



1200 Wilmette Avenue  
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091-0040

**MEETING MINUTES**

**MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE VILLAGE BOARD**

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2020**

**6:00 P.M.**

**VILLAGE HALL – BROADCAST ONLY**

**(VILLAGE HALL IS CLOSED DUE TO THE VILLAGE PRESIDENT’S DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER AND PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ORDER)<sup>1</sup>**

Members Present: Trustee Dan Sullivan, Chair  
Trustee Gina Kennedy  
Trustee Joel Kurzman

Staff Present: Brigitte Berger-Raish, P.E., Director of Engineering and Public Works  
Dan Manis, P.E., Village Engineer

**I. CALL TO ORDER.**

Trustee Dan Sullivan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Committee members Trustees Gina Kennedy and Joel Kurzman were present.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES; MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 29, 2020.**

Chair Sullivan directed the Committee’s attention to the draft minutes of the Municipal Services Committee (MSC) meeting of September 29, 2020.

Trustee Kurzman requested that the third paragraph on page four of the minutes be reviewed and changed to express his surprise that the Master Bike and Active Transportation Plan (Plan) contained a tunnel and that he expected a fly over. He added that his preference for a fly over be recorded in the minutes.

Ms. Brigitte Berger-Raish, Director of Engineering and Public Works, will review the recording of the minutes, propose new language, and bring the minutes back to the next meeting for approval.

<sup>1</sup> This meeting was held remotely by the Municipal Services Committee of the Village Board of Trustees. The meeting was broadcast live at <https://www.youtube.com/user/villageofwilmette/live> and on Channel 6 and then published on the Village’s website. Members of the public were able to make public comment in advance of the meeting by emailing their comments to [publiccomment@wilmette.com](mailto:publiccomment@wilmette.com) or comments could be made during the meeting through YouTube live and provided to the Village Board. There was also the option to participate in the meeting via a PC, mobile device, or phone.

Chair Sullivan and Trustee Kennedy agreed to save the approval of the minutes until the next MSC meeting to appropriately reflect Trustee Kurzman's comments.

The minutes of the MSC meeting of September 29, 2020, were deferred for review at the next meeting.

### **III. SKOKIE/LAKE PROJECT OVERVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MULTI-USE PATH ALIGNMENT.**

Mr. Dan Manis, Village Engineer, opened by summarizing the Skokie Boulevard and Lake Avenue intersection improvements and multi-use path alignment project. The project is currently in the preliminary engineering study phase. In 2019 the Village hired a consultant to evaluate the feasibility of the project and develop alternatives, and the intent of the meeting is to update the Committee on the status of the project, review project details, and seek support on a project alternative. He introduced the representatives from Civiltech Engineering, Inc., a consulting firm hired to complete preliminary engineering study.

Mr. Joel Christell (Civiltech Engineering, Inc.) explained that during the presentation, he will discuss project purpose and need, jurisdiction and funding, public engagement history to date, traffic analyses, proposed intersection improvements, multi-use path alternatives, their impacts, and project schedule.

He added that the Plan identified the Skokie Boulevard and Lake Avenue as an area where pedestrian improvements and bicycle accommodations are needed. The purpose and need of this project are to enhance the safety and mobility of all users, improve roadway surface, traffic signal improvements.

He explained that Skokie Boulevard is under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), and Lake Avenue and Illinois Road are Cook County jurisdiction. The Village has already secured funding for the intersection improvements' design and construction costs. As the project progressed, a need for bicycle accommodation to the north became evident and the Village submitted an Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) application for funding of the proposed path; results are expected in spring 2021.

Additionally, he reviewed the history of the public informational meetings held by the Village. Public Information #1 was held outside during the pandemic, to introduce the project, obtain feedback on the intersection improvement, and multi-use path alternatives. Public Information #2 is tentatively scheduled for Spring 2021 to present the preferred alternative.

He continued to review the existing conditions of the intersection and noted that traffic analyses were conducted. Enhanced safety at the intersection will be achieved by reducing the northeast and southwest corner radii, reducing the lane width of the eastbound curb lane, removing the northwest and southeast corner islands, reducing the crosswalk distances, installing ADA compliant crossings, modernizing the traffic signal, and resurfacing Lake Ave.

