

# **Riverfront Neighborhood Council General Meeting**

**Monday April 11, 2016**

Location: Free Cycles

## **Meeting Minutes**

Jonathan Qualben facilitated the meeting. Introductions made by everyone present.

### **I. Approval of Minutes: Leadership Team, March 14, 2016**

The minutes were approved as posted.

### **II. Missoula International School (MIS): Julie Lenox, Head of School**

The current HIVE building, including 4 acres of land, is under contract by MIS. Lizzie Juda, current owner of the Hive, will maintain a small part in its development. Occupancy is expected for fall, 2018. MIS is working with an architect with expertise in independent schools, as well as with a local contractor. The development is in very early stage, there are no site plans yet, but MIS will be available to return to RFNC in the fall with more information.

Julie provided background about the school. She stated that traffic and other safety concerns will be considered in the planning. The building will be available for community meetings, etc. She was aware of neighborhood interest and the request to keep 2<sup>nd</sup> Street as a dead-end at Walnut. Also, the native landscaping and water infrastructure will be maintained.

### **III. Role of Neighborhood Councils: Jane Kelly, Office of Neighborhoods**

Jane provided background and history and role of neighborhood councils, highlighting their establishment in the City of Missoula Charter, effective January 1, 1997. Neighborhood Councils provide a structure for increased citizen participation in the governance of the City and build cooperation and communication between citizens and city officials. Copies of the Charter were distributed.

Jane called for volunteers to the leadership team. Presently there are 5 members; up to 7 members are needed. Jane described the training provided as well as the neighborhood grants program.

### **IV. Recommendation for Higgins Street Lane Conversion: Jonathan Qualben & Leadership Team**

Jonathan explained that the Leadership Team has been looking at traffic calming plans for Higgins, Brooks to Broadway, for the past several months. Bob Giordano, Missoula Institute for Sustainable Transportation (MIST), distributed handouts for a MIST- created design converting Higgins in the Hip Strip from 4 lanes to 3 in order to address safety, backups resulting from left

turn prohibitions, creation of bike lanes, and more pedestrian crossings. The Leadership Team has endorsed this plan, and a follow-up endorsement made at this meeting will be sent to the Long Range Transportation Planning Committee now in process. This will create a statement of seriousness to the City.

Jonathan made the following motion, seconded by Mary:

*The Riverfront Neighborhood Council supports the conversion of Higgins Street from 4 lanes to 3, Broadway to Brooks. Furthermore, the neighborhood requests that the City include this street in the Long Range Transportation plans, and move forward with appropriate engineering studies.*

This motion was approved unanimously by 34 affirmative votes.

**V. Recommendation for Orange Street: Jonathan & Leadership Team**

Dale McCormick, resident and former LT member, led this discussion. He provided history of citizen concern regarding Orange Street in our neighborhood, and shared a 2013 document sponsored by former Councilman Alex Taft. This was a referral from the Public Works Committee to City Council to convert Orange Street between 1<sup>st</sup> St. and 6<sup>th</sup> to three moving lanes and 2 parking lanes. This was never acted upon.

Discussion followed. Concerns included vehicle speed, safety, plans for a stoplight at Cregg Lane, the concept that streets with parking create “friction” and make cars slow down, insufficient bike lanes, and the separation that Orange Street creates. One resident stated that she is not opposed to a study, but that she travels Orange Street all the time with no problem.

The following motion, amended through discussion, was made by Mary and seconded by Jonathan:

*The Riverfront Neighborhood Council requests that the City of Missoula undertake an engineering study for Orange Street, Cregg Lane to Beckwith, in order to improve safety and usability for all modes of transportation. The RFNC recommends that traffic lanes be reduced from 4 lanes to 3.*

A show of hands was called for. Approximately 24 individuals voted.

The motion passed with 1 abstention.

**VI. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Street Engineering Update: Caleb Kasper**

An engineering study, conducted by Alta Engineering, is awaiting the Mayor’s signature. Caleb expressed thanks to volunteers who assisted in a February traffic survey. The neighborhood was successful last year in securing \$20,000 in the City’s budget to conduct this study. No conclusions or recommendations have yet been made.

**VII. Leadership Team: Nominations and Election**

**Two residents were unanimously elected to the Leadership Team:**

**Jeff Rice**

**Janet McMillian**

Terms are for 2 years, starting now. The next Leadership Team Meeting will be May 9, 5:30 at Bernices's Bakery

**VIII. Community Forum Report: Mary LaPorte**

Mary gave a brief description of the Community Forum. The previous meeting included presentations on:

- Zero Waste Missoula Program
- "Let's Move Missoula"
- Presentation from Development Services staff on the process for the Historic Preservation Commission in its consideration of a demolition permit for Missoula Mercantile building.

