

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a meeting of the Planning Commission in and for the City of Albany, Stearns County, Minnesota, was called to order by Acting Chairman Jon Stueve at 6:35 o'clock in the evening on Thursday, July 20, 2017 in the Council Room at 400 Railroad Avenue for the said City.

Other Planning Commission members present for the meeting were: Joseph Wedel and Will Seiler. Todd Horton and Adam Rushmeyer were absent. Councilor John Greer, Planning Commission Liaison, was present for the meeting.

Acting Chairman Jon Stueve called for any additions or corrections to the minutes of April 13 2017 and hearing none declared them approved.

Jeremy Mathiasen, the City Engineer with Stantec, Inc., appeared before the Commission to present the results from a community survey that were obtained on-line, spring musical, business expo, Mercy Manor, school district/police department facebook page, etc. for the Safe Routes to School program. Mr. Mathiasen noted that the survey results were reviewed in the preparation of a preliminary Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that includes the following: existing facilities, community destinations, roadway considerations, access to sidewalks, student locations, draft priorities, and preliminary implementation strategies. Mr. Mathiasen noted that the plan will position the City and School District to consider sidewalk improvements in the future to increase biking and walking in the community. Mr. Greer noted that a Safe Routes to School initiative can improve safety and encourage more students and families to walk, bike, and enhance the quality of life making Albany a better place to live. Mr. Wedel questioned why some new subdivisions have few sidewalks or none at all. Mr. Wedel noted that school bus routes should be reduced to encourage children to bike or walk to school. Mr. Greer noted that when the City approves the master plan, future developments and reconstruction projects will incorporate new sidewalk installation in hopes of allowing safe travel of pedestrians within the community. Mr. Seiler noted that it would make sense to construct a new sidewalk on the east side of 6th Street that would connect the Highlands residential subdivision to Linden Avenue. Mr. Stueve noted that shared bike and pedestrian paths may be considered if there is adequate right-of-way. Mr. Schneider noted that solar lights may be considered in crosswalks near school and/or at the Lake Wobegon Trail crossing south of the 8th Street and Railroad Avenue intersection. Mr. Mathiasen directed the Commission members to review the preliminary draft of the said Plan and provide comments within a week or two. Mr. Mathiasen noted that a final plan will be presented to the Council in September and once approved by the City and State, the City will be eligible for funding for future sidewalk improvements identified in the said Plan.

Mr. Schneider informed the Commission that the following Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Active Places Demonstration projects will begin the week of July 24th: 1) **Sixth Street/ County Road 53-** Install a temporary shared use path from Linden Avenue to Soo Line Avenue on the east side of 6th Street. The shared use path will be separated from the traffic lane with temporary delineator cones. Parking will only be allowed on the west side of 6th street, 2) **Aliva Avenue-** Install a temporary shared use path from 6th Street to 8th Street on the South side of Aliva Avenue. The shared use path will be separated from the traffic lane with temporary delineator cones. Parking will only be allowed on the north side of Aliva Avenue, and 3) **Forest Avenue-** Develop Forest Avenue as a primary bicycle and pedestrian route, especially for children walking and biking to school. Stop signs will be permanently installed at the intersections of Forest Avenue and 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 7th Streets. The intersections on Forest Avenue and 4th Street will be a four-way stop. Mr. Schneider noted that letters were mailed out to adjoining property owners affected by the project and the project should end in October.

Acting Chairman Jon Stueve adjourned the meeting at 7:20 PM.

Tom Schneider
Clerk/Adm.