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Memorandum

Date: March 10, 2010

To: Damien Davis, City of Morgantown; Chris Fletcher, City of Morgantown; Frank Gmeindl, Chairman Morgantown Bicycle Board; Terry Hough, City of Morgantown; Ray Lewis, WVDOH; Bill Robinson, WVDOH; Matthew Skiles, WVDOH; Fouad Shoukry, WVDOH; Richard Warner, WVDOH

From: Bill Austin, AICP

Subject: Monongahela Boulevard Bike Lane Coordination Meeting

C: Hugh Kierig, WVU; Mike Kelly, MPO Chair

Please find below a short outline of our discussion concerning the proposed Monongahela Boulevard bike lane at our meeting held yesterday.

The meeting opened with Bill Austin asking everyone to introduce themselves. Bill explained that the purpose of the meeting was to address concerns expressed by the Division of Highways about a bicycle lane proposed for Monongahela Boulevard on the shoulder of the northbound side of the road between 8th Street and Evansdale Drive. Damien Davis gave a presentation addressing concerns expressed by the about the bicycle lane proposed on the shoulder of Monongahela Boulevard. The format of this presentation was for Mr. Davis to highlight issues raised by DOH and to have a discussion of the issue of concern and the City of Morgantown's proposed method of addressing this concern. This discussion was also addressed in correspondence to DOH from Mr. Davis, (copy attached). Topics discussed in the presentation included:

DOH expressed concern that there is the potential for cyclists to travel downhill in the wrong direction on the proposed bicycle lane. Mr. Davis noted that the City agreed with this concern and the plan for the bicycle lane has been changed to include signage that would inform cyclists not to go downhill in the lane as suggested by DOH. Mr. Davis noted that the arrows on the lane would also discourage cyclist from going the wrong way. It was also noted that local cycling groups would inform and instruct riders not to ride in the wrong direction on the Bike Lane. During the discussion it was the consensus of the participants that these measures should be adequate to address these concerns.

In previous correspondence DOH noted that there was a concern with providing a bicycle lane in a corridor that has been used for event parking. This issue led to a discussion of enforcement issues and when parking should or should not be allowed in the bike lane if it should be allowed at all. At the conclusion of the initial discussion of this issue it was recognized that there needs to be more work to develop a consensus with all interested parties on how it should be addressed. The primary concern with this issue was how you could allow

parking in a designated bike lane without the potential for incurring liability if an accident were to occur.

The next issue discussed was the issue of ending the bike lane at Evansdale Drive. Mr. Lewis asked if the University has been involved in this project. Mr. Gmeindl noted that Mr. Kierig, the University's Director of Parking and Transportation is a member of the City's Bicycle Board that initiated the project. Mr. Davis and Mr. Gmeindl noted that the Bicycle Board had reviewed the issue and they recommended ending the lane in accordance with Figure 11.a of the AASHTO guidelines for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 3rd Edition. There was a general discussion of where to end the bicycle lane and several acceptable alternatives were discussed. It was the consensus of the group that the proposed solution was acceptable.

The final item discussed was the comment that there needed to be a companion path on the shoulder of the downhill side of the Monongahela Boulevard to accompany the uphill path on the shoulder. Mr. Davis and Mr. Gmeindl discussed this issue explaining that the downhill shoulder of Monongahela Boulevard is essentially unsafe for cyclists attempting to descend the hill at speed. While there are less experienced cyclists who will "ride their brakes" down the hill in the shoulder these cyclists are few and they will still be able to ride down the hill that way even if the proposed Share the Road signs are installed. He also noted that there are several unsafe sunken grates as well as frequently there is debris in the shoulder. Another concern is that the shoulder is replaced by curbing at the bottom of the hill and this would force automobiles merging from the center left lane and cyclists, if they are forced to travel on the shoulder, to both merge together in the remaining through lane. Mr. Lewis noted that the DOH had felt that cyclists would want to have a lane on this side of the road. Mr. Gmeindl stated that the majority of cyclists would prefer to travel down the hill in the travel lane because they can come close to matching the speed of cars in this section and they would not have to avoid the issues with the shoulder. Another concern discussed was that cyclists may have a difficult time accessing southbound Monongahela Boulevard from the CAC. After a general discussion it was agreed that the current access is adequate but that the issue needs to be looked at. At the end of this discussion it was agreed by the meeting participants that Share the Road signs would be the appropriate way to treat the downhill side of Monongahela Boulevard. DOH also agreed that they should replace the drainage grates and eliminate the holes they sit on the shoulder if feasible.

At the conclusion of the meeting it was the consensus of the group that the only remaining issue with the installation of the bicycle lane and accompanying signage on Monongahela Boulevard was the issue of allowing parking on the shoulder of the Boulevard. It was the understanding of the group that DOH's primary concern was how parking on the shoulder blocking the bike lane may create a situation where there may be Departmental liability if an accident were to occur. It was also clarified that the City had agreed to install and maintain the proposed bike lane and signage. Ms. Hough noted that the City currently cleans the shoulders of Monongahela Boulevard. It was the consensus that the City would work with West Virginia University to address the issue of parking on the shoulder and that they would come back to DOH with a proposed solution to this problem. If DOH agrees with the proposed solution the project should be able to move forward.