



SPECIAL KETCHUM CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, February 18, 2014 at 4:30 p.m.
Ketchum City Hall, Ketchum, Idaho

Present: Mayor Nina Jonas
Councilor Anne Corrock
Councilor Baird Gourlay
Councilor Jim Slanetz

Absent: Council President Michael David

URA Board Chairman Mark Eshman
Members Commissioner Trina Peters
Present: Commissioner Tim Eagan

Also Present: Ketchum City Administrator Gary Marks
Ketchum City Attorney Stephanie Bonney
Ketchum Community and Economic Development Director Lisa Horowitz
Recording Secretary Sunny Grant (arrived late)

1. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nina Jonas at 4:30pm.

2. JOINT MEETING WITH THE KETCHUM URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY
Mountain Rides Transit Hub Presentation

Also Present: Mountain Rides Transit Hub Team: Kurt Eggers, team lead
Dale Bates
Mountain Rides Executive Director Jason Miller
Ryan Hales, traffic engineer

Not Present: Susan Desko, architect
Jeff Loomis, civil engineer

Design Team lead Kurt Eggers presented a master site plan. The intersection of Sun Valley Road and East Avenue can be relatively chaotic, so design elements were added to make it safe and pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists and functional for buses. There are bulb-outs on each corner of the intersection; and center tree islands on East Avenue on both sides of the intersection.

The transit hub team met with City staff, Planning and Zoning, and City Street, Parks, Fire and Police departments. Seattle-based public works artist and urban planner Jack Mackie met with the transit hub team in a daylong charette to integrate art and storytelling into the pavers, tree grates, and bollards.

The bulb-outs are outlined by a rolled curb and gutter, making them easy for bikes and pedestrians to cross. Sun Valley Road is not a designated bike route, but the hub shouldn't in any way inhibit bike use through the intersection. The bulb-outs intrude six feet into Sun Valley Road, but parallel parked cars intrude nine feet into the roadway. There will be room for bike racks and BikeShare bikes in the hub area.

Bulb-outs and bollards are for pedestrian safety. Pavers in the streets connect the corner bulb-outs and define the pedestrian crosswalks. East Avenue is a 100ft wide right-of-way, but bulb-outs reduce it to 40 feet wide, diminishing the pedestrian-vehicle conflict time. Bulb-outs also allow the pedestrian to step out into the street sightline to see when traffic gaps are coming vs. having to step out past parked cars.

Eight parking spaces are forfeited: three parking spaces on Sun Valley Road in front of The Perch, one space in front of The Visitors Center, and one space in the center parking lane of each side of East Avenue. Parking studies done as part of several Ketchum master plans show that Ketchum has plenty of parking available.

The bus stops are designed for benches outdoors as well as in shelters. Benches will be concrete base with wood seats. Shelters will have directional "pointers", lights, signs and maps.

The hub team would like to begin construction early summer if possible, to have some elements ready for 4th of July weekend.

Two-way traffic on East Avenue nearing the intersection converges as the middle parking lane disappears. Tree islands at the end of the middle parking lane add more distance to the actual intersection, facilitating drivers making a U-turn at the end of East Avenue before they get to the intersection. Ketchum Street Superintendent Brian Christiansen is okay with the tree islands, although they will decrease the amount of middle-of-street snow storage.

All curbs have been designed to accommodate City snowplows and the street sweeper.

- URA Commissioner Tim Eagan asked if trees on the bulb-outs are a safety hazard, and warned about City snowplows damaging curbs. He was against removing any parking spaces.

Bulb-outs are always subject to wear and tear, but the curbs are flat. The hub design team will pay careful attention to sightlines at the entire intersection, especially the bulb-outs and street trees. Parking spaces on East Avenue are forfeited to allow street traffic to converge as it enters the intersection, not to accommodate the tree islands.

Traffic engineer Ryan Hales said the trees on the bulb-outs will have a high enough canopy that drivers can see under the canopy. Bulb-outs give drivers a visual clue to slow down and pay attention. Stop sign, currently hard to see behind parked cars, but will be moved out on the bulb-out and clearly visible to drivers.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Christy Julio asked about a history of accidents at that intersection.