**IX. Office of Neighborhoods Report: Jane Kelly**

- The Community Forum Neighborhood tour is set for April 21. Riverfront will be included next year.
- Fireworks schedule for Osprey Stadium: 6/24, 7/1, 7/29, 9/2
- Training for new LT members; April 14, 11:15 am

**XI. New Business: none**

**XII. Public comment on non-agenda items**

- Jennifer Anthony spoke about the campaign opposing demolition of the Mercantile Building. An attorney has been hired and fundraising is underway. A public meeting will be held on April 14. Final hearing is set for June 2.
- Dale reported on a recent Extraordinary Events Committee meeting. 2 events have been added: Nitro Circus (May 13), and Widespread Panic (June 29).
- Bob shared the Property Vision for FreeCycles. Plans for the 28,000 Sq. ft. building include a learning center, bike library, public space, bike shops and much more. A fundraising campaign is now underway. Bike events and other information on the website.
- Helen Pent Jenkins Rose Park Neighborhood, spoke about redevelopment of Willard Alternative High School. She is keeping tabs and seeks to share resources with RFNC.

There were no other announcements. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary LaPorte

April 18, 2016

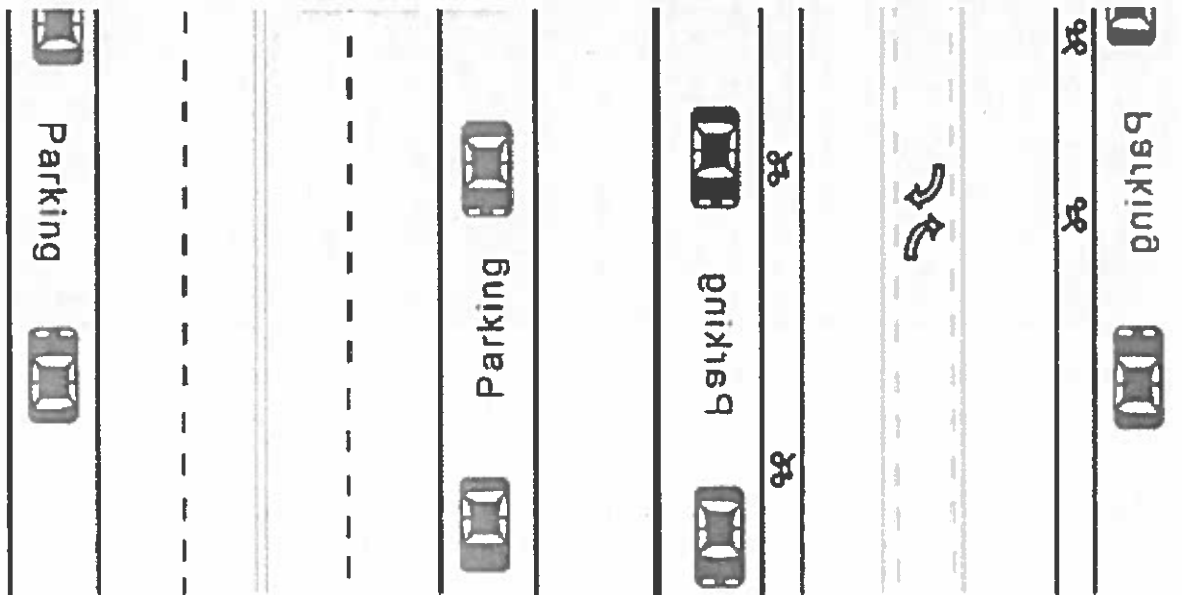
## Transforming the Hip Strip for a Healthy Neighborhood

The Hip Strip, in the heart of Missoula, is not very friendly for drivers, walkers and people on bikes- thus hurting our beloved local businesses. 4-lanes causes trouble- left turns are often prohibited (or when allowed this blocks the thru lane), people on bikes are 'squeezed' and crossing on foot can be dangerous with multiple lanes of cars.

