

N Monroe Advisory Board Meeting #8
17 November 2016

Advisory Board: Ed Ardiss, Brianna Musser, Dale Westhaver, EJ Iannelli, Mike Trautman, Megan Kennedy, Chris Bornhoft, Mike Wallace, Skyler Oberst on behalf of CM Stratton

Public: Kathleen Weinand, Gary Hustad, Lori Keegan, Pat Keegan, Melody Ardiss, Bryce Morrison, Katy Azar, Paul Kropp, Jay Cousins

Introductions

Housekeeping

- Notes Approved
- No questions on FAQ document

Monroe Project Visuals

Focus Areas

- We originally talked about two focus areas; there was more input on the focus area around Grace, with safety upgrades at other intersections
- Two options for construction approach:
 - Standard Option
 - Same features throughout corridor
 - 2 pedestrian lights per intersection with street lights
 - Minimum street trees
 - No furniture
 - Focus Area Option
 - Pedestrian lights on each corner
 - More intense tree and ground planting
 - Colored/textured sidewalk
 - Street furniture

Pedestrian Lighting

- Two options shown
 - Acorn style
 - With flowers, art, etc.
 - City installs fixture and then enters into an agreement with an organization (such as a business association) for long term maintenance
 - Traditional style

Street Furniture Options

- Benches, trashcans, bike racks

- No bike rack standard

Sidewalk Options

- Stamped vs colored
 - One thing to keep in mind is that installing a stamped and/or colored sidewalk will take extra time /effort. Focusing these types of options only in the “focus areas” should help ensure a timely construction schedule

Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing

- Lined up enhanced crossings with bus stops
- If Fredrick/Dalton were combined, would the enhanced crossing move to mirror that change?
 - Answer: That would be the intent. STA is flexible with regards to stop location options around an intersection (such as nearside, farside, etc.). Stop location options can be incorporated into various options for enhanced intersections.

Safety through conflict reduction

- 5 lanes to 3 lane reduces
 - Multi-lane weave
 - Blinding of pedestrians/vehicles
 - Number of lanes to cross
- Enhanced crosswalks through
 - Rectangular rapid flash beacon
 - Pedestrian refuge islands (limits LH turns for one direction)
 - HAWK light (limits ALL left-hand turns)
- **Question:** Will a HAWK light be confusing to users (drivers, pedestrians)?
 - This is a newer concept for Spokane and there will be a level of education that goes along with this option if used. We currently have two other HAWK lights in Spokane so there has been some exposure.

Designs Alternatives

- Raised Medians
- Flashing Beacon – This has been successful on Hamilton
 - **Question:** Has somebody been hit on Hamilton?
 - Staff researched this question after the meeting. Data was looked at for the 5-year crash history for Hamilton Street at the Rapid Flash Beacon crosswalk. There have been two vehicle/pedestrian collisions in the past 5 years. Both collisions resulted in minor injuries. The cause of one collision was related to the multiple –lane configuration (two lanes in each direction) and associated blind spots. The cause of the other collision was related to inattentive driving.

- Montgomery Intersection with HAWK Light
 - No cross vehicle traffic on Montgomery
 - Not much cross traffic anyway
 - People run the light
 - **Questions/Comments**
 - I live on Montgomery and I don't think the HAWK light will work (partly because it does not allow left turns).
 - Can the safety issues be addressed by simply installing better lighting?
 - Answer: Lighting improvements will be part of the project. Adding additional elements like flashing beacon or a HAWK light further improves safety.
 - Is there a way to install a HAWK signal and maintain left hand turns?
 - Answer: The HAWK light is designed to limit left turns as a safety measure (reduces points of conflict between pedestrians/vehicles).
 - Is the HAWK signal tied to the grant?
 - Answer: We have reached out to WSDOT and they feel the rapid flash beacon meets the grant requirements
 - It would seem that the current configuration with the traffic light is the best solution
 - There is a pattern of misuse at this intersection which is creates safety issues
 - Because the light is there, it's the most efficient and assured way to make a left on Monroe
 - If you change the color and texture of the intersection, does that enhance safety because they see something different?
 - Yes, drivers will react differently
- Montgomery Intersection with Beacon
 - Can the rapid flashing beacons go on both sides of the intersection?
 - This is unlikely as it can create an instance where a car could be stopped between the flashing beacons signs (in the intersection).
- Grace Intersection with Focus Area Options
 - Questions/Comments
 - It might be a good idea to start with flashing beacons and evaluate effectiveness. A pedestrian island can be installed later if needed.
 - I like the feel with these extra elements; it gives the street "pizzazz"
 - Any time you put a pedestrian island in the middle, you cause issues with businesses, in addition to restricting emergency vehicles
 - Will wheelchair deployment on buses stop traffic and cause delays?
 - Answer: There is not an appreciable delay expected for these events. Wheelchair ramp deployment occurs about once

every 90 trips (7 times a week) on the corridor. In 2015, 1% of these 7 weekly deployments occurred during a peak traffic hour.

- Can you have a painted median?
 - We looked at it, but we would still have to restrict left turns
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- **Observation from Discussion:** There seems to be consensus that an island should be swapped out for RFB. Further discussion:
 - The purpose of the island is to stop a car
 - If you don't install the northern island, people can still make a left turn.
 - It does not seem like a big deal if there are just 3 raised medians
- Transit Curb height
 - Has to be higher for planned transit improvements
- Lane Transition
 - Bumpouts don't begin until Knox
- Glass Hill Stormwater Swales
 - Manage stormwater
 - Sidewalk will pull away from the street for safety
 - Neighborhoods have set money aside for signage
 - **Question/Comment:** Can we make sure the trail is well-lit? Also, we wanted the signage to highlight the identity of the business district

Next Steps

- Feedback on options from Advisory Board
- Meeting in 2 weeks to review preferences
- Online Open House, December 2016
- Public Meeting, January 2016

Questions/Comments

- A comment was made that the Focus Area at Montgomery and Monroe and should not have been dropped from the discussion. Staff stated that this will be put back into the visuals as they are updated for the public outreach
- I (Mike) like what was done for the hill
- I (Brianna) like the idea of bringing something to designate history of street
- I (Chris) have talked to folks about coning off N Monroe as a test, have we thought about that?
 - Answer: The way the street is built it would not give a realistic experience of the street. You would have entire sections of the street "coned" off for the expanded sidewalk space and

parking space. That's a lot of space to cone in the public right of way. Because it would not reflect what a physical change will actually look and feel like – this could create more confusion than benefit.

- (Chris) when you were talking about flower baskets on the light poles, there is a recorded charge against property owners in the downtown to fund DSP's watering, do you know what the cost would be?
 - No estimate, but East Sprague Business District passed a self-assessment and raised \$58,000. Implementing this process on Monroe would require a discussion with a formal business association
- (Marcia) Is there an interest in art?
 - (EJ) I sit on the Arts Commission and yes there is a desire for this
 - (Bryce) Brad is open to art on his wall (building on the corner of Grace and Monroe)

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