

DRAFT

Route 9 Monitoring Committee Meeting Minutes

10/16/2018

An audio recording of this meeting is available at <http://www.wilmapco.org/Route9/>.

Attendees

- David Dooley, DART
- Carlos Dipres, First State Community Action Agency
- Kenneth Fuller, Oakmont Civic Association
- Mike Hahn, DelDOT Planning
- Ronald Handy, New Castle Prevention Coalition
- Renae Held, DNREC
- Lee Jarmon, Overview Gardens/Garfield Park Civic Association
- James Parker, Oakmont Civic Association
- Sandra Smithers, New Castle Prevention Coalition
- Jeanette Swain, Rose Hill Civic Association
- Bill Swiatek, WILMAPCO
- Jake Thompson, WILMAPCO

Minutes

- **[0:00:40 in recording]** The committee reviewed the previous meeting minutes.
 - There were no comments. The committee accepted the previous meeting minutes.
- **[0:01:20 in recording]** Bill Swiatek reviewed the mission and vision statements. There was no discussion.
- **[0:02:20 in recording]** Bill Swiatek reviewed the Memorial Drive Road Diet public workshop. He shared a draft flyer on page 21 in the meeting packet.
 - Mike Hahn gave a recap of the Memorial Drive road diet project. He handed out a sheet showing a cross-section of proposed conditions of the road on one side and existing conditions on the other side. Currently, Memorial Drive has four lanes with a center median, on-street parking on both sides, a small grass buffer, and sidewalks. The proposed configuration aims to improve walkability and safety. This is an interim road diet that makes it safer for walkability and improves bicycle access. This proposal removes a travel lane in each direction and adds a 5-foot bike lane and a painted buffer between the bike lane and parking lane. The proposal maintains turn lanes for entering neighborhoods. At the public workshop, we hope to receive feedback about this proposal.
 - Carlos Dipres said that this would be much safer for kids walking to school.
 - Sandra Smithers asked where the turn lanes would be.

- Mike Hahn said the turn lanes would be in the place of the buffer and parking lanes for a short distance near intersections. The bike lane would continue through the intersection.
 - Lee Jarmon said that cars are often parked very close to intersections, which makes it difficult to see around the corner. He said this should improve visibility and safety.
- Jeannette Swain asked how kids would cross Memorial Drive.
 - Mike Hahn said that crossings would remain at key intersections.
 - Bill Swiatek said that by taking out a travel lane, it will make it easier and safer to cross the street.
 - Mike Hahn said that one of the objectives of the road diet is to slow cars down and make it safer for all users.
- Ronald Handy asked if we have data on the number of cars that travel the roadway and if traffic will not be affected by removing a travel lane.
 - Bill Swiatek said there are about 9,000 cars per day. Typically, road diets work well on roads with up to 15,000-20,000 cars per day, and Memorial Drive is well below that.
- James Parker asked how you would convince people that removing a travel lane will make it safer to cross.
 - Bill Swiatek said that it would lower speeds and greatly reduce the distance to cross the street and the number of oncoming cars you have to worry about.
 - Mike Hahn said that it's a design feature. You will be able to drive comfortably at almost any speed, but if it is narrower (one lane), it will encourage you to drive more carefully.
- Carlos Dipres said that he knows people with disabilities who live on Memorial Drive who have trouble crossing the street.
 - Lee Jarmon said that some people have to wait for a while at intersections to be able to cross safely. He also said that some people will walk down to the intersection at Wawa because there is more visibility to cross the street.
- James Parker asked there will be a traffic light installed.
 - Bill Swiatek said that this project is strictly a repaving and restriping project. For the McCullough Safe Routes to School project, we are looking into improving one or two intersections, which could include flashing lights or better refuge islands.
 - David Dooley said that this falls under a paving and rehab project, so it does not include widening the street or doing intersection studies.
 - Mike Hahn said that this is an interim project. It is a first step and will provide measurable results. There is a much larger pedestrian enhancements project that will come later.
 - Sandra Smithers said that if it doesn't work, it can be undone. There are no permanent structures and it can be repainted. And that is what she likes best about this project.
- Bill Swiatek said that the workshop will be designed like an open house. There will be some boards about the Master Plan in general and the McCullough Safe Routes to School project. DelDOT will have a series of boards showing what the road diet will look like. He suggested to Mike Hahn to have a diagram of the turn lanes.
 - Mike Hahn said that he will be able to show what the cross-section will look like at each turning area.
- Bill Swiatek asked if the format sounds good to everyone.