The project team developed four alternatives for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along the north leg of Skokie Boulevard. He reviewed the impacts related to the potential tree removal, existing landscaping, permanent right-of-way/easement(s), and temporary easement(s) of each of the alternatives.

Alternative 1 comprises an 8-foot multi-use path starting at Lake Avenue and continuing along the west side of Skokie Boulevard until the Edens Plaza signal, where it crosses to the east side and continues up to Illinois Road, then turns eastbound to Sprucewood Lane.

Alternative 2 comprises an 8-foot multi-use path located entirely on the east side of Skokie Boulevard connecting Lake Avenue to Sprucewood Lane.

Alternatives 3 and 4 comprise the same alignments as Alternatives 1 and 2, respectively, but instead of an 8-foot multi-use path, the proposed path is a 5-foot sidewalk.

Trustee Kurzman asked where the additional 3 feet required to make the 5-foot sidewalk to an 8-foot path will come from.

Mr. Christell replied that multi-use paths must be at least 5 feet in from the face of curb on both sides of Skokie Boulevard. The proposed multi-use path will meet this requirement and will be as far away from the roadway as possible to relieve some of the impacts to the trees and to maintain the existing swale in place as required by IDOT.

Chair Sullivan asked why the crossing at the Edens Plaza traffic signal is on the north end in Alternatives 1 and 3.

Mr. Christell advised that having the pedestrians cross on the north side provides a more space to maintain compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

Chair Sullivan inquired whether there have been accidents from vehicles coming southbound off the Edens exit where drivers don't realize they may have to come to a quick stop.

Mr. Christell advised that no accidents were reported in the collision data due to vehicles existing the Edens at this location.

Mr. James Tibble (Civiltech Engineering, Inc.), added that Edens Plaza currently has a pedestrian sidewalk on the north side of the access drive, therefore having the crosswalk on the north side is most logical.

Mr. Christell finalized the presentation by adding that whereas the multi-use path options have the most impacts, they provide accommodations for both pedestrians and bicycles as noted in the Plan. He added that attendees at the first public meeting overwhelmingly preferred Alternative 1. After design approval is obtained, Phase 2 would begin in 2022, then construction is expected in 2022-2023 depending on right-of-way (ROW) acquisition and funding. If the Village receives funding via the ITEP program, then both the intersection and preferred alternative would be constructed simultaneously.

Ms. Berger-Raish added that the Village's only cost participation for the intersection improvement portion of the project would be related to minor elements such as preemption on the traffic signals for the fire department, possibly some lighting, and beautification.

Trustee Kennedy asked if ROW acquisition is required, would the Village bear any of the costs.

Mr. Christell replied that as part of the Phase 2 intergovernmental (IGA) agreements that it would be the goal for IDOT and Cook County to participate in the funding of the ROW acquisition.

Mr. Manis added as part of the ITEP application, the Village applied for funds for the easements and acquisition.

Trustee Kennedy inquired if the current property owners are amenable to giving us an easement.

Mr. Manis responded that the property owners on the east side of Skokie Boulevard have expressed support for Alternatives 1 and 3, which is the path entirely on the west side. The Edens Plaza representatives are aware of the project and have not yet expressed support for any of the alternatives in writing yet.

Ms. Berger-Raish added that the formal process of land acquisition begins in Phase 2.

Trustee Kennedy asked whether the Village has an idea of whether mostly pedestrians or mostly bicycles is expected to use the path.

Ms. Berger-Raish advised that this project is a critical piece to building out a

pedestrian/bicycle network on the west side, which would eventually connect to Marie Murphy school, Avoca West, and Loyola Academy.

Chair Sullivan opened the floor to public comments regarding the project.

Richard Moy, 3245 Sprucewood Lane, asked whether the Village conducted studies related to the speed of the vehicles travelling along Skokie Boulevard and whether there will be a barrier between the path and the street.

Mr. Christell responded that whereas there was no specific study on the speed of the vehicles, that the Village can consider reducing the corner radii to reduce speeds. He added that since the path will be meeting the 5-foot minimum distance from the face of curb, no barriers will be installed.

Mr. Moy added that since IDOT removed all the trees, people are climbing their fence and throwing things towards their house. He asked if there is a plan to add a barrier to prevent this behavior.

Ms. Berger-Raish responded that the Village is considering adding a barrier consisting of supplemental trees and arborvitae to provide screening.

