From: Phil Caravello
To: Dan Glynn; Joyce Tikalsky
Subject: FW: Re-look at Stoughton Underpass at Dvorak development
Date: Thursday, December 16, 2021 10:20:53 AM

FYI

Phil Caravello

-------- Original message --------
From: Mike Connor <connor_m@sbcglobal.net>
Date: 12/14/21 7:13 PM (GMT-06:00)
To: Tim Swadley <TSwadley@ci.stoughton.wi.us>
Cc: Phil Caravello <PCaravello@ci.stoughton.wi.us>, Tony Fernandez <tony.fernandez5@gmail.com>, Fred Hundt <FHundt@ci.stoughton.wi.us>, "Rodney J. Scheel" <rjscheel@ci.stoughton.wi.us>, Brett Hebert <bhebert@ci.stoughton.wi.us>
Subject: Re-look at Stoughton Underpass at Dvorak development

Hi Tim,

Phil, Tony, and I met on Monday morning of this week at the Dvorak development site. Other than getting our boots muddy, it was a successful adventure. Tony (35 years of experience with pedestrian and bike path design in Madison) believes that an underpass is feasible between Velkommen Way and Town Line Road.

Again, I just want to reiterate that I believe it's not too early or too late to have this discussion. My big concern with the current plan is that we have bike and pedestrian paths planned for both sides of a busy highway, and no way to safely cross. Data from the Wisconsinbikefed.org indicates that a traffic light is not the safest way to get pedestrians or bikes across a busy road. They reminded me that it's called a "traffic light" because it safely controls traffic, but does not help much when it comes to the safety of pedestrians or bikes. Cars tend not to look for pedestrians or bikes. The data also shows a large percentage of collisions with pedestrians/bikes occur because a vehicle is turning right on a red and fail to see the pedestrian/bike until it's too late. I've heard our city planner say that he favors a traffic light at Town Line Road and Hwy 51 and a lower speed limit (35mph). However, DOT is not in favor of stopping traffic (that's why they are installing Roundabouts at Roby, Hwy 138, and Hoel Ave). Although I am in favor of reducing the speed limit, the data (below) seems to indicate that the speed limit would have to be zero in order to negate injury or death to pedestrians.

I copied and pasted this data **(bolded below**) from the DOT website:

In 2001 one pedestrian was injured or killed every 5 hours and 12 minutes in Wisconsin. About 60 pedestrians are killed each year in Wisconsin and another 350 are seriously injured. Another 1,200 or more suffer injuries ranging from minor to serious, but not incapacitating. Only 36 pedestrians escaped injury in these crashes.

A great number of pedestrian crashes involve children. Between 1994 and 1998, children age 14 years and younger were involved in 37.5% of all pedestrian crashes in Wisconsin.

An examination of the pedestrian injuries and fatalities in Wisconsin over the past 15 years shows a mixed result. Pedestrian traffic injuries have declined from 2,144 in 1984 to 1,648 in 2000. Unfortunately, the rate of fatalities has not improved much over this same time period. Pedestrian fatalities in Wisconsin range between 50 to 65 deaths per year, 50 in 2000. Only 40 of the injured in pedestrian crashes were occupants of the vehicles.

Pedestrians ages 75 and older showed the highest rate of fatalities. Older pedestrians do not have the same ability to recover from their injuries as younger pedestrians, and many may take longer to cross the street or have difficulty seeing or hearing traffic clearly.

Children ages 5-9 also showed a high rate of injury. They are most at risk due to their limited understanding of traffic laws and little sense of danger.

My understanding is that there will be residential and business development at the Dvorak site. If we don't think kids will try to cross the highway, then we are fooling ourselves.

I have enlisted the help of the Wisconsin Bike Fed to help us figure out a way to fund a feasibility study. Tony feels this study should cost about $15,000 to $20,000 if we use the same engineers currently on the project. The Wisconsin Bike Fed folks believes there are funds for the feasibility study available and have enlisted help from Senator Agard's office to get answers from the DOT.

What I would like from you: a) I would like you to inform the developer of our plans for the underpass feasibility study, and b) I would like you to inform city council members of the risk doing nothing.

I have included the email string from the Wisconsin Bike Fed and Senator Agard's office.

I have also attached a few pictures of the Hwy 51 underpass (just north of Halverson's restaurant) as an example good planning. This underpass connects the mobile home park to a quiet neighborhood street on the opposite side of Hwy 51. The underpass is used by kids and other pedestrian's everyday. It is also used by snowmobilers to access Lake Kegonsa. Just think on how many lives have been saved and injuries prevented with this small piece of infrastructure.

Thank you,
Mike C

Mike Connor

connor_m@sbcglobal.net

608-698-9485

----- Forwarded Message -----
From: Sen.Agard <sen.agard@legis.wisconsin.gov>
To: Alesha Emmert <alesha@wisconsinbikefed.org>
Cc: Mike Connor <connor_m@sbcglobal.net>

Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021, 11:00:05 AM CST
Subject: RE: Stoughton Underpass

Hi Alesha and Mike,

Thanks for reaching out. I will pass this along to DOT right away to get an answer for you. I'll let you know as soon as I hear back.

Aaron Collins

Chief of Staff

Office of Senator Melissa Agard

Aaron.Collins@legis.wisconsin.gov

608-266-9170

From: Alesha Emmert <alesha@wisconsinbikefed.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 10:54 AM
To: Sen.Agard <Sen.Agard@legis.wisconsin.gov>
Cc: Collins, Aaron <Aaron.Collins@legis.wisconsin.gov>; Mike Connor <connor_m@sbcglobal.net>
Subject: Stoughton Underpass

Hi Senator Agard,

I wanted to put on your radar that Kirsten and I met with Mike Connor (CC'd) of Stoughton this morning about his desire to get a bike/ped underpass put in under HWY 51. I mentioned to him that you're on the Governor's Bicycle Coordinating Council and might be interested to know about his efforts and potentially help get the ball rolling.

Mike is an incredibly active and successful biking advocate, and is currently looking into ways he can get funds for a feasibility study for this project. Kirsten and I suggested looking into TAP funding, especially with the additional dollars coming from the IIJA, but wanted to see if your office could confirm with DOT that feasibility studies would qualify? They're not specifically mentioned in the eligibility criteria, but I believe they'd fall under a "planning" aspect that is listed (here's the doc I'm looking at). Or, if there's another avenue you think Mike could look into - it's not a huge amount of money for the feasibility study (around $20k), but it's a necessary step to get buy-in from Stoughton electeds.

Thanks for your help!

Alesha Emmert
Government Affairs Manager
WISCONSIN BIKE FED
alesha@WisconsinBikeFed.org
608-334-4237

Please consider joining the Wisconsin Bike Fed!