



# CITY OF PROVIDENCE

## MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY

### GREEN AND COMPLETE STREETS ADVISORY COUNCIL

#### DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

#### Meeting of the Green and Complete Streets Advisory Council

September 27, 2023, 4:30 PM

First Floor Conference Room, Doorley Building, 444 Westminster Street, Providence RI, 02903

**Overseeing Body:** City of Providence Department of Planning and Development

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Voting members present: Rosie Jaswal, Kathleen Gannon, Alana Deluty, Doug Johnson

Non-voting Ex-Officio members present: Alex Ellis, Cpt. Luis SanLucas

Ms. Jaswal called the meeting to order at 4:34 PM.

Following roll call, Ms. Jaswal introduced item #2, the consent agenda. Ms. Gannon moved approval, and Mr. Johnson seconded. All voted in favor. Ms. Jaswal moved on to the next agenda item, overview of review procedure. Mr. Ellis gave this overview.

Ms. Jaswal moved on to the next agenda item, an update on the status of recommendations made by the Advisory Council about walk signal policies. Mr. Ellis provided updates. Ms. Gannon moved that the Advisory Council should send a letter to City Council providing an update on the status of the recommendations made to the Traffic Engineer in December 2022. Ms. Jaswal seconded and all voted in favor.

Ms. Jaswal moved on to the next agenda item, discussion of the proposed changes to the procedure for implementing traffic calming. Mr. Ellis summarized the language provided by Mr. Urso following the previous meeting. The Advisory Council discussed recommended changes to the proposed procedure. Ms. Gannon moved that a letter be sent to the Traffic Engineer with the following recommendations:

- The petition requirement should be completely removed from the policy. There is no feasible way to receive representative input from all residents and users of a section of street without biasing the process toward locations with the most time-privileged advocates. Resident requests should still be considered but should not serve as the sole factor in determining where traffic calming interventions are required.
- Proactive identification of high-speed and high-crash locations should be completed as the starting point of the traffic calming selection process, through citywide modeling of traffic conditions in coordination with the Department of Planning and Development. With this foundation of traffic data, following the procedures and thresholds identified in City Ordinance should be achievable.
- A reevaluation of speed reduction and traffic volume reduction techniques should be undertaken, drawing from what works in other cities with urban conditions and average speeds under 40 mph, and designs should be based on what techniques are effective in those contexts. Cost of different design solutions and public acceptance of

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necessary traffic calming measures should be secondary to the location and countermeasure selection process. We believe the cost-benefit analyses used by the City to this point may be based on data that is outdated and collected in locations fundamentally different from most Providence streets.

- For temporary installations to test effectiveness, the temporary measures installed should be temporary versions of the speed reduction technique planned for permanent installation, not always speed lumps.
- Traffic studies of the temporary conditions should be completed after at least one month of installation to ensure drivers have adjusted to the new design, and should not impede the City's ability to meet the deadlines identified in the Ordinance. Conducting baseline counts on the surrounding streets with which to compare the studies during the trial installation of temporary traffic calming measures is also recommended.
- Measures to ensure safe speeds should not be delayed without a robust reason, and we are concerned that the proposed requirement for "public support" judged based on neighborhood meetings will not be clear or representative enough to provide such a robust reason. Therefore, we recommend the neighborhood meeting requirement be removed from the policy.
- If a public meeting is desired by the City for the public to be able to comment on the proposed designs, that public meeting should be held as an agenda item during a meeting of the Green and Complete Streets Advisory Council, with clear criteria for what level of support at such a meeting is sufficient to move forward.

Ms. Jaswal seconded and all voted in favor.

Ms. Jaswal moved on to the next agenda item, an update on the amendment to the Green and Complete Streets Ordinance, which had been heard the previous week at the City Council Ordinance Committee. Mr. Ellis provided an update from that meeting, and recommended that in response to City Councilor feedback that the Advisory Council consider an amendment to its bylaws specifying that three members would constitute a quorum. Because bylaw amendments required 2/3 of the full voting membership, the change was not made, but the Advisory Council indicated their intention to do so when able.

Ms. Jaswal moved on to the next agenda item, Announcements, Staff Updates, and Public Comment. After brief discussion and announcements, Ms. Jaswal adjourned the meeting at 5:43 PM.

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Respectfully submitted by Alex Ellis.

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