



# PLANNING COMMISSION SYNOPSIS

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Baloga called the Planning Commission Study Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on February 11, 2010 in the McLeod Conference Room of the Bloomington Civic Plaza.

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**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Baloga, Nordstrom, Klassen, Willette, Lucas, Fricke, Oleson, Felkner, Marsh

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Hawbaker, Shevi, Marohn, Roberts, Hiller

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**ITEM 1**  
*6:00 p.m.*

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| <b>APPLICANT:</b> | City of Bloomington  |
| <b>REQUEST:</b>   | Transportation Educational Item - Pedestrian and Bike Design and Safety Guidelines |

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**APPEARING FOR THE APPLICANT:**

Kirk Roberts, City Traffic and Transportation Engineer  
Amy Marohn, Civil Engineer

**DISCUSSION BY THE COMMISSION:**

Marohn stated the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety objective is to enhance the quality of life in the City through strategic investments over time in multi-modal transportation features that meet the needs of individuals and families living, working and recreating in the City. The City has begun to increase its focus on pedestrian and bicycle facilities in response to increased demand by the residents.

Marohn and Roberts discussed the goals, overviewed the frequent issues that come up regarding pedestrian and bicycle safety, and provided basic instruction to the design guidelines for constructing new or modifying existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the City.

Hawbaker asked staff to comment on a street configuration for Old Shakopee Road that would improve its functionality, asking if a three lane would be appropriate. Marohn stated that based on volumes on Old Shakopee Road, it would be suited for a five lane configuration. Hawbaker stated the five lane configuration is very unlikely since it would require right-of-way taking to widen the existing road.

Hawbaker asked Roberts to comment on the public hearing process and the typical public reaction regarding striping changes on neighborhood streets. Roberts stated the most common objections relate to the perception of increasing vehicular congestion when proposing to reduce the number of automobile lanes, as well as concern over the loss of on-street parking.

Klassen asked staff to comment on whether existing sidewalks may be under-utilized and whether any thought has been given to converting existing sidewalks to a bicycle path that would be completely off-road rather than striping bike lanes on existing roads taking away automobile lanes. In particular he was referring to the sidewalks on the 86<sup>th</sup> Street corridor and whether or not we could use the path on one side of the street for pedestrians and one side for bicycles. Marohn stated sidewalk usage is not measured. She stated the option of separating the bikes and peds on 86<sup>th</sup> Street was considered by the Stakeholders Group, but unfortunately if it was decided that many pedestrians and bicyclists would need to cross over 86<sup>th</sup> Street to utilize the designated pedestrian or bicycle path. Based on the volume of

traffic on the roadway and the limited number of controlled crossing locations, this would encourage or require pedestrians to cross at the roadway in unsafe locations.

Willette asked Roberts to comment on the bicycle/pedestrian system in place in Portland, Oregon. Roberts stated Portland was very innovative in creating their Pedestrian and bicycle system. Current residents now expect and drivers are now cognizant of the bicycle and pedestrian commuters. Nordstrom commented there appears to be a sense of ownership/territoriality of users of bicycle and pedestrian systems and they do not seem to want to share space. Baloga suggested that bicycle and pedestrian rules/guidelines/etiquette could be made available to residents on the City's website to better educate them regarding bicycle city ordinance/rules this spring.

Baloga asked if the Commission could be distributed the Crosswalk Safety Guide chart Roberts used in his presentation. Roberts stated he would have the chart copied and would have them distributed with the next packets sent to the Commissioners so they can add them to their traffic related support materials.

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**ITEM 2**

6:40 p.m.

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| <b>APPLICANT:</b> | City of Bloomington               |
| <b>REQUEST:</b>   | Educational Item- Nonconformities |

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**APPEARING FOR THE APPLICANT:**

Elizabeth Shevi, Planner

**DISCUSSION BY THE COMMISSION:**

Shevi provided an educational refresher on nonconformities highlighting the primary issues and applicable requirements based on State law and the City Code. Shevi provided Commissioners with reference materials.

Baloga asked staff to comment on the enforcement policies/procedures the City uses when an illegal nonconformity is discovered. Shevi stated the Environmental Health division (EH) is generally where nonconformities are first addressed by the City. The property owner is notified and provided with an explanation about what is required to bring the nonconformity into compliance. EH then writes a correction order setting a date for compliance. If the nonconformity is not corrected within the specified time, the matter is then generally referred to the Legal Department to initiate legal action.

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