

MINUTES OF MEETING OF Public Information Center – February 9, 2021

NJTPA FY 2016-17 Local Safety Engineering Assistance Program
Contract A: Project 3 – Marin Boulevard
Jersey City, Hudson County
NJX-2017650

DATE PREPARED: February 12, 2021

LOCATION: GoToMeeting Virtual Meeting

ATTENDEES:

Project Team Representatives:

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| Andrew Vischio | Director Traffic / Transportation Engineering – Jersey City |
| Christine Mittman | North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) |
| Bernie Boerchers | Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) |
| Christopher Marra | Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) |

All other attendees are listed on the attached sign-in sheet.

PURPOSE: Present the conceptual plan to residents, businesses, community groups and all impacted stakeholders and solicit their comments and/or concerns.

Discussion:

A PowerPoint presentation of the Marin Boulevard project was conducted by GPI staff. The following is a summary of the questions and comments provided by the attendees as well as the responses by the project team and any additional discussion provided below in italics:

1. Diane Kaese (to Everyone): 6:17 PM: Does this include the new layout for the land now occupied by Shoprite, BJ's, Bed Bath & Beyond and their parking lots?

Mr. Boerchers stated that the project is focused on the roadway and sidewalk limits along Marin Boulevard and will not be addressing issues beyond the existing ROW. He added that changes to the access points of the parking lots will be considered in the design of the proposed improvements and that additional survey will be performed to update the basemapping to reflect current conditions.

2. Eleana Little (to Everyone): 6:20 PM: The Manila Ave bike lane is not at all protected and frequently has cars in it. If it's meant to be the main southbound bike artery it ought to be protected

Mr. Vischio stated that providing a buffer for the existing bike lane along Manila Avenue was not feasible due to the roadway width, but the city is investigating relocating the bicycle lane to the opposite side of the roadway as a potential improvement.

3. Chris Adair (to Everyone): 6:27 PM: Don't end it there! Keep going North with that PBL (in reference to the protected bike lane along Marin Boulevard)

Mr. Boerchers noted that the project funding is only for the improvements along Marin Boulevard between Montgomery Street and 6th Street.

4. Kathryn Leonard Moore (to Everyone): 6:28 PM: Bike Lane should be directed to turn east onto to Sixth Street to Washington Blvd to continue north (avoid crossing Holland Tunnel traffic)

Ms. Moore added that the bike lane striping should not continue through the 6th Street intersection, which would leave bicyclists without any lane or route northward. Mr. Boerchers agreed that the bike lane should be terminated at the south side of the intersection.

5. Tony Borelli (to Everyone): 6:28 PM: Yes, one of the best reasons to do this project is to link DTJC to Hoboken. is there any coordination with Hoboken city government on linking up to this?

Mr. Vischio stated that both cities are coordinating connecting their respective bicycle networks. He added that such a connection is outside the scope of this project, however he anticipates that the city will pursue extending the bicycle lane along Marin Boulevard northward in future projects.

6. Eleana Little (to Everyone): 6:28 PM: *I phrased my earlier question poorly - I know PBL wouldn't work on Manila because of all the driveways - was trying to encourage looking elsewhere for a southbound PBL so we have both directions

Mr. Boerchers stated that unfortunately there are limited opportunities for providing bicycle lanes in the north/south direction. Mr. Vischio noted that to the east Washington Street and Green Street currently features bicycle lanes in each direction.

7. Patrick Conlon (to Everyone): 6:29 PM: Will the curb extensions be concrete?

Mr. Boerchers stated that typically curb extensions are concrete, however they provide areas for potential landscaping or green infrastructure which could be investigated.

8. Kathryn Leonard Moore (to Everyone): 6:29 PM: More density is planned for block between First and Second Street - as well as a public school.

Mr. Boerchers stated that the volume projections developed for this project were based on population and employment data as well as the North Jersey Regional Transportation Model. Recently the city had provided updated development maps and it was determined that some of the developments were not accounted for in the model, therefore GPI will use this information to reanalyze the corridor. Due to the project scope and constraints, it is anticipated that the changes to the proposed improvements will be limited to signal timing adjustments and signal coordination. Mr. Vischio added that the city can provide the current plans from the Jersey City Planning Department. Mr. Boerchers stated that if there is a school within the vicinity of 1st Street and 2nd Street then the pedestrian clearance times can be adjusted for slower walking speeds.

9. Kathryn Leonard Moore (to Everyone): 6:29 PM: What's the plan for on-street parking - that is vital for the businesses in the area

Mr. Marra identified the areas where parking is maintained on the plans. He noted that where possible, existing areas of parking will be maintained and at certain locations with sufficiently wide shoulders, additional parking could be provided.

