

S. Syene Advisory Group Meeting #3 Notes

Scheduled for Thursdays in May and June from 12:00 – 1:30

- Overview of previous meetings
 - Need for project: rural corridor transitioning to mixed-use, rough pavement condition, intersection functionality
 - Project Components: roadway cross-section, lighting, stormwater improvements, sanitary and main water in select locations, intersection improvements (T-bone, bike accidents, rear-ending) ... Ninebark has a dangerous intersection in the snow
 - Cross-sectional elements (pros and cons of parking / terrace / buffered bike lane
 - The traffic coming in from farms will be using 14 and Lacy – Steve Arnold
 - Makes the corridor less attractive for through traffic if there is parallel parking involved – Steve Arnold
 - Make sure that our improvements improve the traffic flow as that is one of the main issues
 - Parking
 - Encouraging the deliveries / parking may cause more harm than good, trucks stopping in traffic lanes or bike lanes; consider moving this aspect to cons
 - Consider parking on the back of buildings for the units on S. Syene and
 - Some houses don't have space to fit temporary parking or delivery vehicles
 - If parking is not included within the Argus to Central Park Pl block consider installing no parking, stopping, or standing sign
 - Shared used path vs. buffered bike lane
 - McFadden followed up that he hasn't found definitive studies showing significant safety benefits of buffers in buffered bike lanes
 - Steve noted the there are issues with bike lane design is that if we make the bike lane too wide, motorists will drive in them thinking that they are traffic lanes
 - Buffered bike lane seems to be safe option because the council approved it for W. Lacy on Tuesday – Steve
 - There will be an additional route to take now that Herman Road will be connected
 - Fitchburg has a sparse road network but as we urbanize it there will be more ways to get around and disperse the traffic – Steve Arnold
 - Ron lives off of Lacy and he doesn't like roundabouts, he uses Syene to go north to Madison
 - Sam Huber – we need to get the police on board with controlling traffic ... if we don't get them on board then the speed and safety aspect of proposal isn't going to make the improvements that we're aiming for
 - McFadden noted that the PD has a lot of areas to cover and they generally patrol areas with high crash rates. They will certainly be part of transforming the corridor along with engineering treatments.

- Cross-sectional Elements:
 - **Raised vs. Surface Level Medians**
 - Different types of medians (or lack of medians) down S. Syene
 - Pros of Surface Level : Has curb&gutter elements , easy to clear off snow, no raised nose for snow plows to hit
 - Cons of Surface level: Doesn't really benefit safety
 - Raised medians pros : Can take traffic on one direction as a time (raised island pedestrian refuge)
 - General pros and cons
 - Pros :
 - Channelizes traffic
 - Slows some drivers (1-8 mph)
 - Provides pedestrian refuge (for raised medians)
 - The residents are generally supportive
 - Cons :
 - Loss of some access
 - Cost of construction and maintenance
 - Perception of waste of space
 - Debate over proper landscaping
 - Some increased runoff
 - Requires 20' clear zone
 - Increased roadway width
- Comments
 - Cindy wants to even out Syene crossing at Rodeo so it is less time of people on the intersection
 - We're going to channelize traffic with our median option (cutting down)
 - Some driveways need to be specifically looked at as the design progresses
 - Pat thinks that the medians can generally be surfaced, but raised will help in stopping unsanctioned left turns across traffic (and for jumping the wrong way / weaving between the lowered medians)
 - The Swan Creek Apartment Access off S. Syene by Roadway is signed to restrict left turns out of the access
 - Full access at Argus Lane (still will have sight distance issues that will likely prevent this restriction from be removed)
 - There are no sight distance issues at Aurora
 - That restriction was mainly based on operational delay (i.e. eliminating northbound to westbound left turns that would delay northbound vehicles on S. Syene)
 - Some of these places have other access (like through Swan Creek) that will end up at a controlled intersection

- Curb and gutter – (or the ditch system that we currently have)
 - Pros:
 - Reduces width compared to ditches
 - Can slow some drivers (needs to be verified)
 - Maintains pavement edge
 - Removes need to driveway culverts
 - Cons:
 - Cost of construction
 - Cost of maintenance
 - Some increased runoff
 - Higher potential to clog at inlets
 - Increased roadway width
 - Comments:
 - Right now the City is generally assuming curb and gutter along most of the corridor
 - We have flexibility on the north and south end
 - E.g. up around McCoy Road bend it isn't as necessary to have curb and gutter
 - Steve – we are going to have curb and gutter, the urban homes are paying 3x as much as rural? Steve is very on board for curb and gutter
 - He would like to see a 24" curb and gutter (1' gutter and 1' curb head) – as he says it is safer for bicyclists
 - Council recently approved W. Lacy Rd with curb and gutter
 - Cindy – there is curb and gutter from E. Cheryl up to her house and there are currently flooding issues
 - She is also on board for curb and gutter

- E. Side Sidewalk (generally present along the East side of the corridor)
 - Pros
 - Separates different users
 - Provides continuity and access to destinations on corridor
 - Cons
 - Cost of construction
 - Cost of long-term maintenance
 - Snow removal responsibility
 - Comments
 - More foot traffic, BP and Kwik Trip

- Steve mentioned a possible train station south of Lacy Rd associated with a future Commuter Rail, so pedestrian access to that via E. Side sidewalk is a pro
- Steve mentioned that Park maintenance crews sometime clear off sidewalks. One possibility is that East block of Ninebark Drive (people park in that circle) . Steve wants to argue that park ma should maintain sidewalks all the way down to East Cheryl

Closing statements/concerns/questions

- Jamie – Cindy and she have similarities on concerns that she wants to make sure are on people's radar. With driveways on the road is it very different than exiting driveways that are on side streets. Lots of obstructions that haven't been considered deeply enough (safety, traffic)
- Cindy – currently she must cross Syene in order to get to their mailboxes. Also note that Syene is sometimes used as a commuter road from Madison to Verona
- Andrew – reducing speed is a big wish for Andrew, willing to give up parking if it helps with speed. Wants to see more concrete plans on how we will lower the speed
- Jason – hoping that we can get more feedback so that our outcome accomplishes more of our goals in an efficient manner.
- Sam – on board for whatever it takes to reduce speed and increase safety
- Ron G – Wants to line up Swan Creek driveway with Rodeo Way, with a median. Make sure we are doing whatever we can to accomplish our goals
- Pat – traffic maintenance is main concern