

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

August 20, 2019

A meeting of the Committee on Traffic and Transportation was held this date beginning at 2:35 p.m., at Providence Baptist Church, 294 Seven Farms Drive, Daniel Island

Notice of this meeting was sent to all local news media.

PRESENT

Councilmember Seekings, Chair; Councilmember Wagner, Councilwoman Jackson, Councilmember Moody and Mayor Tecklenburg (arrived at 2:41 p.m.) **Also Present:** Keith Benjamin, Janie Borden, Christopher Morgan, and Bethany Whitaker, Council Secretary

The meeting was opened with a moment of silence provided by Chairman Seekings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On the motion of Councilmember Moody, seconded by Councilmember Wagner, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2019 meeting.

Director's Update

Mr. Benjamin stated that in front of them, they had sheet from SCDOT for a new project called 700 Crosswalks. A few months previous, they had allowed T&T to move forward on signal design plans. There were actually 17 intersections, but nine specific that were outside the 526 intersection improvements. They wanted to make those intersections safer whether that was with crosswalks, ADA compliant ramps, or pedestrian signals. The agreement they had with SCDOT was that they would go forward with the process and SCDOT would foot the bill for putting the infrastructure in. The City would do the signal design plans. District Six was pleased with that process and they wanted to leverage it into a district-wide project. They were hopeful that this was a trigger point for doing this in other areas. It was an opportunity to hold DOT accountable to improving intersections and how they were making that work happen within their maintenance plan and other streams of income.

Councilmember Moody said he knew in West Ashley there was a lot of things going on with the intersections. He asked if SCDOT was going to help with that too. Mr. Benjamin said that was DOT. Josh Johnson had come and presented on the 526 interchange improvements. That was all the intersections that were getting their signal heads changed. They went ahead and did some of those improvements already. All of that work was at DOT's expense. The only intersection that was a TST request was Wappoo and 61 from three years ago. Councilwoman Jackson said the 700 then were more of a hybrid. The City was paying design and DOT was paying for the infrastructure. Mr. Benjamin said that the City's work was a pilot. All they did was the design plans, but all infrastructure and installation would be taken care of by DOT. DOT's hope was to be able to leverage that pilot in other places. Councilwoman Jackson asked if they had any chance to influence any other intersections. Mr. Benjamin said that he was taking it as an opportunity to hold SCDOT accountable. If there were things that the Councilmembers were seeing, they could direct it to the District.

Councilmember Wagner asked if they had a list of what they were looking at and where they were. There was just a County study. Mr. Benjamin said that this effort was an election of 17 specific intersections. About eight of them were included in the 526 improvements. The other nine were on the Peninsula and weren't a part of any previous improvements. The pieces that he was talking about was the County's \$48 million US 17

effort, and the US 17 Corridor Study. Councilmember Wagner said that he knew that a few had been identified on 61 and asked if those were in there. Mr. Benjamin said that with the presentation that Mr. Johnson gave, he showed all the different corridors, including 61, Paul Cantrell, US 17, that would be getting improvements. Councilmember Wagner said they had a DOT person at one of the meetings and he had said that it wouldn't happen at the intersection down towards 171 and 61 where it split, up towards the Post Office. Mr. Benjamin said they had the monthly meetings with the State and the County, so he could make sure he brought that up with them to verify.

Mr. Benjamin stated that for the CTC votes, Maybank Highway was the one that got the most 'shine', but there were two others that were awarded as well. One was carryover funds for Woodland Shores sidewalk and drainage, and then also the Ashley Hall Plantation Road Bridge, finalizing additional construction costs that were needed to be added to the work that would happen there. That entire project was now a little over \$1 million. The current balance was \$730,000, but they needed an additional \$290,000 to fulfill the project. They were still in the design phase. There was a small change in Harborview Road. They had the 24 hour flashers there and County would pay to make those rapid flashers with camera activation and push button activation. It wasn't at the City's cost at all. They had been working with the North East Central community on improvements at the intersection of Brigade and Meeting Street. Brigade/Cypress was up for resurfacing at the top of 2020 and the DOT had agreed to do all the re-markings for that, including protected bike lanes with the understanding that the City would use signal maintenance funds to improve the intersection. Chairman Seekings asked if the City would get the schematics of the markings before they did it. Mr. Benjamin said they would. They had talked about what parameters would be and what would work for the community. They were taking what DOT was thinking about doing and adding it within the concept designs for the intersection and creating a full concept to bring before the community on October 12. It was a partnership effort. It would allow the community to have a direct connection through to King Street and the Lowline. The neighborhood was fully on board. They were tired of the accidents at that intersection and wanted to see the area get a little better.

