

**MINUTES**  
**PRINCETON TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**  
**October 21, 2013**  
**Meeting Room A**  
**Witherspoon Municipal Building**

**Present:** Robert Altman, Kristen Appelget (Princeton University liaison), Murali Balasubramanian, Jo Butler (Council liaison), Robert Kiser (staff liaison), Anton Lahnston (Chair), Sgt. Tom Murray (police department liaison), Marvin Reed (Planning Board liaison), Surinder Sharma, Jan Weinberg, Jack West (staff liaison), and Ralph Widner. **Absent:** Pamela Hersh. **Guests:** Deanna Stockton and Alina Ferreira (engineering staff), Steve Kruse (Chair, Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee).

Chairman Anton Lahnston convened the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

**Approval on Minutes of Previous Meeting**

1. Robert Altman moved approval of the Minutes for the June 10, 2013 meeting. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

**Police Reports for August and September**

2. Sgt. Tom Murray presented the police reports for August and September 2013.

There were 66 accidents in August, six with injuries. No reports were filed for nine of the incidents. Two involved pedestrians, both with injuries. In each of these cases, the driver struck a pedestrian in a crosswalk and was found at fault. No accidents involving bicyclists or deer were reported during the month.

Sgt. Murray reported 77 accidents in September, eleven with injuries. No reports were filed for eight of the accidents. In one, a motorist backed into a pedestrian as the driver attempted a turn-around at the intersection of Edwards Place and University Place. A summons was issued for reckless driving. Two accidents involved bicyclists, both of them minors. In one instance the bicyclist crossed against a red light and collided with a vehicle. There was no injury. In the second accident, a motorist failed to check his rear view mirror before opening his car door. A bicyclist swerved into traffic to avoid the door and was hit by another vehicle. The motorist who failed to check before opening his door was issued a summons.

Other data from the two police reports are summarized in the year-to-date tables attached to and made a part of these minutes.

Sgt. Murray reported that the amount of pedestrian traffic crossing Alexander during construction of the Arts and Transit District is considerable. Message boards have been placed there to remind pedestrians and drivers about the state law that requires drivers to stop for pedestrians.

Robert Altman mentioned a posted photo showing a public safety officer standing by as university students rode their bikes through the crosswalk on Alexander. Anton Lahnston stated that this is a widespread problem. Kristen Appelget said that she would bring this up with the Public Safety Department at the university.

Jo Butler commented that there is so much visual distraction because of construction on Alexander that people tend not to observe some of the rules. Sgt. Murray responded that cooperation between the town and the university's Public Safety Department has been outstanding.

In response to questions about whether and where bicyclists can ride on sidewalks, he added that there were some differences between rules in the former township and former borough that need to be straightened out. The township permitted riding on the sidewalks, but required dismounts at crosswalks in order to ensure that the bicyclist was protected from hazard as a pedestrian. If mounted, the rider is a vehicle. The borough's main prohibition against riding on the sidewalk is on the business side of Nassau Street.

#### **Terhune Road Study**

Sgt. Murray said that the study of traffic on Terhune Road by an outside consultant will get underway shortly. He said some signage has been added at the Meadow Road crosswalk.

#### **Arts and Transit District Construction**

3. Jack West reported that an ordinance has been introduced that will establish two-hour parking on Alexander so that customers of Skillman Furniture and other businesses can park. Persons who need to park for longer periods will be able to get a permit authorizing them to do so.

#### **ASUP Task Force**

4. Jack West said that AECOMM, the traffic consultant to the Alexander/University Place Task Force (ASUP) is about to wrap up its analysis and that a public meeting to present the findings will be held at the Fields Center at the university on November 9 at 9 or 9:30 a.m. The transit studies by URS are not as far along. Anton Lahnston stressed that this is a public meeting sponsored by the task force and the university and is not a Princeton Future event.

