

Pinellas Point Drive S. Corridor Analysis Virtual Meeting Recap

Opening & Introductions: Council Member (CM) Figgs-Sanders welcomed and thanked all participants for attending the virtual meeting regarding traffic calming on Pinellas Point Drive South. CM Figgs-Sanders recognized and introduced City Department of Transportation & Parking Management Director, Evan Mory, and Transportation Manager, Michael Frederick, to share the meeting agenda overview and expected outcomes.

Meeting Agenda Overview & Expected Outcomes: Mory welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Mory stated that they are here to work with the neighborhood and implement some solutions. Pinellas Point Drive is a long straight road that allows people to drive too fast. The department works to change the geometry and type of features on a road, so it does not invite speeding and Mory believes that is what needs to be done to Pinellas Point Drive. Greater Pinellas Point already has a traffic plan and some traffic calming so these actions would be an amendment.

Mory stated that it is a four-stage process to implement true traffic calming (speed humps, traffic circles): (1) determine the features the group thinks they want to go for, (2) petition is made; needs leaders (s) from neighborhood to circulate the petition stating the work the neighborhood wishes to do – needs 2/3 of people to say yes to go to the next step, (3) traffic committee is formed to get into greater details about where to add features (create preliminary design), (4) plan needs to be approved by the neighborhood. Depending on how large or small the proposed changes are, it could range from requiring only a Board signature to requiring a larger vote for elaborate changes. It would require 50% + 1 vote to move forward. If making changes such as narrowing traffic lanes or adding bike lanes that can be done by staff and would not need Council/neighborhood approval.

Mory stated that regarding timing there were two items he wanted to address. (1) funding – if the plan is on the expensive side staff will need to review other plans that are in the queue and evaluate the annual allocation of funding (2) if the group wants to create speed humps, the road is not classified as one that would allow speed humps, so based on the City's comprehensive plan and their procedures we cannot put in vertical traffic elements such as speed humps. If it is decided that speed humps are most cost effective it will require a comprehensive plan change which would have to go before City Council, has to have a public hearing, and go to State level for approval. Staff would support that direction if that is what the neighborhood wants but just wants to make everyone aware of the process. Lastly, Mory stated that staff is here to work with the group and will see the process through.

Public Comments Review & Dept. Responses: Frederick reviewed and summarized the public comments received that were e-mailed to respondents. Regarding the status of the roadway in the depts. comprehensive plan it is a collector roadway classification and in order to consider speed humps the dept. would need to change it to neighborhood collector. The dept. does plan to reduce the speed limit in the Complete Streets program. It is designated for a 30-mph speed zone, however, in order to do that the dept. would have to change the character of the roadway and not just the speed signage. There will be lots of opportunity for public meetings within the process and for residents to be involved with that. Speed limit changes will not actively be considered until after modifications to the character of the roadway are complete. That will be flushed out. Dr.

Hammer had suggested that the dept. should look at the cheapest most effective and smartest recommendations and that is what they are going to try to flush out.

Some people have agreed with traffic circles and some people have agreed with speed humps. Some people just asked for signs and markings to be added. There were requests for four-way stops - there are requirements from the state and federal government to consider a four-way stop. Adding crosswalks; there is minimum criteria to follow based on state and federal guidelines. Frederick stated that they will continue to evaluate pedestrian activity to determine if additional crosswalks should be added. St. Pete Police continue to monitor the roadway and educate with their speed awareness monitor. PSTA buses were observed to be a factor and Frederick contacted PSTA. They retrained their drivers and are monitoring the speeds as they go down the corridor. Frederick stated that they are going to continue with police enforcement. And lastly, the dept. will also support an all-way stop if it meets the state and national requirements. Frederick opened the floor for any questions regarding the summary.

Tom Lally was recognized and stated he was not in favor of changing the road from a collector roadway and put speed bumps in. Believes that traffic will only go to other places. Lally does like the idea of Complete Streets reducing the speed to 30 mph and an opportunity to increase the bike lanes to reduce the traffic lanes and help slow the traffic. One other thing he saw the City do is intersection murals in downtown St. Pete, likes the idea. Frederick stated that the City has approved a few of those types of intersection murals. There is a process involved in that and is resident driven, so if that is something the group wants to do that it is something that can be considered.

Samuel Hammer inquired if they could have citizen speed guns. Frederick responded saying that there was discussion in the past with St. Pete Police about a neighborhood speed watch but there was concern with possible improper interactions with speed offenders and residents.

CM Figgs-Sanders asked which intersection Lally was speaking of specifically. Lally responded that he was thinking they could have a few of them equally spaced along the road. Frederick looked at relative equal spacing along corridors to be traffic circles and those that could be considered include: Martin Luther King, Jr. St, 14th or 16th St, 21st St and at 70th Ave. The number would greatly depend on funding. This is a resident funded issue.