CED Director Lisa Horowitz will bring statistics to the next Council meeting.

- A citizen asked about the distance between the rear bumper of a car parked on East Avenue to the planter. Eggers didn't know the distance and how it would affect a U-turn, but said the intersection dimensions—curbs, parking, etc.—would stay the same.

- Will there be a diagonal crosswalk at the intersection?

No. Traffic on Sun Valley Road makes a diagonal crosswalk potentially unsafe.

- Mickey Garcia said the intersection was designed to be traffic-calming, but would create congestion. He wanted the parking spaces back.

Hales said bulb-outs are a traffic-calming feature, and will help calm traffic at a 4-way stop. Congestion will remain about the same, but be safer for pedestrians crossing between buses on both sides of the street. Tree canopies are about 8ft off the ground; tree trunks and stop signs are about 15 feet apart and shouldn't affect line of sight to the stop signs. Mountain Rides Executive Director Jason Miller said the time for pedestrians to cross a narrow street width will be shorter, decreasing the time buses have to wait at the bus stops. Safety is everyone's first concern.

- Are buses subject to Ketchum's idling code?

Buses are mid-route at the hub, so people onboard are in transit to somewhere. Buses unload and load without waiting. Councilor Baird Gourlay added that the buses run very clean.

- Mayor Nina Jonas asked about maintenance of the hub intersection, facilities and landscaping.

The Parks Department's Town Square contractor will probably maintain the transit hub; but the Parks Department won't absorb the cost. The City's tree inventory doesn't change. CED Director Lisa Horowitz will put together a maintenance budget. The tree wells are larger, and the trees should be healthier and longer-lived than many current street trees.

- Councilor Anne Corrock would like to hear P&Z's comments and asked for a clear financial picture of the whole project.

Mountain Rides did not want to spend money on the P&Z process until Council approved right-of-way encroachments in concept.

- Councilor Baird Gourlay would like to hear from the Street Department about the bulb-outs and the City arborist about trees in the middle of the street. This is a very busy intersection early in the morning. Councilor Gourlay suggested there be only two bus spaces in front of the perch, and one parking space put back on both sides of Sun Valley Road. He agreed that there's a surplus of parking in town, but not around the Ketchum Core.

- Councilor Gourlay asked if semi-trucks could make the turn.

The radius is a 40-ft radius, which Ketchum Street Superintendent Brian Christiansen said was ideal. The turning radii meet Fire Chief Mike Elle's inside turning specifications, and even exceed them because the bollards are set back 18". Chief Elle liked the streetlights on the corner because they're tall enough that he can see them in his mirrors.

The hub was presented for P&Z pre-application. P&Z requested the bulb-outs be reduced and they have been. The Council will ultimately decide if the applicant can use the City's right-of-way in this manner.

- Councilor Corrock is uncomfortable with the use of the right-of-way as presented with bulb-outs and islands. It may be pedestrian friendly, but is not all-user friendly. It's tough on bikes, large vehicles, and the Street Department.

- Councilor Gourlay did not like the islands, but was okay with the bulb-outs, with some refinements.

- Councilor Jim Slanetz is okay with the bulb-outs, but was not sure about the islands. He wasn't sure space for three buses was necessary.

- URA Commissioner Eagan said the URA had not been involved with the design to this point.


Council Gourlay agreed that the URA is a funding partner, and needs to lend its opinion on functionality of the hub.

- Mayor Jonas requested an operations plan. She suggested it go to P&Z for Design Review.

Mountain Rides Executive Director Jason Miller said there currently is only one bus at the intersection because that's all the room there currently is. When the system is improved, buses will meet at the intersection for transfers.


3. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Baird Gourlay moved to adjourn at 5:50pm. Councilor Anne Corrock seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.



Nina Jonas
Mayor

ATTEST:



Sandra E. Cady, CMC
City Clerk