

MINUTES FORDHAM BOULEVARD SIDEPATH PROJECT



**AUGUST 22, 2018
7:00 PM, UNIVERSITY PLACE**

The meeting started with a brief overview by Bill Webster. Kayla Seibel discussed how the proposed project fits within the goals of the Town's Mobility Plan. She also updated residents on recent and upcoming extensions of other sidepath segments in the Fordham Boulevard corridor. Jeff Moore from Kimley-Horn described the proposed sidepath. There were 19 attendees.

Existing Sidepath Reconstruction

Everyone who addressed the issue supported the reconstruction of the existing trail. Several speakers asked that the oversized bollards on either end of the bridge be replaced with standard size bollards for safety reasons.

Alternative Option Proposed by Attendees

Most people in attendance did not support the construction of the proposed new segment from Ridgefield Drive to Willow Drive. They offered instead a proposal to sign pedestrians and bicyclists through their neighborhood using Hickory Drive.

Safety Concerns

Several speakers pointed out that automobiles entering and exiting Ridgefield Drive and Walnut Street usually do so at high speed, which would endanger anyone crossing those streets near the point the streets intersect with Fordham Boulevard. This was a major concern for many speakers.

Several speakers stated that the major crossings of Fordham Boulevard should be made safe for pedestrians before any trail is built.

One speaker suggested that the trail be elevated into tree level.

Loss of Landscape Buffer

This issue was shared by most participants. Speakers noted that the current buffer between the ROW (Right of Way) and nearby homes is a dense stand of either bamboo or cedar depending on exact location. To complicate the matter there is a Duke Energy easement immediately adjacent to the ROW in which only low plantings can be installed.

One speaker noted that the illustrated schematic plan did a poor job of showing what the after effect of any construction would look like. He noted that the schematic drawing did not accurately show the amount of space available for landscape planting.

Several speakers stated that they do not currently have fences between their homes and the NCDOT ROW.

One speaker stated that any loss of trees would expose the remaining trees near the property lines to increased wind and thus increase the danger of falling trees to adjacent neighbors.

One speaker stated that if the project moves forward the Town should explore construction of a sound-absorbing barrier to reduce Hickory Dr. residents' exposure to traffic noise.

One person expressed a concern that trail users would upset her dogs which use her backyard.

Use Funds Elsewhere

Numerous speakers suggested that the funds earmarked for this project be used elsewhere.

Incorporate Play Areas into the Design

One speaker suggested that small play areas be designed along the path.

NEXT STEPS:

Bill Webster stated that he would report to Town staff about the results of the meeting. He promised that he would make strong efforts to accurately relate the concerns of those attending the meeting to his colleagues before agreeing to next steps in the process. He also promised to use the project's email mailing list to keep persons on that list updated at all key points in the project development process.