10. Kathryn Leonard Moore (to Everyone): 6:30 PM: where is the on street parking? Can the spaces be marked?

Ms. Mittman noted that US Access Board Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) would require providing at least one handicap parking space per block where spaces are marked or metered.

11. Diane Kaese (to Everyone): 6:30 PM: So, the answer is no, you haven't looked at the new street layout for that section of land. I suggest you contact the Planning Department to get the approve site plan for that area. (in reference to the planned development to the east of Marin Boulevard between 2nd Street and 6th Street)

Mr. Boerchers stated that GPI will request plans of any proposed developments in the project area from Jersey City. Ms. Mittman added that only existing conditions can be shown at the time that the city is seeking construction authorization. Mr. Boerchers stated that the project survey is going to be updated in Final Design to account for any changes which have occurred after the original mapping was prepared.

12. Kathryn Leonard Moore (to Everyone): 6:31 PM: Include block the box in the intersections of Steuben, Morgan, Bay, First and Second

Mr. Boerchers stated that block the box signing and striping could be incorporated but it would be if the final decision of the city.

13. Michael Rodriguez (to Everyone): 6:32 PM: The light between Marin Blvd and Grand Street is very fast, sometimes there isn't enough time to cross the street. Also, the wait time between lights is long, so if you miss the crossing light, you can be delayed a while. Can the crossing light be extended?

Mr. Boerchers stated that per the previous edition of the MUTCD, the pedestrian crossing times were calculated based on walking speed of 4.0 feet per second. The current MUTCD uses a walking speed of 3.5 feet per second, and a slower walking speed of 3.0 feet per second can be used for locations with higher usage by children or elderly. He added that bringing the signal timings into conformance with the current MUTCD typically results in longer crossing times.

14. Alexander Mirescu (to Everyone): 6:34 PM: Marin Blvd in recent years has seen an increase in the number of areas that flood. Considering the long-term vision of this project, from Marin Blvd eastward is among some of the most flood vulnerable areas of the East Coast. Are you considering stormwater management and flood mitigation measures for Marin?

Mr. Mirescu recounted other projects within the area that involved incorporating stormwater capture technology and stated that he could provide the project team with example plans. Mr. Vischio noted that he would reach out to the Jersey City Office of Sustainability to provide any additional guidance on green infrastructure. Ms. Mittman added that while the project is primarily a safety improvement project, the FHWA will fund green infrastructure which is being incorporated into safety projects more often. The project team agreed that incorporating green infrastructure would be investigated for the Marin Boulevard project.

15. Patrick Conlon (to Everyone): 6:34 PM: Maybe the city can add some way finding signage to direct cyclists over to Washington

Mr. Boerchers stated that wayfinding signage could be incorporated into the project, but it would need to be tied into the larger cycle network. Mr. Vischio stated that the city can provide guidance developed with the bike master plan. Mr. Conlon added that wayfinding signing should be added to direct northbound bicyclists onto 6th Street eastbound which connects with Washington Street.

16. Michael Flinck (to Everyone): 6:34 PM: I cross the Holland Tunnel traffic all the time on my bike, its fine

17. Deirdre (to Everyone): 6:39 PM: there's a lot of pooling and flooding on many PBL's and it's a hazard

Mr. Boerchers stated that the proposed resurfacing and grading improvements should address any ponding issues along Marin Boulevard. He added the green infrastructure may also help address any existing drainage issues.

18. Robert Gordon (to Everyone): 6:42 PM: I only joined within the last couple minutes and this may already have been addressed, but my main concern is the parking situation near Sussex St.

That intersection with Marin is a major safety hazard. Parking should be moved to the eastern side of Marin next to St. Peter's field.

Mr. Vischio stated that this issue is outside the limits of this project, but the city is aware of the issue and is working to address it.

19. Gary Murphy (to Everyone): 6:43 PM: Joined a bit late...sorry if this was already addressed. Is there a plan for a traffic signal at either Mercer or Wayne St.? I live in this immediate area and frequently see people dashing at their peril to cross Marin. No safe place to cross between Montgomery and Columbus

Mr. Boerchers stated that certain warrants need to be met in order for a traffic signal to be installed. He added that GPI could assess the existing traffic volumes and crash history to see if a signal is warranted at either intersection. Mr. Vischio stated that construction of pedestrian refuge islands could be investigated. Mr. Marra added that a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) could also be installed at this location. Mr. Boerchers also noted that a HAWK signal system may be another solution at this location.

