

St. Paul Greenway Committee Meeting
August 11, 2010
Merriam Park Library
6:30pm – 7:45pm

Present: Nelson, Zerger, Turek, Flynn, Madden, Baum, Longley

Next Steps for the Committee

Madden shared the following suggestions:

1. Ask the city to take right-of-way (ROW) from the existing 4-lane Ayd Mill Road to create immediate and safe access for pedestrians and cyclists from Selby to Jefferson.
2. Ask the city to do preliminary engineering to determine if the CP Rail alignment is feasible. Is there enough room for both the trail and the additional set of tracks that CP might someday build? If so, we can ask federal authorities to pursue an agreement with CP.

Nelson stressed the importance of balancing our short-term and long-term goals and ensuring that a short-term solution does not harm our long-term goal of having a bike/walk trail from the river/Mpls border to downtown St. Paul.

Baum suggested a way of thinking about the different potential actions:

Short term: Jersey barriers on Ayd Mill Road

Medium term: Taking ROW from Ayd Mill Road and building a trail for walk/bike

Long term: Full trail along the entire corridor

Baum asked whether placing jersey barriers on Ayd Mill Road to create a bike/walk trail would “prejudice” the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). Madden suggested that it could be described as a “test” and therefore wouldn’t prejudice the SEIS.

Nelson asked whether the committee can impact the scenarios addressed in the SEIS. Zerger stated that a new EIS process would have to be initiated for new scenarios to be included.

Longley echoed Madden’s statement asking the city to do preliminary engineering on the corridor. He stated it is important to get the Ayd Mill portion of the trail beautiful. Jersey barriers, he said, would not do that. Zerger pointed out that if a test with jersey barriers failed, that could give the impression that a full and beautiful trail would also not be used. Longley stated that Ayd Mill is not the shortest route through St. Paul, so more confident riders might not use a jersey barrier trail.

Zerger said she talked to people associated with the Midtown Greenway at the summit and they urged our committee to shoot for a trail wider than 20 ft. When several pedestrians are walking abreast, there isn’t room for all the users on a 20 ft trail. She also asked “how wide is too wide?” Is there a point at which a trail that is too wide causes problems/issues? Longley shared that people at the summit were very concerned with getting a safe and comfortable north-south route through St. Paul. Zerger suggested the St. Paul Greenway could have a green buffer between walk and bike, as seen in some parts of the Midtown Greenway.

Nelson suggested the committee write a letter to the Mayor and City Council laying out the committee's questions, sharing signatures to our vision, and sharing renderings from the summit.

Zerger asked what happened to the CIB funds that had been allocated for the greenway. She said the committee should advocate that those funds be put back into bike/walk projects.

→Action Item: Baum will reach out to businesses and organizations to ask them to sign on to our vision.