

**City Council of the City of Greenville
Work Session**

**Monday, January 24, 2021
4:00 p.m.**

**Meeting Location:
Greenville Convention Center, 1 Exposition Drive**

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL: Mayor Knox White; Councilmember John M. DeWorken, Councilmember Lillian B. Flemming, Councilmember Kenneth C. Gibson, Councilmember Wil Brasington; Councilmember Russell H. Stall; and Councilmember Dorothy H. Dowe

CITY STAFF: City Manager John F. McDonough; Interim City Attorney Leigh Paoletti; City Clerk Camilla G. Pitman

Mayor Pro Tem Flemming called the meeting to order for the purpose of discussing the following matters.

Augusta Street Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Improvements Study

Public Works Director Clint Link introduced the agenda item and referred to the recommendation provided in November for the traffic and pedestrian safety improvement study. Mr. Link stated city staff and Stantec have been reviewing and studying Phase 1 of the road diet including road striping and have applied for a permit with SCDOT. Mr. Link also stated the presentation today is to provide more detail involving the road diet limits and the traffic analysis and model used in the study. Mr. Link introduced David Beaty with Stantec who provided an overview of the corridor.

Mr. Beaty recognized the 2.3 mile length of the corridor and commented on the three public meetings conducted in 2021. Mr. Beaty identified Augusta Place to Crystal Avenue as the area for the proposed road diet. Mr. Beaty provided a proposal to change from four lanes to two lanes and a center turning lane, moving the vehicles four feet away from the sidewalk. Mr. Beaty stated the distance from Mauldin Road to Church Street currently averages 7:30 minutes and with the recommendation, the travel should increase approximately 30 seconds for a total of 8 minutes. Mr. Beaty presented an animated transmodeler comparison map showing current and anticipated traffic conditions within the proposed road diet. Mr. Beaty referred to the sideroads and stated while there may be some cueing, it would be limited. Mr. Beaty added that the road diet will work at an acceptable level with very little changes to the existing conditions.

Councilmember Gibson asked if the road diet works and it becomes permanent, does it provide for additional sidewalk space to make it more pedestrian friendly. Mr. Link responded Phase 1 includes restriping and Phase 2 considers moving curbs and widening the sidewalks to create multi-use paths and moving of utility poles. Councilmember Gibson also asked if Phase 2 were to be implemented, would those changes be made without losing visibility. Mr. Link responded that landscaping and site distance would be an important part of the process.

Councilmember Dowe asked if the model included a change in the speed zone and incorporates the Greenlink bus stops. Mr. Beaty responded he believes it includes the speed zone and that the

bus stops would be reviewed in the post analysis. Councilmember Stall asked if the medium will be 11 feet throughout, and Mr. Beaty responded the proposal is to have a two way left turn lane throughout with implementation in Phase 1. Councilmember Stall asked if the four-foot areas would be considered for a bike lane. Mr. Link responded the objective is to improve safety and stated staff is not comfortable with making it a dedicated bike lane. Mr. Link added there are some additional drainage issues that have to be addressed as well. Councilmember Dowe expressed her opinion that it does not need to be a bike-lane.

Mayor White entered the meeting.

Councilmember Flemming asked for consideration to encourage individuals along Augusta Street to trim their bushes to assist with the sight line. Councilmember Dowe reiterated there will be additional accidents if the City does not find a way to mark “no bike lane.” Councilmember Brasington asked for clarity in that Phase 1 is focused today strictly on a road diet and that bike lanes are not precluded, but they are not a part of Phase 1, and Mr. Link affirmed the same.

Councilmember Brasington asked about the impact on side streets, and Mr. Beaty responded that there will be some impact but not a significant impact. Councilmember Brasington referred to the average travel time and asked if the additional 30 seconds is on average, and Mr. Beaty confirmed the same. Mr. Beaty stated they have looked at different versions of the model to create an average of 30 seconds. Mr. Beaty offered to review the model further and provide additional information to Mr. Link.

Councilmember DeWorken shared his excitement for the project and stated he looks forward to the reform that will come to Stone Avenue in the future.