### **Transit Trust Fund**

Anton Lahnston asked Kristen Appelget to describe the \$500,000 trust fund established by the university under the Memorandum of Understanding with the town. She pointed out that the town and the university each appointed three trustees. As it happens, three of those trustees (Lahnston, Appelget, and West) sit on the Traffic and Transportation Committee. The trustees will decide upon the appropriate uses of these funds.

### **Bus Shelters**

5. Robert Kiser said that he awaits a response from New Jersey Transit about whether a cash allowance of \$5000 per bus shelter could be awarded to the municipality toward the cost of bus shelters if it decided not to use those provided by New Jersey Transit itself. He also said that, because Nassau Street/US 206 are part of the Lincoln Highway Historic District, we must also apply to the state historic preservation authorities for permission to install whatever shelters we do decide upon.

Anton Lahnston urged Bob Kiser and Pam Hersh to recommend which five locations are the most critical at which to begin the installation. Ralph Widner said that the criteria for that decision should be drawn carefully. As mentioned in an earlier meeting, the most critical locations may not necessarily be those where the volume of bus riders is greatest. In some of those locations, shelter from rain is available nearby. On the other hand, there are several locations totally exposed to the weather where lower income riders must await their bus. In some of those places the need for a shelter may be much greater.

Anton Lahnston said that Mayor Lempert has expressed interest in having local architects design the shelters. Robert Altman then asked: can we set caps on the cost? Anton Lahnston responded that the notion would be to invite architects to both design and fund the shelters. Robert Kiser said that such an approach was used for design of the municipal complex.

Pam Hersh and Robert Kiser are to report their recommendations at the next meeting of the Traffic and Transportation Committee.

### **Crosswalk Design Resolution**

6. Anton Lahnston said that a meeting was held with the Public Works Committee to discuss the policies and designs for crosswalks. The unanimous decision was that the international “hash markings” be used uniformly throughout the town. Research has demonstrated that they are the most effective from the point of view of safety. Their costs of \$2,200 per crosswalk are substantially less than the \$7,500-\$9,500 unit costs associated with brick.

In addition, brick crosswalks have proven to be a bit of safety hazard as bricks pop up or are damaged.

The engineering staff is drafting a resolution for council action on the matter. The Traffic and Transportation Committee is asked for its views regarding such a resolution.

Jo Butler said that she believes there will be some “push back” from some members of Council who do not believe that all research supports the recommendation. She said that the design should depend on the intersection and that some designs, particularly with glazed brick, are more attractive.

Ralph Widner responded that our primary concern must be safety. Sgt. Murray said that uniformity of design ensures greater public understanding of what symbols mean. That is why the “Stop” sign and other traffic signs are standardized internationally.

Robert Altman moved that the committee support a resolution calling for use of the international standard crosswalk markings throughout the town. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

#### **FREEB**

7. Marvin Reed explained that because some trains on the Northeast Corridor are on revised schedules, new FreeB schedules are being printed and will be available shortly.

He added that seven loops on the 6-days per week schedule have proven impossible to sustain because of traffic and that there will now be six loops instead. In early November, posters with the new schedules will be available for placement in bus shelters wherever and whenever they are set up.

#### **An “App” for Citizens to Report Problems**

8. Murali Balasubramanian reported that he and Anton Lahnston have investigated “apps” used by communities throughout the country that enable citizens to report problems. Easy-to-use “See-click-fix” apps can also provide “metrics” to gauge local government performance and response. There are a number of issues: (1) Where do calls go? To a central place or are they distributed? (2) How does the local government respond? (3) Costs for hosting and operations.

Hamilton Township (pop. 100,000) uses a call center. Bob Altman calculated that, based upon Princeton’s population, we might expect 30,000 users per year. Bob Kiser said that reports or complaints currently are received and distributed by the Clerk’s office. Kristen Appelget commented that Princeton

University has a call center. Jo Butler said that the Parks and Recreation Committee is currently engaged in a similar exploration.

Anton Lahnston concluded by saying that Bob McQueen, the Information Technology expert on staff, has the lead to prepare a recommendation.

### **Parking Meter Pilot Program**

9. Deanna Stockton then explained the Parking Meter Pilot Program that will be tested in the Dinky parking lot and on University Place and Alexander.

