

**User Group Members Present:** Ellen Walker, Emily Tatum, Clint McCrory, Sam Eberhard, Bruce Lonnee, Mark Ebell, Stephen Bailey, Jeanne Connell, Daniel Sizemore, Ilka McConnell, Jen Rice

**Members Absent:** Peter Norris

**Other Staff Present:** Brad McCook, Melissa Byler, Diana Jackson, Gavin Hassemer, John Rogeberg, Victor Pope

**Guests:** Erik Hammarlund, John Walker, Jared Draper

### **General Business**

Diana Jackson called the meeting to order at 3:04 P.M., welcomed the members in attendance and thanked them for being present.

**Quorum:** Established quorum was present.

No additional items were added to the agenda.

### **User Group Actions**

Meeting Minutes Review & Approval – Mark Ebell made a motion to approve the February 9, 2022, Minutes, as amended by Ellen Walker & Clint McCrory, Jeanne Connell seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Emily made a motion to approve the engineering proposal to design the three-laning concept, and Jeanne seconded. This motion was approved unanimously.

**The below is a brief summary of the key discussion items, not a transcript. The full video is available at the above noted YouTube link. The below notes are only to identify the items discussed and the general order of those discussion to make finding the information on the video easier.**

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### **Traffic Safety Analytics Update**

Erik specified that Street Simplified scheduled March 31<sup>st</sup> meeting to present their Insight Report to the engineering team, T&PW and SPLOST. Diana asked if the meeting could be recorded so the User Group could see the results. Stephen Bailey said they can make it a WebEx meeting, so it can be recorded.

### **Talmadge/Park NOPAA**

Diana discussed the NOPAA she created, and Manager Williams sent to the M&C. The NOPAA is very similar to an Agenda Report. It describes the purpose, history, facts and issues and then explains that the intersection improvement's full implementation cost exceeds the project budget. However, in the interim, we could install short term pedestrian improvements at Talmadge and Park with crosswalk restriping and signals. The NOPAA is sent to the M&C and if they have any questions then they will need to ask the Managers office by Friday. If they do not have any questions, then we will move forward with it. Ellen asked if that includes putting in the pedestrian walk signals. Diana responded that it does.

## Talmadge/Park Intersection Meeting with GDOT and Piedmont – Diana and TPW staff

Diana discussed the Prince Avenue scope of work with GDOT & Piedmont that includes:

- **Signal Upgrades @ 8 Locations**
  - SR 15 @ Sunset Drive
  - SR 15 @ Oglethorpe
  - SR 15 @ Talmadge Dr/ Park Ave (convert Park Ave to RIRO)
  - SR 15 @ King Ave
  - SR 15 @ N. Chase St
  - SR 15 @ N Milledge Ave
  - SR 15 @ N. Finley St/ Barber St
  - SR 15 @ Pulaski St
- **Mid-block crossing upgrades @ 3 locations**
  - CS 1228/ Prince Ave @ Piedmont College DW (now CCSD DW)
  - CS 1228/ Prince Ave @ N. Pope St
  - CS 1228/ Prince Ave @ N. Newton St
  - Potential crossing at SR 15 Alt @ Pound St. (SSA building) - *Under TMC Review*
- **ADA Ramps & crosswalk striping upgrades (where existing conditions are lacking)**
- **Mill & Inlay resurfacing, including restriping from Sunset to Pulaski**
- **Raised Median**
  - From Oglethorpe Ave/ Satula Ave to Talmadge Dr
  - From King Ave to N. Chase St.
- **Lighting Upgrades along corridor at signal/MBX Locations (approx 11-12 locations)**

Diana shared the drawing from GDOT's PIOH and went over the scope of work for the Corridor.

GDOT has added a mid-block crossing at the SSA building. Sue Ann Decker, GDOT, said she would like it moved to the other side of Kenny Rd because she did not want it on the back side of a right turn. It would cause too many conflicts between cars and pedestrians. Erik stated that this would also have RRFBs at this location.

Further along the corridor between Satula Ave and Talmadge Dr, GDOT has reduced the size of the median. It has a pedestrian crossing along with a refugee island. Eric stated that at this site, there would be a mast arm with an overhang that would act as stop light for pedestrians. These are called HAWK signals – high intensity activated crosswalk.

Sam asked if the parking in the Normaltown area was reverse-angle parking. Diana responded, yes that it is supposedly safer than pulling in and backing out. Daniel was concerned about having no median at that section and what was going to stop eastbound traffic from just pulling into those spots. Jared commented that maybe a hardened centerline with flex post or raised turtles could help.

