

Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning 2016

Community: University Heights
Minutes by Trees Forever Field Coordinator: Hannah Howard
Date and Time: Wednesday, May 25th, 2 PM
Meeting Length: 1 Hour
Location: University Heights City Hall
Meeting Number and Title: #5 Transportation Meeting

Number of committee members in attendance: 5

Names of committee members in attendance: Virginia Miller, Dotti Maher, Silvia Quezada, Wally Heitman (Mayor), Carolyn Wells

Others (7): Hannah Howard (Trees Forever), Meg Flenker (Flenker Land Architects), Catherine Cutler (Iowa Department of Transportation), Jerry Zimmerman (local transportation official/city council member), Brian Loring (Think Bicycles of Johnson County), Mike Haverkamp (city council member), Brad Neumann (Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County)

Meeting Summary:

Hannah began the meeting with introductions of all present, an overview of the community visioning process and an update as to where University Heights was in the process. Meg led the meeting by asking about the natural features of University Heights, cultural features, management, maintenance, and future construction projects. When discussing water features and drainage areas, it was pointed out that there is an underground stream that flows beneath Monroe Street and Oakcrest which was not previously discussed at the TAB Workshop in April. A few blocks over in the SW corner of town there used to be a spring on the corner of Oakcrest and Koser Ave before a home was constructed there. An issue was also identified with a sump pump next to this on the east side of the intersection which causes an "ice rink".

While discussing other natural features, there was confusion regarding whether the users on the trail in the woods on the North edge of town were trespassing. The trail was created and maintained by nearby homeowners. It is currently open for all city residents to take advantage of and is surrounded by private property. Mike pointed out that the trail was within an old city street ROW, so all trail users are legally using the trail and are not trespassing.

A majority of the meeting was spent discussing the traffic on Melrose. Melrose is the main route that many University Heights and Iowa City residents use every day. Due to heavy bus traffic, many cyclists chose to ride on the widened sidewalk instead of with traffic. Melrose is a popular bike route as many bicyclists use it to access the hospital, the University of Iowa and the city of Iowa City. A few meeting participants noted that there is potential for a bike lane on Melrose if the current off street parking was eliminated. Yet despite the high traffic of vehicles and pedestrians on Melrose, University Heights' only park located on Melrose, Triangle Park, receives little use. Currently, a resident

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volunteers to mow the park but Dotti mentioned that Rotary has interest in funding a project and taking over maintenance in the future.

There are a few construction projects being planned within University Heights as well as right outside of the city limits in Iowa City. Currently, there is construction on the intersection of Melrose and Sunset, to align and straighten Sunset. The ends of Leamer Court and Olive Court are actively being developed and both streets are due for upgrades in the next two to five years. Northeast of University Heights, the University of Iowa is exploring the possibility of constructing new dormitories and renovating the North end of the stadium. Iowa City also has plans to remove the street parking on the Iowa City (east) side of George Street.

Currently, only two roads within University Heights are on the list to qualify for funding from the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Melrose and Sunset. Community members were interested in learning how additional roads within University Heights could become eligible for project funding from the MPO. Brad informed everyone that additional streets can potentially qualify if the city could put a proposal together for it. Catherine supplied Meg with the daily average traffic count and crash data.

Next Meeting: Pre Goal Setting, Wednesday, May 25 at University Club, 6 pm.