20. Chris Adair (to Everyone): 6:44 PM: Glad to hear there's discussion of connecting Jersey City bike lanes with Hoboken bike lanes!

21. Ryan Williams (to Everyone): 6:45 PM: a bike lane on Thomas Gangemi (6th Street) connecting PBLs on Marin Blvd and Washington Avenue would make a lot of sense (I guess the city would have to do that). There's definitely space for it

22. Chris Adair (to Everyone): 6:46 PM: What is the material that will make the bike lane protected? There are better materials than plastic bollards.

Mr. Boerchers stated that flexible delineators are currently proposed, however other alternatives could be investigated. He added that consideration of maintenance and safety for motorists is also important when choosing a device for protection of the bike lanes. Mr. Vischio stated that the city typically uses flexible delineators, but other options could be discussed after the meeting.

23. Chris Lamm (to Everyone): 6:47 PM: can the priority be safety and signal timing optimized for pedestrian crossing (no beg buttons please) and not prioritize max car throughput

Mr. Boerchers stated that the proposed improvements will provide sufficient crossing time for pedestrians as well as shortened crossing distances and better visibility. He added that the focus of this project is safety for all road users.

24. . (to Everyone): 6:48 PM: @Kathryn great call out re:school!

25. Chris Lamm (to Everyone): 6:49 PM: sorry I was late and if this was already covered. the intersection of Marin/Columbus is scary as hell for pedestrians and lots of road raging motorists. had some near misses while walking across

Mr. Boerchers identified the proposed improvements at this location, such as curb extensions, shorter crossings, signal upgrades, and bringing the pedestrian timing into conformance with the current MUTCD, which should improve pedestrian safety at this intersection.

26. Ms. Kathryn Leonard Moore inquired if the 5.5 foot wide shoulder along Marin Boulevard southbound as it approaches Columbus Drive would be used as a right turn lane.

Mr. Boerchers stated that the minimum lane width would be 11 feet wide and there is insufficient space to provide a right turn lane at this location.

27. Mr. Patrick Conlon inquired if a pedestrian only phase could be added to the intersection of Marin Boulevard and Columbus Drive.

Mr. Boerchers stated that a pedestrian only phase will be investigated for this location.

28. Tony Borelli (to Everyone): 6:49 PM: I.e. many people are parking illegally and dangerously

Mr. Boerchers stated that proposed curb extensions, where feasible, help to reduce illegal parking, but often the issue falls on enforcement. He added that additional pavement markings and signing can help discourage illegal parking.

29. Michael McCarty (to Everyone): 6:50 PM: we don't need free storage for cars when most Jersey City residents don't own cars. (added) plenty of paid parking in the neighborhood.

Mr. Boerchers stated that the proposed improvements were intended to provide safety improvements for all road users and that maintaining or adding parking were not priorities of the project. He added that areas of additional pavement width lend themselves to parking which couldn't be used for other purposes and noted that there are businesses along Marin Boulevard, such as restaurants, which benefit from having parking nearby.

30. Diane Kaese (to Everyone): 6:51 PM: Has the drop off for the PATH been eliminated on the east side of Marin south of Stueben St? If so why?

Mr. Vischio noted that this drop off location was eliminated as part of the 90 Columbus development. He added that a drop off was added along Columbus Drive after the original survey was performed and that the design would be modified to maintain the loading zone area.

31. Tony Borelli (to Everyone): 6:51 PM: Studies have shown repeatedly that business owners drastically overestimate the % of their patrons who arrive by car, and thus overvalue street parking.

32. Patrick Conlon (to Everyone): 6:53 PM: Will there be designated loading zones incorporated on any of the blocks?

Mr. Boerchers stated loading zones are typically defined by city ordinance and would be maintained in the proposed design. Ms. Mittman noted that many of the businesses, office buildings and residential towers have loading zones or other access on the side streets.

33. Michael Flinck (to Everyone): 6:54 PM: I believe there is currently an "all-walk" signal at the intersection of Metro Plaza Dr & Marin Blvd. Will that style of pedestrian signal be continued there? The Harsimus Cove Assoc (which I was involved with years ago) fought for this.

Mr. Vischio noted that the current timing at Metro Plaza Drive provides a Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI). He stated that adding LPIs to other signalized intersections within the project limits should be investigated.

34. Alexander Mirescu (to Everyone): 6:54 PM: I agree with Tony Borelli. Local businesses rely much more on foot traffic and pedestrian passage.

