

DIKE STREET ASSESSMENT MEETING 1/25/22

Q+A

Public questions and comments submitted during the Q&A session of the January 25 virtual public meeting have been copied and pasted below. Questions that were answered live have been copied and pasted below. Questions that were not able to be answered live have also been copied and pasted below. Answers have been added below each question.

If you have any further questions, you may direct them to project planner Alex Ellis at aellis@providenceri.gov or 401-680-8522.

Question: What Cheer Flower Farm is about to undertake a large building renovation project so even though the sidewalks around its block are in bad shape they should be omitted from this project. Secondly, trucks serving Mars Plastic often impede traffic and visibility on Agnes St.

Answer: Thank you for informing us; we will be in touch to coordinate construction.

Question: Pleased that the assessment will be data-driven. What is the scope of the project? It would be great to conduct a traffic study as part of this. The school buses cutting through the neighborhood are a challenge to keep in mind. Daniel Doolittle has video data that he offers to share.

Answer: Initial inventory maps are based on City data supplemented by field review. Feedback from community and City staff inform where follow-up field visits are taken to refine those maps. Once that is done, cost estimates are assembled for the identified improvements. Once that is complete, more engineering is needed to design the improvements before they are constructed. The bus issue is on our radar and we are thinking about how to address it.

Question: Local woodworker echoing school bus issues. Their presence is fine but they drive too fast, as do many vehicles of all types. Request for stop sign at corner of Troy & Magnolia; need to find location for stop signs that won't be damaged by large vehicles. Speed lumps on Troy St could also help.

Answer: Thank you for detailed recommendations and we will factor those in.

Question: Concern about improvements bringing more attention into neighborhood leading to displacement of longtime residents. Several buildings in the Dike Street area are full of small manufacturing and affordable artist space. What is the plan for protecting people who need such affordable space, not just housing but also mixed-use?

Answer: Yes, that is important for projects throughout the city to consider. It is not only part of individual projects like this but connected to City's affordability and anti-displacement work. The new Comprehensive Affordable Housing Plan touches on a lot of this and we can post it to this project's website.

Question: Large vehicles from 6-10 construction as well as school buses have damaged Atwood St. Can it be repaved? Large vehicles shake houses as well.

Answer: We have begun conversations with the school bus company about routing issues. RIDOT will likely do some repairs at the conclusion of the 6-10 Connector project, but we don't know what the scope of those repairs will be. Streets that need repair that aren't fixed as part of RIDOT's repairs will be included in this assessment for the City's work.

Question: Does the project include reconfiguring Westminster/Broadway/Valley/Troy intersection? That reconfiguration should include connectivity to the San Souci bikeway.

Answer: At a planning level, some exploration of that intersection is included. That connectivity will be an important consideration of that study.

Question: Pedestrian safety across Hartford Ave between the Post Office and its parking lot is unsafe. Etna St, behind the Post Office, is narrow, one-way, without sidewalks. Is there an opportunity to relocate Post Office parking there so people don't need to cross Hartford Ave?

Answer: We will look at that.

Question: Plainfield Street under the Route 6 overpass is very dark, and should have lighting improvements. The sides of Plainfield Street under the overpass where construction is active are a mess and should be restored with landscaping or some other welcoming design when it's done; worried it will be overlooked.

Answer: Great points, thank you.

Question: Pilsudski Street is unwelcoming as a gateway to the city. Abutting uses including scrap. Any zoning or screening solutions?

Answer: We will look into it.

Question: The new connection RIDOT is building as part of the 6-10 Connector between Westminster and Plainfield streets on Troy and Pilsudski streets will be an attractive shortcut to avoid Olneyville Square. Has RIDOT modeled the future traffic impacts of that on Troy Street, or can the City undertake that modeling? New flyover from RI-10 North to US-6 West has noticeably reduced traffic, especially on weekends.

Answer: Traffic counts will be conducted after construction to measure impact.

Question: Converting part of Citizens Bank parking lot to a park has coincided with more La Lupita customers asking about where to park. Staff park on Stokes and Dike streets. People aren't good at telling whether they will fit in a spot. Can parking spaces be delineated? Might also help as a visual cue to help people understand they can park there.

Answer: Those are great points and we'll be in touch.

Question: Does the scope cover the area under the highway and next to Magnolia near Troy Street? Proposal for parking lot with lighting and a police substation.

Answer: Once RIDOT is done with highway construction, they will install permanent lighting under the highway but then it will be up to the City what happens in that space. This assessment process can look into what the options there could be.

Question (Councilor Oscar Vargas): Lighting under the Plainfield Street overpass is going back next month. Council is working on the trash storage on Pilsudski St mentioned before. He likes using the space under the bridges for public parking, likes idea of connecting Pilsudski St through to Plainfield St, likes the idea of a roundabout at the Westminster/Valley intersection, and believes Atwood St should be made one-way in from Plainfield St.

Answer: Thank you for joining us.