Ruth Barrens stated her concern is that the small section that runs North and South from 70th Ave. to 62nd is also being included in the study, because as the traffic rounds that corner headed West to go North it is a blind corner. Frederick responded discussing their initial study of vehicle speeds and police went out to do enforcement and education. Frederick stated after that the dept. conducted another study and found there was no effect, so they are continuing to work on that enforcement and education. The dept. will go back again to determine if the continued tactics have made a long-term effect.

Steven Barefield inquired what criteria the neighborhood was lacking or what criteria would be needed to allow an all-way stop. Frederick did not include whole synopsis into report but can provide when an update is given. The criteria of the all-way stop were based on past data because it is more relevant than present volumes being experiencing. Data was short on total intersection volume, total volume on the side streets, and delay to the side streets. Frederick will update with new data and will get that out to residents.

Barbara Ellis stated that Pinellas Point Drive is the main roadway for the Southern part of the neighborhood during evacuations and so they need to ensure roadways are clear and they are not

putting barriers between rescue vehicles and police. With that said she, and majority of residents, would not want to see change in the designation of the collector road. Additionally, Ellis is not sure where the concerns about speeding is coming from but understands if there are. Ellis inquired if anyone knew how many speeding tickets have been issued. Ellis added that her association is a part of the Communities of Pinellas Point (COPP) so she is aware of the issues of toe-taggers in the Coquina Key Shopping area. Ellis stated they would be open to some minor changes but hadn't heard many complaints about it. She understands if you live on Pinellas Point Drive you are going to see all kinds of things. Lastly, Ellis shared that she read the accident report sent out by Frederick and thought it was rather minimal.

Janet stated she lives physically on Pinellas Point Drive and has observed on weekends and many times in the evenings the traffic really starts to change, the level of aggression of drivers changes and that is hard to record. Janet would love to have statistics as to what is going on weekends and at the different problematic times during the day. Additionally, Janet would like to see the dept. pursue the idea of the murals. Frederick stated they can do weekend counts and will have that all available for viewing and can breakdown when conditions are worse throughout the day.

Ruth Barrens asked if Frederick could confirm if the study is including the North/South run of Pinellas Point Drive in which Frederick's responded that it was. They have conducted some speed study's there and will have to incorporate some proposals along that corridor as we move along.

Jeremiah is alarmed that people think the neighborhood collector is not a good idea and has had numerous instances where it has been dangerous on that road and sidewalk and is hoping for something to happen to where citizens are protected, and people are safe. Frederick responded that it is ultimately the purpose of this process and is hopeful that they come up with a consensus as they move forward.

Report Short/Medium/Long Term Actions: Frederick went over the short, medium, and long-term actions. Frederick shared that the short-term actions have been completed and included: crash analysis, streetlighting levels, speed limit analysis, all-way stop analysis, education, enforcement, equity, and evaluation. Mid-term actions began in May and will continue until October. They will look at pavement markings, traffic studies updated, traffic calming – traffic circles, education, enforcement, equity, and evaluation. Frederick then reviewed long-term actions which go from present day until work is completed and includes engineering, education, enforcement, equity, and evaluation. Frederick opened the floor for discussion. The main thing of focus is the recommendation on the traffic circles.

Open Discussion of Actions: Tom Lally asked if Pinellas Point Drive is wide enough to have traffic circles, even at the intersections. Frederick responded yes and said they have about 20 of them around the City and are currently installing 2 in Causeway Isles. It is a landscape donut inside the existing configuration of the intersection. They would not touch the outside perimeter curbing at all. It includes a small truck table to allow for larger vehicles to get through (i.e. bus). This provides a lateral shift so that a vehicle has to slow down through the intersection. The operating speeds are designed for 15 mph through the intersection, pedestrian's have the right-of-way, traffic from the side streets have the right-of-way, first-come first-serve. It helps as a traffic calming to space them out along the corridor to prevent a significant increase in speed between circles. As they leave the traffic circle, they cannot accelerate due to slowing down again and will probably result in average of 30 mph in between intersections and 15 at the traffic circles.

Lally additionally asked what the cost is associated with the traffic circle. Frederick responded and said it will vary somewhere between \$20,000-\$30,000. That includes design, temporary installation of rubber curbs and bollards to get people familiar with it as they wait for construction period.

Lally asked how hard it would be to get that funding in the budget. Frederick stated that if they move forward with what is recommended then it will be a long-phase program. The department receives \$100,000/year for the entire City so to take the cost times four would diminish the budget for the entire year. It would have to be broken up into one/year with some other funding allocated.

