out of their cars for thirty minutes on their shift, but there is no control over when and where that happens. JR Lee: the police should overlap when they get out of their cars so that there is an officer on the street at all times.

JR: would it be possible to have a board up program for 1000-1100 block of W Baltimore St, boarding up the second and third floor windows at least as the buildings are vacant and people are overdosing in them.

Dan Rodenberg: the owners of those buildings have a window of time before demolition to come up with plans. In the meantime there have been numerous meetings to board them up. JR asked if the community could board it up themselves, and it seemed as though they could.

**Bon Secours Community Works Clean and Green (Talib, Eric, Lionel):** Chris asked them to come to talk about their program and what they’ve learned about lot maintenance. Since 1999 Clean and Green has cleaned over 600 lots. Have learned that people have to be committed to keeping up the lots. They can clean, but the need the community to the maintain. They have received an anchor grant to board up 60 properties, so if a vacant needs to be boarded they will put it on the list if they have the address. If the community wants to take care of a lot that is vacant they can send a letter to the owner. If there’s no reply in 30 days the community can maintain the lot. The Neighborhood Law Center has a nuisance program that community members can go through as well. If the community has a list of lots that they need assistance with the list can be sent to Lionel and Clean and will determine if they have capacity to help out. The committee asked if there was a resource guide on how to manage a vacant lot.

Bon Secours Community Works is in talks with the City to have Clean and Green be on the official city contractor list for maintaining houses and lots. The Southwest Partnership can help Clean and Green expand its capacity by sending a letter to the City. Talib will share the process--the letter should be sent to Rudy Childe expressing that the SWP area neighborhoods would like Clean and Green to be an official contractor in West Baltimore. This will increase their capacity to handle lots and houses in the area.

Chris has met with DPW and they have committed to having a trash can on Baltimore St, cleaning crews on Baltimore St. from Monroe to MLK until street sweeping signs can be reinstalled so that street sweeping can begin again, as well as gateway crews coming daily to pick up trash from community clean ups along major streets.

**Committee Workgroups Needed:**

1. Survey: capture conditions in each neighborhood. Hollins, Union Square, and Barre Circle are already done. A workgroup leader is needed to coordinate the other surveys. Seven people is the best number to have when doing a survey, as there are seven different categories. Bif will ask Thomas if he is interested.
2. Park Improvements: working with the Friends of Carroll Park and Friends of W. Baltimore Squares to advocate for improvements and to focus on maintenance and upkeep of the parks. Bif will take the lead on Park Improvements projects.
3. Voter Registration: a few community members are certified to register people to vote, and can also certify others. Voter registration is an important part of increasing the political pull of the area. JR suggested using the parking lot across from the Market to work on a big outreach event, and said that Elaine Lee (his sister) would be interested. Dan will work with her.
4. Grants: Mary Alice (in Union Square) is very good at writing grants and may be interested.
5. Elementary School Greening Programs: Elizabeth will check with members of the Education and Workforce Development Committee to see if they are interested.
6. Trash and Litter: Revisiting trash and litter, take the lead on following up with Bon Secours. Dan will do it.

**Committee Project Updates**

1. Tree Planting: Saturday the 19th on West Pratt Street volunteers and community members planted 24 trees impacting Mount Clare and Union Square neighborhoods. Going to plant 20 trees along Hollins St. this Saturday (26th) volunteers will get storm water credit fees.
2. B&O Bridge/Underpass: identified in the Vision Plan as an area of concern. B&O agreeable to assist in that effort. NDC has agreed to assist with coming up with a design to assist in the aesthetics of the area. Bill Pickens: Parks and People, Southwest Baltimore Charter School, and the B&O are in serious discussions with a landscape contractor to clean up the area behind the school. B&O has a grant to stabilize the slopes, but it became clear that something has to be done immediately and that the a lot of environmental study work needed to be done, grant for stabilization has begun dwindling. The landscape company is scheduled for late October early November to clean the place up, There are going to be areas that can’t be touched. Once its cut back the design and environmental team will go in to see what’s there. Only touching the school triangle and B&O, can’t go to the trail or pass the trail.
3. 311 Residents Guide: needs to have more contact information for helpful City officials, as well as to be made beautiful. Elizabeth will reach out to committee members for their input.
4. Landlord Pamphlet- a draft has been written. Chris will share with Elizabeth

Announcements:

Upcoming Committee Events

Tree Planting: Hollins Street, 26 September 10am to 1pm

Tree Planting: East End Hollins Market, 3 October 9:30am to 1pm

Clean and Green: S. Fulton Avenue, 10 October 10am to 1pm

Lots of Art Work Days

117-119 S Carey workday (needed)

1218-1220 West Lombard St. workday, 3 October 9am to 12pm

Sunflower Village

Sowebo 5K Race 4 October, Union Square Park

Paul’s Place Huff Puff November 14th

No Committee Meeting in December, November meeting changed to **November 19th**

Mayor’s Fall Clean Up October 24th