

13 November, 2015

1984 Jefferson Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55105

Members of the City Council
Attn: Chris Tolbert, Ward 3
City of Saint Paul
15 W Kellogg Blvd #310,
St Paul, MN 55102

Dear Members of the City Council,

In August a Community Working Group was formed under the direction of Public Works Director Kathy Lantry in response to the Saint Paul City Council passing resolution PH 15-164. The goal of the Community Working Group was to provide voices and input resulting in a community and stakeholder driven recommendation for the Saint Paul City Bike Plan that will maximize the benefit to the neighborhood and its businesses and commuters. Specifically, the work group was to recommend the route for a north-south bicycle route that runs from Randolph Avenue to University Avenue between Fairview Avenue and Mississippi River Boulevard.

On Monday, November 9, our working group concluded its work and voted 8-4 to recommend that Cleveland Avenue be the designated bike route between Randolph and University.

While the decision to recommend Cleveland had strong support among the majority of working group members, there were also significant concerns raised about how this bike route would be implemented. Throughout our work we consistently heard from neighbors and small businesses along the proposed route raising important concerns about the impact designated bike lanes on Cleveland would have. The working group takes these concerns seriously and strongly urges the City to immediately begin developing mitigation plans and to secure the required resources to implement those plans in conjunction with the creation of the new bike facility.

Safety issues were central to the working group's prioritization and decision making process. During the course of our listening and learning we heard numerous concerns about adding a bike facility to a busy street. Specific ideas about improving lighting (particularly between Grand and St. Clair), reviewing the signalization and the potential for a left turn arrow at Cleveland and Randolph, and establishing clear markings for bicycle traffic through intersections are worthy of further study.

One of the most challenging aspects of the proposed Cleveland Bike lane is the loss of parking along Cleveland Avenue. This could have serious ramifications on small businesses and residents. A detailed mitigation plan addressing the loss of parking is essential. The working group explored a number of concrete ideas such as the creation of additional parking bays and potential modifications to resident parking zones. More work and technical analysis is required to create effective strategies to support our local businesses and neighbors.

Attached to this letter is a list of potential mitigation ideas the working group developed. We all recognize that the route selection is merely the first step toward implementation. Many working group

members stand willing and able to assist as detailed implementation and technical plans are developed. We request a response from the City Council or Director of Public Works by December 31, 2015 as to how the city will create a robust mitigation strategy, particularly for parking and safety, and the how St. Paul residents and business owners will be involved moving forward into the implementation phase.

Sincerely,

Dave Pasiuk
Chair, Cleveland Community Working Group

Cleveland Community Working Group:

Bill Lindeke Planning Commission Transportation Committee

Leo Viktora Macalester Groveland Community Council

Adam Backstrom Macalester Groveland Community Council

Dave Pasiuk MGCC Transportation Committee

Matt Wille Union Park District Council

Nate Kellar-Long Union Park District Council

Anne White Union Park District Council Land Use Committee

Angel Chandler Business Owners (Randolph/Cleveland)

Bob Stupka Business Owners (Grand/Cleveland)

Dick Trotter Business Owners (Marshall/Cleveland)

Mark Johnson St. Catherine's University

Amy Gage University of St. Thomas

Michael Sonn Saint Paul Bike Coalition

Amy Schwarz Women on Bikes/Smart Trips

Facilitation and City Support:

Tim Griffen Riverfront Corporation

Tracey Griffen Riverfront Corporation

Eric Molho Facilitation

Samantha Henningson City Council Ward 4

Libby Kantner City Council Ward 3

Luke Hanson Public Works

Reuben Collins Public Works

Joe Ellickson Public Works

Community Working Group Ideas to Make Cleveland A Better Bike Route:

The list of unprioritized ideas represents some of the implementation and mitigation strategies the Community Working Group feels are important to explore when bike lanes are added to Cleveland Avenue:

Parking

- Dedicate city funding for parking mitigation and parking bays
- In as strong a language as possible. Three bays:
Randolph to James (2 different parking bays)
West of Cleveland from the alley North to Palace
- Idea of a "test" to allow employees to buy permits for neighborhood parking districts.
- A review of the signalization at Randolph and Cleveland. Adding a left turn arrow? Looking at what can be done to improve that signal.
- How will Metro mobility pick up residents? How will the needs of elderly/handicapped members of Kehilat Sar Shalom Synagogue be addressed?
- Expanding some of the timed zones near Astound or the day care. Timed limits perhaps on cross streets. Timed during the drop off/rush hour times. Similar to Finn at the UST Child Development Center. Evening parking for residents?

Safety

- Lighting from Grand to St. Clair. Gets lost in the trees particularly in Spring and Summer.
- Traffic island at Randolph and Prior for bicyclists and Pedestrians
- High visibility of continuation of the bike lane through the intersections. Consider the green paint
- Buffered or protected bike lanes.
- Improve Marshall/Cleveland as a business destination Speed lowered to 25 mph.
- Jim Tolaas (Ramsey County) is concerned about adding the bike symbol painted in the bike lanes would encourage families to send children/families on the route. Is it safer to just stripe the lane?
- Can we put any protection for the bikes? Between University and St. Anthony is wider. Between St. Anthony and Summit would require removing all parking for a buffer.
- Check the crossing at the railroad tracks to make sure it is at a 60 or 90 degree angle.

Business Support/Bicycle Community Engagement

- Creative options for marketing Cleveland as a bicycling destination to show support for Cleveland businesses from the bicycling community

- Nice Ride is much smaller in St. Paul vs. Minneapolis and seeks to grow here. Adding Nice Ride station(s) along the route to help connect schools and link to the Highland Village area.
- Free bike racks should be pursued for businesses. Bike racks or anything else that would make businesses more bike friendly.
- Signage as to where to go and find what's there. Wayfinding and bike signage to give a starting point for people to see where they're going. And include bus routes and transit options.
- Think about adding a bike facility or something when you get up to Gilbert (Or Wabash?) to direct bikers east to Prior and through Iris Park to get to the Fairview LRT station.