

**STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH**

March 28, 2011

The Streets and Transportation Committee Meeting of the City of Rehoboth Beach was called to order at 2:03 p.m. by Co-Chair Pat Coluzzi on Monday, March 28, 2011 in the Commissioners Room in City Hall, 229 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

ROLL CALL

Present: Co-Chair Dennis Barbour, Co-Chair Pat Coluzzi, Cindy Lovett, Kathy Osterholm, John Gauger, Jim Ellison, Dennis Diehl

Absent: Lorraine Zellers

Audience: Tom Allen, David Hastings of Jolly Trolley, Ryan Mavity of Cape Gazette

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Cindy Lovett made a motion, seconded by John Gauger, to approve the Agenda as amended with the deletion of the March 1, 2011 and March 18, 2011 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the March 1, 2011 and March 18, 2011 Streets and Transportation Committee Meetings were not available for approval.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

Discussion of traffic circle issues including pedestrian walkways and decisions and recommendations regarding same.

Co-Chair Pat Coluzzi has forwarded the plans and quotes from Sposato to the Committee members. Option A reflects the traffic circle with the wall, and Option B reflects the traffic circle without the wall.

Dennis Diehl has walked the circle to see what the visibility issue is. Dennis felt that visibility is not an issue, but he did not know if the wall as far as visibility really is the problem from a pedestrian's point of view.

Cindy Lovett has walked the circle and looked at the wall several times. It is harder to see around the circle from the west side than it is from the east. The island is wider on the west side so a pedestrian stands deeper into the circle. On either side, the outside lane is easier to see. When a vehicle comes around the circle on the inside lane, it is well around the circle when a pedestrian is seen. The wall is a problem and needs to be removed.

Jim Ellison noted that the critical points where a pedestrian cannot see vehicles coming are when a pedestrian is in the median who is wanting to cross and faced with traffic coming around the circle, whether it is inbound or outbound. In the original report, the sub-committee did not say that the wall needs to be removed. The sub-committee had suggested a major repositioning of plantings. Sposato had not followed the sub-committee's suggestion in Option A. Aesthetically the wall is not all that wonderful because it is fake stone. In a natural setting, a person does not see a lighthouse with an octagonal fake stone wall around it. He does not particularly like the wall, but it was considered in the original plan. Safety would be improved if the wall is removed and there is a greater slope away from the lighthouse itself. One of the possibilities of removing the wall and having a more natural approach is that the earth can be manipulated around the circle. Swales can be put in to improve the views and higher little berms can be put in where it would not affect the views. The flexibility of dealing with the entire circle as opposed to the wall and the planting area is more substantial if the wall is removed.

Co-Chair Dennis Barbour had wondered if it would be clearer to people entering the City that there is a traffic circle if the wall is removed because the circle would not be clearly defined. There would be 40% improvement in visibility if the wall is removed.

John Gauger thought that it makes a difference how high a vehicle is as to whether visibility is blocked.

Pat thought that the wall is a safety issue, and the Committee should be airing on the side of safety. The soil can be taken down a bit near the lighthouse.

Kathy Osterholm has no problem with the wall because vehicles have always stopped when she has walked across the street at the circle, and she has never had a fear of being hit by a vehicle when she has walked in the median. In looking at the two proposals, there is no difference in the descriptions. No matter if the wall is removed and the sides are beveled, a person is never going to be able to see from point A to point C of the four points of the intersection because the lighthouse will always be in the middle. When entering or leaving the City, a person will never see straight through even if the wall is removed or not. Kathy asked if it is known what benefits there would be with removing the current plants, putting in ground level plants, and not taking the wall down and having to reconfigure the entire planting, irrigation, etc.

Pat will contact Marcus Richardson of Sposato and ask him to be present at the next meeting to clarify the quotes and talk about the plantings. On April 4, 2011, she will provide a summary of the Committee's discussions to the Board of Commissioners about the wall in general. The Commissioners will need to make the decision regarding the wall, but the Committee can make the decisions about adjusting the plantings, removing a holly tree, etc. Pat will report to the Commissioners that there are a variety of opinions, but the majority of the Committee members think the wall is an issue.

David Hastings of Jolly Trolley mentioned that less money should be spent, and speed bumps should be put in because they are effective. Jim commented that the sub-committee which put the original report together on sight lines, coupled its recommendation relative to planting and other changes within the circle with the thought of speed bumps, rumble strips, etc. because speed is an issue.

James Allen, address unknown, asked what the purpose of the wall is, the visibility problems in regard to the shrubbery, and the possibility of removing the lighthouse. His life is put at risk three to four times per day when crossing the street at the traffic circle. Pat thought that the wall is a design element. There are visibility issues on the east and west sides; and changing or removing the shrubbery is part of the planting plan and will be addressed. The possibility of removing the lighthouse can be discussed at the Mayor and Commissioners meeting.

This topic is an agenda item for the Mayor and Commissioners Workshop Meeting on April 4, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. Pat will inform the Board of Commissioners what all the members have said regarding the wall.

Pat suggested the possibility of recommending rumble strips and/or speed bumps on Rehoboth Avenue when approaching the circle. Jim preferred a speed bump, but there is an issue of removing snow with snowplows.

Dennis Barbour said that the snowplow issue should be secondary because safety is more important than the maneuverability of snowplows. A crew with shovels or something could be sent out to remove the snow.

