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**MINUTES
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN ADVISORY GROUP
Remote Participation
March 24, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.**

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Advisory Group meeting was held remotely on Tuesday, March 24, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Chairman Niedermaier.

Members Present:

Chairman Craig Niedermaier
Peggy Reins
Matthew Abtahi
Stephen Sanders
Ticia Doughty-Ashcroft

Staff Present:

Kathy Thake, Staff Liaison
Tom Powers, Village Engineer
Katie Schneider, Community Engagement Coordinator
Andrew Vitale, GIS Coordinator
Nathan Bruemmer, Community Development

Staff Absent:

Nick Zakula, Police Bureau Chief

Also Present:

Tim Gustafson, Epstein
Stacey Meekins, Sam Schwartz
Alex Hanson, Sam Schwartz

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes

Board Member Reins, seconded by Board Member Abtahi, to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2021, meeting; on voice vote all concurred.

Announcement

Community Engagement Coordinator Katie Schneider provided an update on social media campaign which will be implemented in the coming months. This campaign will include encouraging people to get out, making drivers more aware of pedestrians, incorporating messaging to vehicle sticker renewal. The Niles Police department will be working on a video promoting safety, which will be shared with the Group.

New Business

I. Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update

a. Epstein Presentation

- i. Tim Gustafson of Epstein presented the approach for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update. The presentation is attached to these minutes for reference.
- ii. Board Member Reins questioned the community engagement component of the planning process. Tim Gustafson stated their approach is on the smaller level but it can be tailor to the municipality. Being in the digital environment it has made it easier to engage the community along with pop up events.
- iii. Village Engineer Powers questioned the next steps once a decision is made on the firm to conduct the plan update. Tim Gustafson suggested that a scoping meeting will be the first step and a casual conversation with high goal setting meeting.

b. Sam Schwartz Presentation

- i. Stacey Meekins of Sam Schwartz presented the approach for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update. The presentation is attached to these minutes for reference.
- ii. Chairman Niedermaier questioned Sam Schwartz what unique ideas have been developed. Stacey Meekins state that in Ann Arbor, MI vision zero plan and long term plan was developed around safety which sparked shared streets plans. Alex Hanson stated that creating sense of community is in design similar to Des Moines, IA where public art was a focus.
- iii. Board Member Reins stated community engagement component of the planning process is important and how can this be applied for this update. Stacey Meekins stated that a unique event in celebration of biking and walking worked in the past and this can be a way to do it again in addition to the workshops. Alex Hanson stated that online engagement would be a benefit. What type of support of grant funding would this firm provide and the success of past experience. Sam Schwartz would be willing to take the applications and apply; in addition to working with safe ambassadors. Board Member Reins stated the policy landscape has changed since the last update. Stacey Meekins stated there are several polices that can help such as quick paint and post designs, speed limit policy, street shut downs for block parties.
- iv. Village Engineer Powers questioned what is the experience working with IDOT. Stacey Meekins states working with IDOT is not easy but having them involved early on would be advantageous.
- v. Board Member Reins questioned what the next steps are. Stacey Meekins stated that a review of what has been done and hear about the goals and priorities from the Group and other stakeholders.

c. Open Discussion

- i. Board Member Reins stated both seem qualified to conduct the update. Village Engineer Powers presented his pros and cons of both firms. Epstein seemed to be more engaging while Sam Schwartz was more reserved. Village Engineer Powers stated that his working relationship with Epstein is limited as they were a subcontractor on a larger project. Village Engineer Powers stated he did not work with Sam Schwartz in the past. Chairman Niedermaier suggested staff obtained information

from both firms on the team that would work with the Village. Staff liaison Nathan stated both seem qualified. The budget for the update is \$50,000 for FY 2022. Board Members Sanders stated it appears the focus is more on education for stakeholders is a stronger aspect seen from Epstein. Chairman Niedermaier saw more engagement but more prioritization and system of planning focused on safety from Sam Schwartz. Epstein has a sense of who Niles is and how it fits into the region. Staff will obtain more information from both firms on the size of their teams and share with the Group. Moving forward staff will make a recommendation to the Group and proceed to the Village Board for approval.

Member Ticia Doughty-Ashcroft joined the meeting at 11:35a.m.

Other Discussion

Culver School project will break ground in the early summer to avoid school congestion. Nordica Avenue was discussed in general, but the parking is problematic. Staff mentioned that Community Development Department is doing work on an SSA in this area to have a full understanding of the parcels and work that needs to be done.

Comments from the Public

None

Next Meeting

Tentative Date April 28, 2021 time to be determined.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Group Member Reins, seconded by Group Member Sanders; all concurred and the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Kathy M. Thake
Staff Liaison