

Street Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
December 16, 2024

The Street Committee met in Council Chambers on December 16, 2024, with these members in attendance:

Michael Houser – Chair
Mark Labutis – Vice Chair
Jeff Rath
Colton Rine
Beth Bline
Doug Marmie
Spencer Barker

We wish to report:

1. **Ordinance No. 24-51** AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE 2024 CITY OF NEWARK THOROUGHFARE PLAN AND AMENDMENTS TO PART 12 OF THE CITY OF NEWARK CODIFIED ORDINANCES TITLED PLANNING AND ZONING CODE

Brian Morehead, City Engineer - Thank you. Yes, this is a long, long overdue and needed document. I think the last thoroughfare plan the city of Newark had was, I believe it's 1971. So, we have been kind of on the coattails of a planning exercise that Licking County has also been going through to update their thoroughfare plan. So, we jumped on with their consultant from Burgess & Niple. Over the last year, year and a half, we've been putting together our plan which includes access management regulations and traffic study standards. We've been using some of these concepts as the years have gone by, but to be able to have it in codified form will be very helpful for us going forward and helpful for the development community to know what to expect when they develop in the city of Newark. So, if you haven't read the document, it's not terribly, terribly long, but you can get a pretty good view of it in the first few pages of the document. If there are any questions, I'd be glad to answer them. We did go to the Planning Commission, set up a public hearing, had no comments at the public hearing about the idea. So, we asked to pass it on to Council for adoption.

Mr. Rath – Can you give us an overview?

Mr. Morehead - Well it classifies all the streets into different categories based on the width of the street, the traffic patterns, and so forth. I mean, right in the document kind of says establish a roadway classification system, set expectations for anticipated right-of-way needs, to adequately maintain the transportation network, understand the changing land use development context, and meet transportation needs throughout the city, and account for multimodal transportation needs, including transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access. This is more on the front-end design part of things, rather than the streetscape. It's kind of on the back end, the pretty stuff at the end. So, these are the planning concepts on the front end to build into the design.

Mr. Houser - So the focus of this is not so much on existing roadways as developments and things like that in the future. Is that kind of the target?

Mr. Morehead - It is for existing roadways as well. For instance, the 7 Brew coffee place that just built on N. 21st St., we know that at some point, 21st St. is going to need to be widened. So, we asked them to move their parking areas and not put a sign right on the back side of the right-of-way where they could, and knowing that we were going to need to widen things out and acquire right-of-way. They were very good to work with us and made their plan accordingly. So, this would sort of put that in writing.

Mr. Barker - Brian, so I'm looking here at exhibit four, which is the active transportation vision. There's like a bikeway and then there's a multi-use path. What's the difference? Because it looks like the multi-use paths are also the bike paths and bikeways, like it's going out of downtown up 13. Do we really want bicycles on 13?

Mr. Morehead - No. I'll have to have a look at that. I really don't know.

Mr. Barker - Okay. That's concerning to me. I don't think we'd want bicycle riders on a state route.

Mr. Morehead - Not on the roadway. Correct.

Mr. Barker - So, what's a multi, can you define what multi-use path is? Is that in fact the bike paths?

Mr. Morehead - I don't know. I don't know what the distinction is between the two. I would have to really dig into the plan. I don't think there's a big distinction.

Mr. Marmie - I know we had conversations in the past where the bike paths are for walking and bicycles and scooters and all of that. When it's on a road, its only use is for bikes. We did that in the downtown area here, but it's only for bicycle traffic. It's not runners, it's not any of that when we put it on a street.

Mr. Morehead - Yeah, right, right. Like the bike lanes on Church St. You don't want people walking down the bike lanes, but they are for the bike traffic. They're not for pedestrian use.

Mr. Houser - So I guess a follow-up to Mr. Barker's question, I guess on things like that when we're seeing that in this document where it's recommending it on 13 and things like that, are those things that the city's going to move forward to act on adding things like that? I'm just trying to understand how this is going to apply.

Mr. Morehead - It's really a planning document. So, it is not set in stone. Nothing is set in stone. It sets up those concepts that we're going to try to follow, but there's always hurdles and things like that. They come along that sometimes you just can't build what you're planning on, right? So that's the whole point of it. It's a planning document more than anything.

Mr. Marmie - I have to say, Columbia Gas put a bike lane on Mount Vernon road for us last year.

Motion to send to full council by Mr. Rath, Second by Ms. Bline, Motion passed 7-0

Meeting stands adjourned

Michael Houser -Chair