Emily asked if GDOT was going to add a left turn lane at Satula Ave. Erik said it looks like they're maintaining the existing straight left. Daniel suggested that we just make it a signal timing improvement instead that allows pedestrians to enter the crosswalk before cars can take a left. Emily, Ellen, and Jen think having a dedicate left turn lane and the other lane being a straight/right would be better. The UG also suggested doing the same to the Oglethorpe side of the intersection to remove the automobile straight-turning conflicts. John stated their February 2019 traffic study recommended those exclusive left turn lanes with straight/through rights, so there's data to back this one up.

The Park/Talmadge intersection with the RIRO at Park Ave was shown to the group. They discussed that the public has a chance to assert their feelings at the PIOH sometime in mid-May (tentative). GDOT is supposed to be preparing a C/B ratio for the RIRO versus the UG concept intersection realignment. GDOT is still in preliminary plan stage and timeline is ROW in September. Ellen stated that this is a good

interim solution until there is funding for the intersection. Neighbors will learn how to use other routes. Jen stated that this is a major improvement over the existing intersection.

John pointed out that GDOT might need to remove some median at the King Ave signal to accommodate a U-turn, a left turn lane, or they would have to use Talmadge Dr signal to turn back. The UG discussed the possible need for a left turn at the signal at King into the businesses on the north side of the street. Could GDOT pull the median back enough to allow the left turn?

Stephen pointed out that by removing Park Ave from the signals, it removes split phase intersection and should improve traffic flow as there won't be that set of signals for Park Ave. Pedestrians triggering the crosswalk signals would also interfere with the signals. Vehicles should see much better timing system at the intersection.

Emily pointed out that if you cannot take a left onto Park Ave or onto Nacoochee Ave, people who live in the area will have a hard time getting into their neighborhood. Diana stated this is something that needs to be brought up at the PIOH and that a list can be made up of the concerns. While she believes it might be safer in the long run, it sends people down to Chase St where it gets rather congested.

If people begin to use Satula Ave to get into their neighborhood, that's problematic as people park on both sides of the street, use the sidewalk on the east side of the street, and the street is very narrow. Diana reminded that this is feedback we need to provide at the PIOH.

Diana pointed out originally there was supposed to be medians from King Ave to Chase St, but GDOT removed those.

Erik pointed out that the wide area on the east side of N Milledge Ave intersection (where the bus usually stops) has not been addressed by GDOT, and it probably needs to be formalized if that is going to remain a transit stop.

Diana went through the other mid-block crossings that are RRFBs and another HAWK crossing at 100 Prince. And at the Pulaski St intersection GDOT has realign the lanes at the intersection. Stephen asked if the pilot study is successful, and becomes three lanes permanently, would GDOT still set a HAWK here or change it to a RRFB? Erik stated that he and John could review the warrants for placing a HAWK at this location. PIOH is being targeted for mid-May.

## **Prince Ave Lane Repurposing Proposal**

Diana discussed the Proposal to temporarily restripe and segment Barber St to Pulaski St from four lanes to three lanes and putting in a dedicated bike lane. We will try this for at least 90 days.

John with Kimley-Horn will be going to 17 different locations and putting out black hoses across the roadway before Prince is re-configured to get traffic counts. Once the lanes are re-configured, they will wait two months and then go back to same locations to collect the same data to compare to see if and where that traffic diverted due to the reconfiguration. They will take counts post at Pulaski St and Barber St intersections (already have pre counts). Lastly, they will physically drive the corridor during the three "rush hours" to document the time it takes to traverse the corridor both pre and post reconfiguration.

Jared from Toole discussed their scope which includes signage and marking on Prince Ave between Barber St and Pulaski St as well as the approaches to these intersections to capture transitions. Their first task is to create a design memorandum that documents the minimum thresholds - widths of the bikeway, types of street buffers between the bikeway and travel lane, transit stops in the street crossings. Next step is the schematic design as well as an interactive on-line public engagement with a series of questions (before, during, and maybe, after the pilot project) and the last step is the Final design.

Diana discussed getting the traffic studies done before the end of April before students being to leave. Diana would like to take this to the M&C for a July Work Session and August Vote. It would be implemented in September for 90 days.

Diana asked the user group if they agreed to use the requested amount of \$87,140 to do all the traffic counts, design and public engagements. M&C already approved our proposed list and to move forward into the concept phase is to have the user group approve.

## **Next Steps**

### **Assignment for future meetings**

- Next meeting is **April 27, 2022 from 3-4:30 PM NOTE TIME**
- Street Simplified Results
- GDOT PIOH updates
- Interim Park/Talmadge crosswalk updates
- Next Steps

*These minutes are not a transcript of the meeting but instead is a general summary of the key points, ideas, or considerations from the discussion.*