Mr. Moy inquired whether the ditch along Skokie Boulevard behind their home will remain and if the new plantings would survive.

Ms. Berger-Raish replied that the swale will likely include a storm sewer to manage water, which provides additional flexibility on drainage that would ensure the landscaping would thrive.

Imran Laljivirani, 3241 Sprucewood Lane, asked where the path would sit and exactly where the trees would go, what is the sequence of the project, and how long would it take the plants to grow to provide the same privacy as before.

Mr. Christell responded that the construction would begin with the roadway first, then the path, then the vegetation.

Ms. Berger-Raish added that since this path is contingent on funding, 2023 is the soonest possible construction start time. Also, depending on the size of initial landscaping, it would be approximately 3-5 years before the residents would see screening meaningful to them. The Village has advised residents to consider adding landscaping on their side of the fence to provide some more immediate relief.

Mr. Moy asked how much space there was between the edge of the proposed sidewalk and the fence.

Mr. Christell responded that he believes it is at least 12 feet.

Mr. Tibble added that it ranges 10 to 15 feet.

Trustee Kennedy asked to confirm that the Village did not have anything to do with the removal of the trees.

Ms. Berger-Raish responded affirmatively.

Mr. Manis added that IDOT provided notice to the Village and the residents that there would be some selective clearing as part of their Skokie Boulevard resurfacing project. Since they don't generally maintain vegetation in their ROW, they take the opportunity during construction projects to remove dead, diseased, or invasive trees to reduce liability.

Trustee Kennedy asked whether the easement between the curb and the fencing belongs to IDOT or the Village.

Mr. Christell responded that this area is IDOT's easement and that IDOT can selectively decide to maintain the drainage, remove trees, etc., as needed.

Chair Sullivan asked if this project will allow the Village to install some landscaping for the residents.

Ms. Berger-Raish responded that the Village would plan to facilitate landscaping and screening as part of the IGA for this project, and then the Village would then be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the new landscaping.

Mr. Laljivirani requested that the Sprucewood properties along this project be allowed to install a fence above the 6.5-foot zoning limitation.

Trustee Kennedy advised that his request should be brought to the Wilmette Zoning Board of Appeals.

Ms. Berger-Raish stated she will convey the request to Mr. John Adler, Director of Community Development.

Ms. Lourdes Cornelius submitted a comment via YouTube Live: Please consider adding signs to reduce the speed of vehicles along Skokie Boulevard and no-turn-on-red signs when pedestrians are present at the intersection of Skokie Boulevard and Lake Avenue.

Ms. Leanne Moy, 3245 Sprucewood Lane, wrote an e-mail: We are not in agreement in the sidewalk along Skokie behind the houses on Sprucewood because it's too dangerous for pedestrians. People jump the fence and throw trash into our yard.

Chair Sullivan closed public comment and indicated his preference for Alternative 1 or 3 because both alternatives have one-third of the sidewalk along Edens Plaza. He added that Alternative 3 is reasonable because of less impacts and can better address the concerns of the residence on Sprucewood but also likes alternative 1.

Trustee Kennedy added her preference is Alternative 1 since a wider path is safer for both bicycles and pedestrians.

Trustee Kurzman remarked that he also has a similar preference for Alternatives 1 and 3 and that he chooses the 8-foot option Alternative 1.

Chair Sullivan confirmed the Committee's unified choice of Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative.

Ms. Berger-Raish concluded that the Village has received the concurrence for Alternative 1 and will keep the Committee informed of the project as it moves forward.

#### **IV. NEIGHBORHOOD STORAGE PROJECT – PHASE 2 NEGOTIATION UPDATE**

Ms. Berger-Raish Brigitte explained the Village conducted a negotiation with the Neighborhood Storage Project Phase 1 contractor, after which the Village decided to go out to bid for the next phase. The Village will award the next Phase on December 22, 2020.

Chair Sullivan and Trustee Kennedy commented that they agreed this was a great decision.

Mr. Manis stated there were no comments on this topic via YouTube Live.

#### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

#### **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

#### **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

#### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT.**

Trustee Kennedy moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Kurzman seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote ending the meeting at 7:24 PM.

Minutes respectfully prepared by Georgia Mihalopoulos, P.E.