

MINUTES OF THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 17, 2007 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE SECOND FLOOR TRAINING ROOM OF THE VILLAGE HALL, 1200 WILMETTE AVENUE, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091

Members Present: Trustee Mari Terman, Chairperson
Trustee Alan Swanson
Trustee James Griffith (7:30 p.m.)

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Brigitte A. Mayerhofer, Director of Engineering
Linda Reilley, Engineering Assistant
Donna Jakubowski, Director of Public Works
George Carpenter, Chief of Police

Also Present: Nancy Blake, 2300 Birchwood
Laurel Brown, 2307 Lake
Vangelis Economou, 601 Hunter
Jeff Strange, 2105 Schiller
Lali Watt, Trustee, Village of Wilmette

Chairperson Terman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Approval of minutes of the December 21, 2007 meeting.

Motion by: Trustee Swanson
Second: Chair Terman
Discussion: None
Action: Approved by unanimous voice vote

2. Review of Draft Street Lighting Policy

- Chair Terman introduced this issue and indicated that currently the Village does not have a policy that addresses resident requests for lighting changes on their street. She summarized the important points in the policy, including the difference between roadway lighting and decorative lighting and the reasons for lighting.
- Chair Terman asked Chief Carpenter what role lighting plays relative to security, to which Chief Carpenter indicated lighting is one of the most important aspects of safety.
- Trustee Swanson indicated he supports the policy as drafted. He added it is important to base lighting changes on an engineering study.
- Trustee Watt asked the Committee how it is known what level of lighting belongs on each street. Trustee Swanson explained that there are a series of considerations that impact lighting levels including roadway classification, geometry, pedestrian activity, etc. He explained the difference between an arterial street such as Green Bay Road and Skokie Boulevard and local residential streets.

- It was noted that many of the major streets in Wilmette are owned by either the state or the county. Both agencies follow an adopted standard for roadway lighting based on engineering criteria.
- Trustee Watt indicated there are many lighting inconsistencies throughout the Village to which Trustee Swanson stated the inconsistencies are a result of when areas were developed and what technology was available at that time.
- Trustee Watt suggested developing a lighting standard and bringing all Village streets up to that standard. Chair Terman and Trustee Swanson agreed that it would be very expensive to accomplish that goal, especially since the existing lighting levels are adequate in many cases.
- Trustee Watt indicated there should be other factors like pedestrian consideration when determining acceptable lighting levels. She prefers less light. Trustee Swanson stated there are many different purposes of lighting, including for pedestrian safety.
- Nancy Blake, 2300 Birchwood, asked about the difference between the 105 watt green lights versus the 21-foot poles on Hunter Road. She stated the lights are too bright and shine into her windows.
- A discussion ensued concerning the difference between the “cobra” fixtures and the “acorn” fixtures. In both cases, there are techniques that can be used to shield light from the residential properties.
- Ms. Blake indicated there is an inequity because the east side of the Village has the quaint street lights and the west side does not.
- Chair Terman asked about the development of the lighting system to which Ms. Jakubowski stated the east side system was developed in 1910. The west system was installed after World War II, when technology was significantly more advanced. She concluded by describing the east side re-wiring project which took place over several years to replace the old electrical infrastructure and refurbish the poles and fixtures.
- Mr. Jeff Strange, 2105 Schiller, indicated he thought the 80-percent requirement for submitting petitions was too high. Chair Terman asked Ms. Mayerhofer why the proposed policy is for 80-percent approval. Ms. Mayerhofer explained that the policy for traffic calming requires 67-percent approval. Lighting impacts all residents of the block and could result in a significant expenditure of public money. She stated she thought it would be important to make sure as many residents as possible were in favor of the change. She concluded by indicating 67-percent would be fine as well if the Committee chose to reduce the threshold.
- Trustee Watt indicated she still had some concerns with the policy because it does not specifically indicate what type of lighting is required. Chair Terman stated the purpose of the task given to the Committee is to develop a procedural policy that can be used to govern resident requests for changing or adding lighting.
- Ms. Blake asked if the lights on Hunter Road have gotten brighter to which Ms. Jakubowski indicated that sometimes new light bulbs could appear brighter.
- The Committee discussed the percentage of households that constitute a valid petition. Trustee Watt indicated she was concerned about the need for a petition process. Trustee Swanson stated that petitions are used for several things like traffic calming and parking changes. He stated this process is consistent with other

resident requests. Trustee Griffith indicated he thought making the petition process easier would result in more lighting, therefore he was not in favor of the changing the 80-percent requirement.

Motion to amend the policy to require 67-percent of the households on the block to sign a lighting petition, instead of the stated 80-percent.

Motion by: Trustee Swanson
Second: Chair Terman
Action: Approved by roll call vote of 2 ayes (Terman and Swanson) to 1 nay (Griffith)

Motion to approve the amended policy and to recommend it as drafted to the Village Board for adoption.