Mr. Benjamin stated that week, on Monday, the BCDCOG had voted for the second phase of funding for the Bus Rapid Transit System that would bring the entire design up to 30%. Design would be a 15 month-2 year process. It would include a study to figure out what development patterns should look like along the corridor. Councilwoman Jackson asked who the most reliable source was to connect with in North Charleston regarding planning. Mr. Lindsey said they worked with the County's Director. They wanted to make sure densities were coordinated. Councilwoman Jackson said that Charles Drayton was her go to person in North Charleston. Chairman Seekings said that as they got closer to this project, a lot of the corridor would be in North Charleston, but it would be an amenity for downtown, so they should give them some guidance and expertise.

Revised Memorandum of Understanding between the South Carolina Department of Transportation, Berkeley County and the City of Charleston to allow the installation of a traffic control signal at the intersection of Beresford Run and Clements Ferry Road and shared desire for improved access management along Clements Ferry Rd. (S-8-33).

Mr. Benjamin stated that they had brought this before the Committee for approval before. This was an agreement that was permitted by SCDOT Columbia office to be able to have an agreement for designating the location of signalization at the realignment of Beresford and Clements Ferry. It was also the understanding with SCDOT that the introduction of this MOU would be a jump start to identifying

transportation management throughout that corridor at SCDOT's expense. They were excited about the proposition of that. They also had gotten a number of inputs from the neighborhood. The Mayor had called a meeting with the supervisor, the County Councilmember, Councilmember White, and the neighborhood regarding the MOU. They walked away from that meeting thinking they had agreements. County went ahead and made their approvals at their initial committee meeting. He had spoken with the supervisor the day before and also with the City's legal team, and the legal team at Berkeley County. They still refrain that they had comfort levels with the MOU. That being said, there had been attention brought back forward from the neighborhood of the potential for additional changes that they might be putting forward to Berkeley County. The supervisor planned to go to the community in the near future, and he had iterated that he was not planning for this MOU to go before their full Council until September 23rd. When the City had left the original meeting, the agreement was that County would bring this forward to Committee on August 12, which they did, and the City would bring it before both Committee and Council, and then County would bring it to the full Council on the 26th of August. In communication with the City's legal team and Berkeley County's team, there were a few options from a legal standpoint that they wanted to make the T&T Committee aware of and allow them to decide how to move forward.

Councilwoman Jackson asked if they had any insight as to what the community would be asking of their Council regarding changes. Mr. Benjamin said that when he spoke to the supervisor, he knew there had been conversations regarding the zoning of the parcels. The supervisor had made it very clear where he stood on that, in terms of the downzoning of the back end. The front end would have a Refuel station, but the back end parcel was still zoned for Industrial. At the City level, they were still of the opinion that because they owned the right of way, that the City had the right to determine where curb cuts would be. As of now, based on the conversation they had, the only thing that the City was comfortable with permitting was the curb cut near the Refuel station. That was the position they continued to hold, and they City didn't feel its hands were tied within the agreement of being able to keep that stance the way it was. There was due diligence that the County wanted to be able to do, but they had passed it through their committee. He wanted legal to give the options for what they could do.