35. Kathryn Leonard Moore (to Everyone): 6:55 PM: FYI - there is a private "waldo school" on the south side of Second Street east of Marin.

Mr. Boerchers stated that school crossings and pedestrian counts at this location would be investigated and the pedestrian crossing times will be adjusted accordingly.

36. Tony Borelli (to Everyone): 6:55 PM: loading zones/very short-term parking spots are much more valuable for retail business than regular curb parking.

37. Michael Flinck (to Everyone): 6:56 PM added: The "all walk" in that location is critical because all of the traffic is turning left or right, which means pedestrians can't really cross at the same time as the Metro Plaza Dr green light

38. Ryan Williams (to Everyone): 7:00 PM: re: on-street parking, there's very little of it in this corridor today, and on Saturday a large portion of the spots were occupied by snowed-in cars

that hadn't been moved in 5d (snow was the previous Monday) <https://youtu.be/OccaXy3-oqA> echoing others: free long-term car storage on streets is bad policy! Ryan Williams (to Everyone): 7:01 PM added: (good case in that video for why n/b bike lane will be very useful as well 🙏🙏)

39. Michael McCarty (to Everyone): 7:04 PM: there are bike route designations
Mr. Boerchers noted that any proposed bike route signing would be coordinated with the city.
40. Kathryn Leonard Moore (to Everyone): 7:05 PM: First Street intersection is missing a storm drain on south east corner. But on all the other corners have storm drains.
Mr. Boerchers stated that the drainage of the roadway and intersections will be addressed when the grading plans are prepared, and if additional inlets are required, they will be added.
41. Michael McCarty (to Everyone): 7:09 PM: If you are entitled enough to own a car you should pay to park it.
42. Michael Flinck (to Everyone): 7:11 PM: Could we get left turn bike boxes at Mercer St & Wayne St? It could help connect the Montgomery St bike lane with the Grove St bike lane
Mr. Boerchers inquired if the city has a preference regarding bike box type. Mr. Vischio deferred to Mr. Patrick Conlon regarding his preference since he is an experienced cyclist. Mr. Patrick Conlon stated that typically two stage bike boxes are preferred by less experienced users. He noted that bike boxes are typically not used at unsignalized intersections. Mr. Vischio stated that green pavement markings could be provided adjacent to the crosswalk to direct bicyclists to either dismount and walk the bike across or, if there are sufficient gaps in traffic, ride across.
43. Karin Vanopoen (to Everyone): 7:15 PM: Parking in that bend? (referring to the northeast corner of Columbus Drive)
Ms. Karin Vanopoen added that the curved alignment of the northbound vehicular lane and bicycle lane through the intersection with Columbus Drive might result in vehicles encroaching into the bicycle lane. Mr. Boerchers stated that GPI would investigate a realignment of the Marin Boulevard northbound approach to address this. Mr. Marra added that the bicycle lane marking style through the intersection could be improved as well.
44. Michael Flinck (to Everyone): 7:17 PM: We have a lot of pedestrian flashing beacons in JC
45. Ryan Williams (to Everyone): 7:17 PM: there's an RRFB at Newark&5th and Newark&7th
46. Jeff (to Everyone): 7:17 PM: Have we ever considered pedestrian-only stop lights that some cities such as Vancouver use? It would be a big improvement over the flashing beacons.
Mr. Boerchers reiterated that a warrant analysis would be conducted at Mercer Street and Wayne Street.
47. Tony Borelli (to Everyone): 7:18 PM: also West Side Ave by Lincoln Park (in reference to RRFB locations within the city)
48. Chris Lamm (to Everyone): 7:18 PM: the flashing beacons are largely ignored
Mr. Boerchers stated that RRFBs are still an effective safety tool when a signal is not warranted.
49. Chris Lamm (to Everyone): 7:18 PM: have a bunch around Journal Square
50. Michael McCarty (to Everyone): 7:18 PM: until they start ticketing, drivers will ignore the flashing beacons and pedestrian crosswalks
51. Michael McCarty (to Everyone): 7:19 PM: the plastic bollards will last a week

Mr. Boerchers reiterated that GPI will work with the city to determine if there are any effective alternatives to the flexible delineators.

52. Diane Kaese (to Everyone): 7:20 PM: The congestion between CCD and Mercer causes back ups the whole way to Grand Street due to the left turns at CCD and the inability to go straight at the CCD /Marin intersection due to late turns and congestion to the north. Any islands in this area will be accidents waiting to happen. An additional cross walk is warranted between Wayne and CCD.

Mr. Boerchers reiterated that GPI will investigate the aforementioned alternative improvements at this location.