The test involves new high technology meters based on wireless communication that offer a range of payment options, are multi-lingual, solar-powered, and provide real-time reporting and alarming. A user would be able to add additional payment from afar, including aboard a train.

Currently, the technology is in use in eleven New Jersey municipalities. It will cost about \$12,000 per meter, plus additional operating costs, including paper for receipts, etc. On the other hand, it may lessen the need for parking enforcement personnel.

Procurement will take place in November 2013 and pilot meters will be tested in the Dinky parking lot from January 2014 to January 2016 and on University Place from February 2014 through February 2016.

Jack West suggested that the meters can adapt easily to changing technology. Deanna Stockton added that even if a user is across town, he or she would know the meter is running out and can add money with a smartphone.

Marvin Reed asked about 30-minute meters. Kristen Appelget responded that the plan calls for keeping them.

Robert Altman remarked that from the perspective of the Traffic and Transportation Subcommittee, the pilot is a good idea. He moved that the committee endorse the pilot program. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

### **Proposed Through-Bike Trails in Princeton**

10. Steve Kruse, Chair of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), then presented the work of BPAC to design a bicycle trail through Princeton that would link with the Hopewell-Lawrence trail at Province Line and the Freedom Trail in South Brunswick at River Road. He traced the proposed route through town.

Anton Lahnston said that prior to any recommendations to Council, he, Murali Balasubramanian, Robert Altman, and Deanna Stockton will work with BPAC to examine every stretch of the proposed route step-by-step to identify obstacles or problems—physical or otherwise— that may hinder establishment of the route. Once that inventory is in hand, recommendations to Council can go forward.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph R. Widner, Secretary

**MONTHLY PRINCETON ACCIDENT SUMMARY TO DATE  
2010-2013**

**Total Accidents Involving Motor Vehicles, Pedestrians and Bikers, Jan -July**

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
<b>2010</b>	85	96	91	94	96	108	88	97	91
<b>2011</b>	146	118	83	85	99	88	100	99	91
<b>2012</b>	77	91	81	75	112	100	74	76	81
<b>2013</b>	77	91	67	79	83	79	86	66	77

**Total Persons Injured in Accidents, Jan -May**

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
<b>2010</b>	5	11	8	18	9	7	7	16	9
<b>2011</b>	11	7	14	8	8	6	16	12	13
<b>2012</b>	7	14	11	9	16	9	8	11	10
<b>2013</b>	5	10	6	7	7	10	9	7	6

**Total Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving Pedestrians, Jan -May**

Pedestrian Accidents	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
<b>2010</b>	0	1	0	3	1	1	0	2	2
<b>2011</b>	0	2	1	1	0	1	4	0	1
<b>2012</b>	0	5	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>2013</b>	3	1	2 (one death)	1*	3	0	0	2	1

\* One Bicycle/pedestrian accident (no mva)

**Total Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving Bicycles, Jan -May**

Bicycle Accidents	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
<b>2010</b>	0	2	0	2	1	1	0	1	0
<b>2011</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
<b>2012</b>	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	2	1
<b>2013</b>	3	1	0	2*	1	2	1	0	2

\* One Bicycle/pedestrian accident (no mva)

**Cause of Bicycle/Pedestrian Accident, 2013**

	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
<b>Pedestrian Accidents</b>						
<i>Engineering</i>						
<i>Behavior</i>	1	3	0	0	2	1
<b>Bicycle Accidents</b>						
<i>Engineering</i>			.5			
<i>Behavior</i>	2	1	1.5	1		2

**Motor Vehicle Accidents with Deer**

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
2013	3	2	3	0	2	1	1	0	2

**Total Citations for Speeding**

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
2013	131	116	67	84	50	57	65	33	56

**Total Citations for Cell Phone Use While Driving**

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
2013	50	64	46	35	34	36	37	16	34

**Total Citations for Not Wearing Seatbelts**

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
2013	10	13	12	15	70	21	16	11	8