Ms. Borden stated that if they moved forward with adopting it that day, and Berkeley County were to make any changes to it, so long as they were minor and didn't substantially alter the agreement, they could continue moving forward. However, in the event of substantial changes or material alterations to the agreement, they would then have to bring it back the Committee to approve those changes. Councilwoman Jackson asked if that's how the motion should be, and Ms. Borden said that would be best.

Councilmember Moody asked for some understanding of what the intersection looked like. Mr. Benjamin said that Beresford Run led into the community, and the other side of Clements Ferry was Enterprise Boulevard, where there was new development occurring. Getting the signalization there, would be giving land to the City to have the Fire Station and also putting up the \$3 million to align Enterprise Boulevard into Beresford Run to make a full intersection. Councilmember Moody asked what the property was zoned now. Mr. Benjamin said that the property adjacent to Beresford, that has been in question before was Industrial. It was County, and there had been conversations about down zoning

part of the parcel for the Refuel Station that would be there. The County had not agreed to do the down zoning for the entirety of the parcel. Mr. Morgan said that the City zoning across the street at Enterprise Boulevard was General Business. The County had other zoning on the other side of Beresford. On the eastern side, it was really just the roadway right of way that was in the City. On the western side, it was all in the City as part of the Enterprise Boulevard development. Mr. Benjamin said that the City's leverage has remained that it owned the right of way, so if someone wanted to cut into that right of way, they had to get City permission. Councilmember Moody said that the ingress/egress would be off of Beresford Run, and not off Clements Ferry. Mr. Benjamin said that was correct. Councilmember Moody asked what they were hearing from the citizens. Mr. Benjamin said they hadn't gotten push back on the gas station. The concern they had heard was about the back end of the parcel that was zoned Industrial. The ask had been made for the down zoning of the whole parcel, and the supervisor had made it clear that they were not favorable to that, but they weren't opposed to the down zoning of the front part.

Mayor Tecklenburg stated that the City felt like they would continue to have control over what the access looked like. In the agreement it said access to adjacent properties shall be provided through 'a' 22 foot minimum publically accessible travel way. It didn't say some or a few travel ways. In the meeting, he heard the fear that it could end up with multiple accesses or curb cuts. He believed that as written, the City could say that one access was all they had agreed to provide. That allowed for the light to get done and the neighborhood to have access to that light, and for the City to proceed with getting the Fire Station built. He wished the neighborhood well if they wanted to get more concessions out of the County. This would give the City flexibility to be able to move forward. Councilmember Wagner said that it said this was the fourth entrance onto Beresford and the traffic appeared to be reviewed in five years. It sounded like Grand Oaks. It wasn't permanent and it would be multiple. Beresford had to be a large road to have four entrances. Chairman Seekings said he thought the only limitation was that if the signal wasn't put up, then the agreement expired. But, if a traffic signal was put up, then the MOU was in place. Mr. Benjamin said that it was also at the discretion of the members of the MOU to be able to extend it. Once the MOU was done, they had to go back to the drawing board. They had to keep in mind, from a City perspective, that there were other intersections that were wide open for signalizations. Without the establishment of the MOU, it was the usual DOT approval process, which meant whoever got the warrants first would get the signalization. The benefits were beyond just the immediacy of signalization at the intersection.

Chairman Seekings asked if they expected substantial changes from the County to what had already been drafted. Mr. Benjamin said that he had talked with the attorney from Berkeley County a few hours previous, and he was not of the mind that they would be making changes. They were still making a visit to the neighborhood, so there could still be changes though. Chairman Seekings said that his suggestion, so that there was no questions in the future and the neighborhood knew exactly what the City's position was going forward, in number four on the agreement, they could add the word 'single' to make it read as 'access to adjacent property shall be provided through a single 22 foot travel way'. He knew 'a' was singular, but that would make it clear.

On the motion of Councilwoman Jackson, seconded by Councilmember Moody, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the above item, with the amendment that the word 'single' be added to number four of the MOU, so that it read 'Access to adjacent properties shall be provided through a single 22-foot minimum publically accessible travel way-'.

Having no further business, the Committee adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Bethany Whitaker
Council Secretary