Mr. Link provided the implementation schedule and stated the City is currently going through a permitting process with SCDOT. Mr. Link advised that staff is working on rolling out a communication plan and that the contractor is scheduled to tentatively begin on March 15. Mr. Link also advised the goal is to complete the restriping and allow traffic to adjust to the new pattern road configuration, to be followed by collecting the counts. Councilmember Dowe referred to the traffic counts and asked to consider the school schedules when determining when to perform the counts. Councilmember Brasington suggested having an open house to share an update following the first phase and provide information regarding the next steps of the process.

Mayor White referred to recent discussions with Duke Energy and the installation of additional polls anticipated along Augusta Street. Mr. Link responded that he has met with Duke Energy recently and they are aware of the road project and the City’s goals. Mr. Link advised that he continues to maintain communications with Duke Energy.

Cultural Corridor Project Update

Mr. Link introduced a presentation and update on the Cultural Corridor Project to enhance the pedestrian and bicycle mobility from Main Street to Heritage Green. Mr. Link commented on the history of the project and referred to proposed traffic and intersection improvements along Academy Street and the Corridor intersection at Heritage Green. Mr. Link stated that HDR serves as the consultant and the project will complete a number of achievements in a few of the master plans. Mr. Link advised the objective is to consider a road diet on College Street along with wider sidewalks.

Assistant City Engineer Nick DePalma provided slides showing the project recommendations of the corridor and alternatives for the intersection of College Street and Academy Street. Mr.

DePalma advised that SCDOT has requested feedback from the public regarding which alternative to pursue.

Councilmember Stall asked about the status of the two-way suggestion. Mr. DePalma responded it was considered early on, however, from a feasibility standpoint they could not get support from SCDOT. Councilmember Stall also asked about including bike lanes. Mr. DePalma responded that bike lanes will be multi-use along with sidewalks and will be protected.

Regarding Academy Street, Mr. DePalma provided recommendations on moving traffic to Academy Street while reducing traffic on College Street. Mr. DePalma provided a time line for a phased approach, with Academy Street improvements and continued corridor design work occurring in the Fall and construction on the Corridor in the Spring of 2023.

Councilmember Gibson asked what the Academy Street crossing will look like for visitors with increased traffic at the intersection. Mr. Link referred to Alternative 1 and responded there will be a dedicated pedestrian crossing across Academy Street. Mr. Link stated that factoring the additional traffic, there will be some longer cues on Academy Street, however, the level of service will still operate acceptably. Councilmember Gibson stated the two goals seem to work against one another. Mr. DePalma responded the transmodeler was used for this project and that traveling time on Academy Street will improve even with the pedestrian improvements. Councilmember Gibson asked what the difference will be if Alternative 2 is selected, and Mr. DePalma responded there is more of a pedestrian concern with Alternative 2 that would require vehicles to yield to the pedestrians crossing the street. Mr. DePalma stated SCDOT will make the decision and their decision will be based on citizen input. Councilmember Gibson recommended making it clear that the reason for the project is to increase pedestrian traffic. Councilmember Flemming suggested speaking with the neighborhoods in that area and to have their input early on.

Councilmember Dowe recommended reviewing and adjusting the project's timeline which is scheduled during a time when tourists are usually visiting. Councilmember Dowe also recommended working with VisitGreenvilleSC to make them aware of the project and communicating with the businesses between Main Street and Academy Street so they are aware of the project. Councilmember Stall asked for the difference in the traffic count on Academy Street between now and when the project is implemented. Mr. DePalma responded there is currently an estimated 13,000 cars per day on Academy Street.

Mayor White stated while it is tourism, the museums have felt like they are an island with no connection. Mayor White referred to the ability to park in Richardson Street Garage and walk safely to the Corridor once the project is completed. Mr. DePalma advised they have been working through the communication plan and that the first community meeting is scheduled for tomorrow evening.

Motion - Executive Session

During the open Work Session, Mayor White asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. Interim City Attorney Legh Paoletti recommended going into executive session under S.C. Code §30-4-70 subsection (a)(2) negotiations for proposed contractual matters involving the disposition of property in the North Main Street area.

Councilmember Stall moved, seconded by Councilmember Gibson, to go into Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously.

(Executive Session)

There being no further discussions, Councilmember Dowe moved, seconded by Councilmember Gibson, to go out of Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously. No action was taken.

With no further discussions, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Camilla G. Pitman, MMC, Certified PLS
City Clerk

Meeting notice posted on January 21, 2021