Lastly, Lally asked about the intersection murals. Frederick stated that he was not involved in that, but he will reach out to someone to get a cost.

CM Figgs-Sanders asked Frederick if they could look into something more linear like 26th Avenue and said those are linear rather than circled. They are also on 16th Street. Frederick stated that if they are landscaped medians, they would have to drop the bicycle lane to install those and bicycles would have to join the traffic. It does not provide as much of a lateral shift to traffic as circles but is less confusing. It does have a lesser effect on speeds. CM Figgs-Sanders stated she would provide pictures to Frederick of the examples mentioned. Mory echoed the reasons Frederick stated as to why the linear landscaped medians were not considered but added that he does like them. The dept. just did not want to have to drop the bicycle lanes. He added that they are less expensive to add.

Mory asked Frederick if he would send the group out about five examples of the traffic circles being installed throughout the City.

CM Figgs-Sanders asked Mory based on his response the landscaped medians were not totally off the table. Mory responded that they were not off the table and he could have more discussions with his dept. internally if that is the wish of the neighborhood. Mory added that he just wants to consider the bicyclists and other concerns. CM Figgs-Sanders responded that she does not want to put anyone in harms way but wants to ensure that residents have input in determining that because of the dollar amount so if it has a financial advantage she wanted to know that there could still be a discussion on this as oppose to installing one traffic circle per year. Mory responded and said that if they moved forward with the traffic circle plan there would be temporary traffic calming installed until completion of the circles but then there is the concern of aesthetics as neighborhoods may not like the look of the temporary solution in place.

Jeremiah spoke about his recommendation to reclassify as a neighborhood collector to have speed humps put in. Jeremiah added that traffic circles seemed to be more expensive. Frederick said that speed humps would cost approximately \$1,500 each. Additionally, it will cause an 8-10 second delay per speed hump for emergency vehicles. A traffic circle would slow them down somewhat but not as much as the speed humps.

Steven Barefield asked regarding murals at intersections, did Frederick say that would be a neighborhood funded project in which Frederick confirmed that the two previous ones that he knows of were privately funded. Barefield asked if traffic circle money could be devoted to a different use that gets the same result. Frederick stated that there is no national evidence that shows the intersection murals to have the same effect. Barefield has observed in other countries that 3-D murals have been effective. Barefield asked related to landscape medians versus traffic circles he believes that the landscape medians are effective at four-way stop intersections and believes that

it is the four-way stops that slow the traffic. Barefield also stated that as a resident of South St. Pete for more than 20 years he agrees with CM Figgs-Sanders' statement about not seeing many cyclists on 26th Avenue but always passes multiple cyclists on Pinellas Point Drive. CM Figgs-Sanders made a brief statement about being careful using taxpayer dollars to fund murals.

Janet asked who has the right-of-way if traffic circles are placed in locations with only a two-way stop. Frederick responded and said that the traffic circles are first-come, first-serve with all approaches yielding to traffic in the intersection. Janet echoed her concerns with placing traffic calming on Pinellas Point Drive.

Ruth Barrens stated that her question is about the potential traffic circle at 70th Avenue on Pinellas Point Drive. Barrens asked how that would change what is going on there already since there is already a triangular island out there. Frederick replied saying that is the intersection that would require the most reconstruction because it is a "T" intersection. There would be shifting of existing curbs at that location in order to put that donut in the middle of the intersection. The South end towards those properties would require a little depth to provide that South to Eastbound radius. Probably not a location the dept. would be able to test with the temporary conditions based on the current geometry there. It would require further construction. Barrens then asked what Frederick would suggest in which he responded saying that if the group is serious about the traffic circles along the corridor as a solution the dept. could do some minor modifications with the curbing at that location to get the temporary tests in place at a minimal cost. Lastly, Barrens asked if that could be added as a potential solution. Frederick confirmed that he would include it.

Barbara Ellis likes the idea of the traffic circles and wanted to know where the four places are the dept. would plan to install the traffic circles. Frederick responded stating the four places are MLK Street, either 14th or 16th Street, 21st Street, and at 70th Avenue. Ellis also asked where in Kenwood the trial area is so she can take a look. Frederick responded saying the two they are working on are in Causeway Isle neighborhood on 79th Street. Frederick stated he will e-mail everyone the location where they are currently placed and when the temporary ones are installed so that they may go look at them.

Tom Lally asked if Frederick could find out what the cost of the intersection murals for both 3-D and regular in which Frederick stated that he would.

Steven Barefield responded to CM Figgs-Sanders' comments of concern with utilizing taxpayer dollars for the mural asking if the City has a public arts ordinance that requires a portion of any new building; couldn't that process be followed where it goes through public vetting for input and approval. Barefield also asked if that was somewhere, they could turn for funding. CM Figgs-Sanders responded agreeing with Barefield and stating that yes, the group could go through that process as well.