Motion by: Trustee Swanson
Second: Chair Terman
Action: Approved by roll call vote of 2 ayes (Terman and Swanson) to 1 nay (Griffith)

3. Transportation Commission request to review Village-wide speed limit policy on collector streets

- Chair Terman asked Ms. Mayerhofer to introduce this item. Ms. Mayerhofer summarized the history of the Hunter Road discussions at the Transportation Commission meetings. She stated that although speeds are not that high, the Commission implemented some roadway striping last summer in attempt to slow cars down. She stated the residents of Hunter Road have also asked the Commission to be considered for a lower speed limit. Ms. Mayerhofer concluded by indicating the current policy is to sign all collector streets (including Hunter Road) as 30 miles per hour.
- Clay Weaver, Chairman of the Transportation Commission stated that the Commission recognizes that changing the speed limit on one collector street could result in numerous other requests. Since the Village Board ultimately approves speed limit changes, the Commission is looking for some direction.
- Trustee Swanson stated he concurs with the concept of keeping speed limits consistent. He referenced the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices which provides uniform standards for things like signage, striping and speed limits. It is important to keep speed limits uniform so that drivers know what to expect.
- Chief Carpenter and Trustee Swanson concurred that setting the speed limit too low can actually cause more accidents than reduce them.
- Trustee Watt suggested there is a perception that Hunter Road is unsafe for pedestrians.

- Chair Terman asked how speed limits are determined. Trustee Swanson explained the 85-percentile speed is used initially because it is the speed most drivers are comfortable with under normal driving conditions.
- Chief Carpenter indicated that police presence is a significant deterrent for speeders, but it is not realistic to expect to have continuous enforcement presence.
- A discussion of the unique characteristics of Hunter Road took place. Several residents commented on the concern for safety of the children crossing Hunter Road, especially at Illinois Road where few drivers obey the stop sign. Trustee Swanson provided information about the engineering study that was done five to ten years ago to improve pedestrian safety around Highcrest School.
- Trustee Griffith asked Ms. Mayerhofer if there were any other suggestions to improve safety on Hunter to which Ms. Mayerhofer suggested a raised intersection, similar to the raised crosswalk on Hunter, north of Lake. Chief Carpenter stated the feedback received on the raised crosswalk has been very positive.
- Ms. Blake stated that most schools are on collector streets and therefore shouldn't all collector streets be reduced to 25 miles per hour, because there is pedestrian traffic all year long. She also mentioned a letter from School Superintendent McGee supporting the speed limit reduction.
- Chief Carpenter indicated the Police Department cannot write and prosecute tickets if the speed limits are not set based on an engineering study.
- The Committee discussed the in-street pedestrian crossing sign policy that was recently adopted. It was noted that most crossing guards already use "narrow-cades" to communicate school zones.
- Chair Terman indicated it is important to change the culture of the way people drive.
- Chief Carpenter suggested that if the speed limit is reduced on Hunter Road, there would likely be a domino effect beginning with Illinois Road. He surmised that residential streets would likely request speed limit reductions to 20 miles per hour.
- Mr. Strange, 2105 Schiller, indicated the recent restriping at the Hunter Road and Lake Avenue intersection is causing drivers to divert to other routes.
- A discussion continued regarding the safety of the school zones. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated that most key school crossings are managed by crossing guards, which is the safest possible standard.
- Trustee Watt indicated the problem is not during the morning and afternoon pick up and drop off times, but other times of the day when crossing guards are not present. Chair Terman suggested that the crossing guard's hours could be extended to pick up early morning or later afternoon programs.

- Trustee Swanson indicated a raised crosswalk would require cars to slow down as they approach and cross the intersection. He also suggested using color to make the intersection visually more prominent.
- Chair Terman asked if these possibilities more directly target the problem, rather than reducing the speed limit, which may or may not have the desired impact.
- Trustee Watt suggested contacting the Park District to get information on their summer programs, including how many students attend, where they come from and how they get there.
- A discussion ensued concerning Linden Avenue. Ms. Blake stated the Hunter Road residents wanted to be treated the same as Linden Avenue. Ms. Mayerhofer explained that the speed limit on Linden Avenue was lowered to 25 miles per hour many years ago because the high crown was a safety concern.
- Trustee Swanson stated that there are circumstances where speed limit reductions are warranted, such as on Linden Avenue where there was a legitimate engineering reason. He stated he supports following the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) model which supports speed limit uniformity unless an engineering study indicates a reduction is warranted. Trustee Swanson referenced some of the considerations in the policy which include on-street parking, pedestrian activity, driveway locations and location of the sidewalk. Chair Terman and Trustee Griffith concurred.
- Chair Terman suggested the Transportation Commission could continue to gather data about pedestrian activity on Hunter Road and consider possible traffic calming improvements.
- A discussion took place regarding the need for the Civics and Safety Groups to meet with the Police Department and other Village Staff to review their concerns. It was suggested that this forum already exists in the form of the Transportation Commission. There have been numerous school groups in the past that have petitioned the Commission to review traffic and pedestrian issues. Most recently, studies were completed at Romona and Central Schools.
- Chair Terman reminded the meeting attendants that the next Transportation Commission meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2007.

4. Old Business / Pending Matters

- Chair Terman referenced the letter from Dr. Gynn of Golf Terrace regarding his concerns about the Dick Keefe Development.
- Trustee Swanson asked staff what the feedback has been on the Lake Avenue changes, to which Ms. Mayerhofer and Chief Carpenter indicated it has been primarily positive.

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by: Trustee Swanson
Second: Trustee Griffith
Action: Approved by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Brigitte Mayerhofer, P.E.