- Carlos Dipres suggested having an animation showing how traffic movements will work in the proposed design.
 - Mike Hahn said he will ask about comparing the boards with what DeIDOT did on Philadelphia Pike and Union Street in terms of the visualizations that were presented.
 - Jeanette Swain asked how feedback will be collected.
 - Mike Hahn said that at most of the DeIDOT workshops, there is a comment/suggestion period, as well as the option to provide written comments.
 - Carlos Dipres suggested having one or two people with a computer handy so they could collect comments or questions.
 - Mike Hahn said that DeIDOT's Community Relations department is sometimes hesitant to do that, because it could be a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) concern if people leave their names but don't want their feedback to be known publicly. It is better if comments are kept anonymous. He said that there would be a simple feedback/comment form that people could fill out.
 - Bill Swiatek said that on pages 19 and 20, there is a description of existing conditions and future conditions with the road diet. He asked if there is a way to present this information visually.
 - Committee members agreed that this information is too technical.
 - Mike Hahn agreed and said that if these are presented visually, it would make it easier for the engineers to explain it.
 - Bill Swiatek asked if anyone has any edits or feedback on the flyer on page 21.
 - Dora Williams asked how long it will be until this is distributed. She said that there is a long turnaround time to getting the flyer out to the community.
 - Bill Swiatek said that the flyer will be ready this week.
 - Renae Held suggested clearly explaining the project limits on the flyer.
 - Jeannette Swain suggested clarifying "Review Proposed Safety Improvements" to say "Proposed Road Safety Improvements".
 - Bill Swiatek said that we will try to squeeze in a "before" picture.
 - Bill Swiatek said that we will distribute the flyer electronically as well. He asked Carlos Dipres if he could help with a Spanish translation.
 - Carlos Dipres said that he could do that.
 - Bill Swiatek said that we hope to have one side in English and one side in Spanish.
- **[0:54:30 in recording]** Bill Swiatek shared some brief updates. He said that he presented the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan at some civic group meetings. At the Eden/Hamilton Park Civic Association meeting, there was discussion about the community survey regarding the potential for relocation. The survey has been wrapped up and the results are being studied. He also said he met with the Holloway Terrace Civic Association, and they learned about the Master Plan.
- Bill Swiatek said that Safe Routes to School projects are moving along. At McCullough, the team is working on ways to make the intersections safer to cross in conjunction with the Memorial Drive road diet changes. There will be a board at the workshop about that.
- Bill Swiatek said that the OJT subcommittee is working on getting funding to get the work finished. DeIDOT does not have the money, so the subcommittee is looking at alternatives to get a few thousand dollars to work out contracts. Councilman Street is interested in providing that money if he has to, but he threw the request over to New Castle County Community Services to see if they could fund the effort.

- Bill Swiatek said that he does not have updates on the hometown overlay.
- James Parker asked if the new homes that are being proposed for the area were offered as an option for Eden/Hamilton Park community members to relocate into.
 - Bill Swiatek said that there was a question on the survey that asked where people would like to move if they wanted to move, but it was an open ended question and did not suggest any particular location.
 - James Parker said that the community members there might not know about the new homes that are proposed for the area.
 - Bill Swiatek said that he thinks this is a good idea, but it is ahead of what the County is doing. The area has to be rezoned first before the new housing is built and that hasn't even been done.
 - Jeanette Swain asked if the economic development person from New Castle County will come to one of our meeting to talk about zoning changes.
 - Bill Swiatek said that he talked to Tamarra Morris. He said that she is interested in coming to one of our meetings, but she wants to have something more firm to present for a productive conversation.
 - Sandra Smithers suggested having a representative from zoning come to a future meeting to let the group know what the plans are for rezoning the area. She said we need to know the process for changing the zoning and how we can impact that process. She also suggested that Ms. Morris come to the meeting before she had anything firm, so the community could help her develop a plan.
- Mike Hahn said that his name is on the draft flyer if anyone has any questions or comments. People will be able to circulate the flyer throughout their communities. Committee members will be responsible to circulate the flyer as well. The success of the workshop depends on everyone in the committee.
- The next Monitoring Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 20 at 4:30 pm in the Scriptorium of the Route 9 Library.