Kathy said that rumble strips make people aware they are coming to a place where attention is needed regarding traffic. Putting in a sequence of rumble strips when coming into the City and approaching the circle and when leaving would be the most effective way to serve as a reminder that something is coming up.

David Hastings suggested the use of rumble strips, a sign notifying people of a speed bump ahead and speed bumps to slow people down. Dennis Diehl supported this idea.

Jim supported the idea of a properly designed speed bump because it would be the most effective. Some speed bumps are painted with chevrons leading up to them with signage.

John suggested putting in a rumble strip to warn people that a speed bump ahead. Dennis Barbour agreed.

Kathy suggested relocating the Welcome to Rehoboth Beach sign to the opposite side of the circle on Rehoboth Avenue. Removing the sign from its current location would increase the view of the circle and what a person is approaching. Relocating the sign to the Visitors' Center would be appropriate.

Dennis Barbour hoped that some of the signs to the entrance of the City could be removed, and he recommended that the Committee members take a fieldtrip to the circle to look at all the signage.

Jim said the problem with moving the sign further east is that there is parking all along the medians, and the sign would not be seen. The sign could be moved forward to where the turn in is for the museum. He suggested that speed bumps be placed on Columbia Avenue when approaching the circle. Dennis Barbour thought that a recommendation be made for the City Engineer to go out and look at that and comes back with his recommendations to the Committee.

Dennis Diehl noted that in regard to the crosswalk issue, the Committee had talked about signage saying that Rehoboth is a pedestrian friendly City and stop for crosswalks.

Pat suggested that the concrete should be painted white at the crosswalks on Rehoboth Avenue including the crosswalks at the traffic circle because people do not necessarily know they are crosswalks. Cindy suggested using a white paint that glows in the dark.

James Allen said that if the northern crosswalk would not be located as close to the circle as it currently is, it would eliminate issues with drivers not seeing pedestrians.

Cindy said that the crosswalks are placed too close to the circle, and it is something that should not have ever been done.

Pat said that access such as curb-cuts, etc. would need to be looked at in regard to the current streetscape. This would be a larger issue because of re-engineering the entire area.

Pat will present the Committee's recommendations to the Board of Commissioners at the Workshop Meeting on April 4, 2011 to put in speed bumps eastbound and westbound on Rehoboth Avenue before the traffic circle, removing the wall based on safety, and painting the concrete at the crosswalks on Rehoboth Avenue.

Cindy and Jim will contact Marcus of Sposato to meet on April 1, 2011 to discuss concerns, options and finalize the plan for the traffic circle. Members of the Committee recommended that new quotes be provided regarding the circle.

Update on State grant and pedestrian issues.

Pat noted that the State grant has been received in the amount of \$85,000.00 and will require competitive bids. JMT, the company that helped with the proposal, will need to bid in regard to the pedestrian/bicycle master plan. The scope of work calls for a year-long study.

Consideration of request by Nora Martin to change parking space No. 2 on Rehoboth Avenue in front of Remax Realty to a 30-minute parking space.

Pat noted that changing the parking space to 30-minute parking would require an ordinance amendment. Reducing some of the spaces to 30-minute is not a bad thing because turnover on Rehoboth Avenue is good.

Jim said that the request to change the parking space to 30-minute parking does not say that it will become Nora Martin's parking space. He asked if a precedent would be set.

Dennis Barbour suggested that the City needs a policy on changing the time limits on spaces. The 30-minute parking space could be approved with the condition that the City develops a policy on these types of changes.

Dennis Diehl said that 30-minute parking spaces are a good thing because it helpful to the businesses regarding turnover.

Cindy thought that there may need to be a rule of how many 30-minute meters can be allowed on a block or within a certain range. This may need to be included in the policy.

Kathy said that other businesses may voice concern that a 30-minute parking space is provided in front of Nora Martin's business which has off-street parking.

Jim suggested that the decision on the request should be postponed pending more information and for the development of a policy. All Committee members agreed.

Other remarks from members and the public.

Cindy noted that there is graffiti on transformer boxes, on the bridge, etc., and she asked who is responsible for covering it up. Pat mentioned that the Street Department would be responsible for covering up the graffiti. Cindy suggested that when trees in the first two blocks on Rehoboth Avenue need to be replaced, another type of tree is planted that does not produce as much dirt as the present ones. Pat said that the City received a grant to plant 163 trees. Dennis noted that the tree ordinance has been changed and provides a list of specific species to be used which were based upon the recommendations from the State. Cindy suggested contacting companies in regard to green sidewalks and find a discontinuous sidewalk in the City where the companies can put in samples of green sidewalks. Pat suggested that Cindy make a presentation at the next meeting in regard to this topic. A suggestion would then be made to the Board of Commissioners to perhaps install the green sidewalks. Kathy will contact Representative Pete Schwartskopf in regard to the abandoned property near Church Street and the two-story building that had burned to

see if something can be done about the disarray.

James Allen suggested that the trees need trimming at the corners of Grove Street and State Road, and Bayard Avenue and Munson Street because they create a safety issue.

Dennis Diehl requested that the crosswalk issues be placed on a future agenda.

Set next meeting.

The next meeting has been scheduled for April 11, 2011 at 11:00 a.m.

There being no further business, John Gauger made a motion, seconded by Dennis Diehl to adjourn the meeting at 3:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

(Ann M. Womack, City Secretary)

**MINUTES APPROVED ON
MAY 2, 2011**

(Dennis Barbour, Co-Chair)

(Pat Coluzzi, Co-Chair)