Action Items: Frederick summarized the discussion of items moving forward: the department is going to look into painting the intersections cost effectiveness, whether the City could fund that or not, and how that would happen. Include counter measures on the North/South section, whether the counter measures proposed at 70th Avenue would be enough to facilitate that or if it needed to be looked at further. Send out re-evaluated all-way stop analysis and speed and volume data as that moves along as well as work with the police to get updates on their speed enforcement and effectiveness of the speed awareness monitor. There is going to be weekend monitoring to see if there is more aggressive driving on the weekend and provide the 24-hour summaries. Frederick will send materials out on medians so those can further be considered in conjunction with the

bicycle lanes. Additionally, Frederick will send out pictures of what the mini-traffic circles look like, where they are located, and the cost versus the medians. Frederick is also going to try and gather a volume count of cyclists along that corridor so that they know how many cyclists are using to ensure whatever method is used is effective for everyone. Lastly, Frederick stated he would look at the right-of-way for a traffic circle at 70th Avenue.

Discussion Update: Frederick shared that the options based on discussion are traffic circles but is not sure there is enough support yet to say yes to those. What he has gathered is that they are being considered but let's do the test first and evaluate those. This would require a leader to take the petitions that Frederick will create. The petition would be for consideration of temporary traffic circles to be evaluated for further review. After the petition is returned the dept. would get approval from the association that they are in concurrence with the potential amendment to their traffic plan. Then the evaluation could begin, usually lasting around 6-months. Next the dept. would provide a report at end of the evaluation and meet with the traffic committee again to review the report and decide on moving forward. Frederick opened the floor for any comments/questions/concerns regarding the proposed action plan.

Tom Lally stated that he wanted to make sure Frederick gets the prices for the murals. Lally also asked if they could track the bicyclists over the weekends too because it is heavily traveled by them over the weekends versus during the weeks based on his experience.

Janet asked when the dept. looks at the intersection at MLK would residents be required to get feedback from Westminster for that. Frederick replied that he is unsure how the petition would work for that address as it is multiple addresses. They will look to see if there is a management company and knock on the door to let them know what the dept. is up to so that they can post something for their residents.

Ruth Barrens asked if regarding the petitions, there was an electronic format in which these could be gathered given the current conditions with the health pandemic. Frederick responded saying that the dept. has been including handouts/door knockers in the material for petitioning so that you can leave the information at their door to call the petitioner back when available to sign. The protocols for process require original documentation to verify that it was signed by the homeowner.

Barbara Ellis stated that GPPCA would be glad to take the petition and believes they have enough people that would be able to circulate it. Frederick thanked Ellis for taking that.

Steven Barefield stated that related to the current health pandemic and circulating petitions he wanted to make sure Fredericks was aware of an application called "Verisign" which is legal documentation that is done on the internet and counts as legal signature. It is used by real estate, corporations, banks, credit unions, etc.

Frederick summarized what he heard, other than action items previously mentioned, the participants have agreed to complete a test for traffic circles once the petition has been circulated with 2/3 agreement. After that 6-month evaluation the dept. would have another meeting with the traffic committee to review the data and determine if they could proceed with the permanent installation phased in over four years, leaving the temporary measures in place as it moves along. At this point there is no need to consider a comprehensive plan amendment to modify the street from collector to neighborhood collector to have speed humps considered. Other comments that were not discussed include increasing the signage for the curve at 4th Street that Frederick has agreed to do and the narrowing of the travel lanes to help reduce vehicle speed.

August 18, 2020

10:00 am

Frederick stated that a summarize of what was discussed today will be distributed for those that were unable to attend and allow a week for them to comment and review for any substantial changes and update everyone with the material.

Steven Barefield stated that it occurred to him with the list of traffic circles that might be evaluated, is there any reason to consider the intersection at 4th Street and Pinellas Point Drive. There is a lot of City property there and that is about 1/3-2/3 of the way of the two straight aways that invite speeding. Barefield asked if installing traffic circles there would slow vehicles down enough to set them off at a slow speed when entering the two straight away. Frederick responded saying that he has look at that before and the issue is that it is not a four-way intersection or a “T” intersection, but is curved and outside of the limits of the asphalts there are ditches so all of that leads to dollar signs and would be very expensive. That is why it was not included in the summary. Based on initial public comments the dept. is going to be looking at additional curve warning signs and maybe even flashing beacons in order to try to address that.

Wrap Up & Next Steps: Mory added final comments and thanked everyone for their participation. CM Figgs-Sanders thanked everyone for their attendance and participation in the meeting.