53. Raffi (to Everyone): 7:20 PM: Any plan not based on enforcing existing law (license plate covers, illegal tints, reckless acceleration, box-blocking etc.) is a waste of money
54. Tony Borelli (to Everyone): 7:23 PM: Raffi, while lack of enforcement of those laws is a problem, no, physical changes to streets are in no way a waste of time or dependent on enforcement. Part of the current increased emphasis on street redesign came precisely because redesigns work independently of enforcement to slow and calm car traffic and provide havens for people outside cars.
55. Tony Borelli (to Everyone): 7:23 PM: street redesign is "the silent police
56. Tony Borelli (to Everyone): 7:24 PM: ...man, paid for once and on duty 24/7/365
57. Diane Kaese (to Everyone): 7:26 PM: Connect the exit from the PATH station to the crosswalk at the east side of CCD going south. It is human nature to continue straight and it is a significant pedestrian car interface usually not good ones.

Ms. Mittman stated that adding an ergonomic crosswalk at this location across Columbus Drive would help this situation.

58. Gary Murphy (to Everyone): 7:27 PM: Stopping all traffic at Columbus and Marin would make it much safer, and have the spillover benefit of making it easier (safer) to cross at Wayne.
59. Karin Vanopoen (to Everyone): 7:30 PM: Looking at that intersection. Aren't the cars going to be driving on the bike path? Drivers tend to stay on the right.

Mr. Boerchers reiterated that GPI will investigate realignment of Marin Boulevard through Columbus Drive.

60. Ryan Williams (to Everyone): 7:35 PM: yes please, LPIs 😊!
61. Karin Vanopoen (to Organizer(s) Only): 7:36 PM: Will turn from Columbus to Marin become no turn on red?

Mr. Boerchers stated that adding a no turn on red at this location depends on the available intersection sight distance. Based on the current proposed improvements sight distance should be improving, therefore it may not necessary to restrict right turns on red.

62. Ollie Oliver (to Everyone): 7:50 PM: Regarding preference between single phase and 2 phase bike boxes. Confident cyclists don't need the single phase bike boxes, but 2 phase bike boxes can guide newer cyclists through the more complicated, less intuitive maneuver
63. Ryan Williams (to Everyone): 7:54 PM: can the curbs be extended into the intersection more at Christopher Columbus Drive & Marin Blvd? it's such a huge intersection. there might be room to start the bend in n/b traffic before the intersection, to mitigate the danger of cars drifting into the dotted bike-crossing portion

Mr. Boerchers noted that the proposed improvements at this intersection incorporate large curb extensions currently and also accommodate larger design vehicle turning movements. He added that GPI will reexamine the alignment of Marin Boulevard through the intersection.

64. . (to Everyone): 7:57 PM: Can we remove all turns on red?

Mr. Boerchers stated that removing all turns on red is probably not feasible due to the detrimental impact to traffic operations. He added that justification for restricting right turns on red needs is required.

65. Jeff (to Everyone): 7:57 PM: Yes, HAWK is what I was thinking of, thank you. Looks like they're considered very effective: "One study released by the Federal Highway Administration found that, after a HAWK beacon was installed, vehicle/pedestrian crashes were reduced by 69%.[6] As many as 97% of motorists comply with the HAWK beacon, higher than signalized crossing, or crossings with flashing yellow beacons.[7] "

66. atmun (to Everyone): 7:59 PM: could you quickly show the 1st and Marin intersection again? I missed it.

67. Kathryn Leonard Moore (to Everyone): 8:02 PM: Bus Only turn lane - no longer enforced

Mr. Vischio noted that the left turn from Columbus Drive eastbound onto Marin Boulevard northbound is no longer restricted to buses only. Mr. Boerchers stated that the plans would be updated to match the current configuration.

68. Ryan Williams (to Everyone): 8:03 PM: what's the "5.5' MIN" on the right side of s/b Marin at CCD?

Mr. Boerchers stated that this area is a shoulder and that it is not wide enough for on-street parking. Mr. Ryan Williams inquired what the 8 foot wide shoulder along Marin Boulevard southbound, south of the intersection with Columbus Drive would be used for. Mr. Boerchers stated that it could be used for on-street parking, but that decision would be up to the city.

Copy: Attendees; File

This memorandum of record is believed to be an accurate record of the discussions at this meeting. If any of the attendees disagree with the documented discussion, please contact Christopher Marra at (908) 236-9001 within 10 days of receipt of minutes. If no comments are received, then this memorandum will be considered a true and accurate record of this meeting.