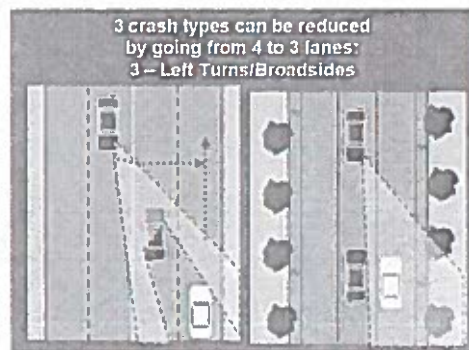
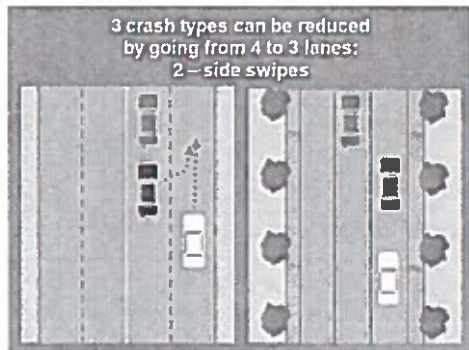
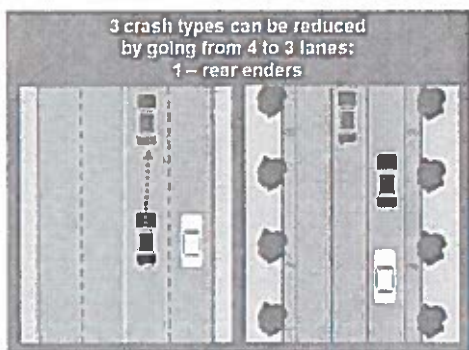
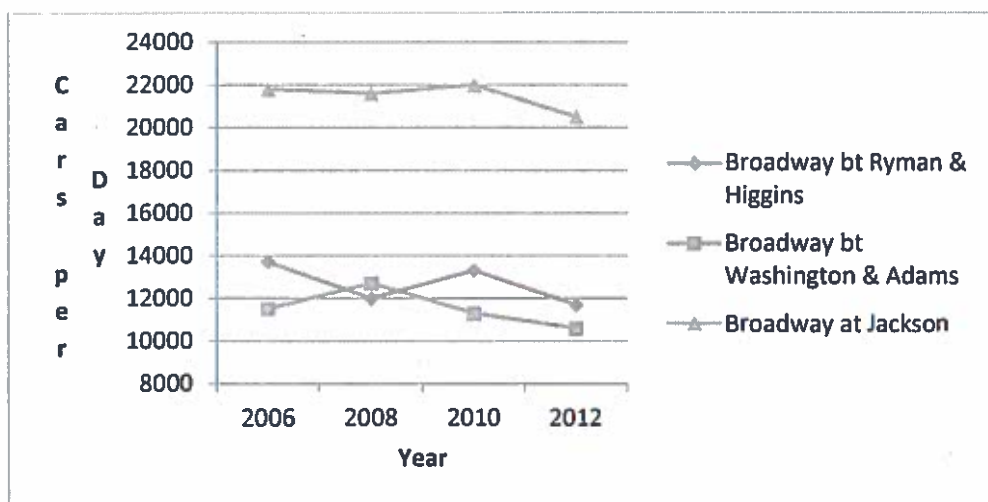
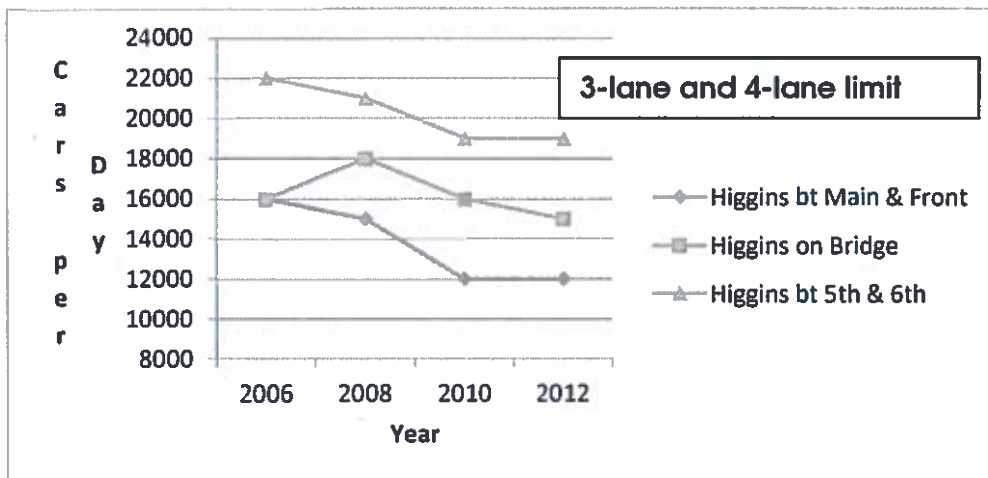


### Proposal for 3-lane Higgins (Brooks to Railroad) and 3-lane Broadway (Orange to Madison)

Two successful 4-lane to 3-lane conversions have been implemented in Missoula, with good results in safety and flow. N.Higgins was converted 4 to 3 in 2011, gaining bikeways (cycle tracks), calming traffic and making for a more inviting pedestrian atmosphere. W. Broadway saw the same results (bike lanes added instead of cycle tracks) in 2005, ending a string of pedestrian fatalities. MIST believes strongly that converting the Hip Strip from 4 lanes to 3 lanes will benefit everyone, especially local business.



**Traffic Flow and Safety: Both 3-lane and 4-lane roads move up to 24,000 cars a day with similar flow rates (in urban settings). This is due to the inside lane clogging on a 4-lane road when left turns are being made. The benefits of a 3-lane road include dedicated left turning space, bike lanes being added, pedestrian crossings being safer and motor traffic becoming calmer-all of this improves livability and makes storefronts more visible and accessible.**



The above graphics illustrate how car crashes are reduced with a 4 to 3 lane conversion. Just as important- if not more so- is that pedestrian and bicycle safety is immensely enhanced with a conversion.

"City Public Works supports the extension of a 3-lane Broadway from Orange to Madison Street and 3-lane Higgins from S. 5th Street to Railroad Street." -Steve King, Public Works Director, email on August 28, 2008

Please send comments to [mist@strans.org](mailto:mist@strans.org)