

Minutes of the Transportation Commission Meeting held on Wednesday, May 14, 2003 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Village Hall, 1200 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091.

Members Present: Neil Ferrari
Jim Grosh
Barbara Lusky
Amy Panici
Steve Schlickman
Alan Swanson, Chairman

Members Absent: Ed Gubman

Staff Present: Brigitte Mayerhofer, P.E., Director, Engineering
Linda Reilley, Engineering Assistant
George Carpenter, Police Chief
Thom Dworak, Traffic Coordinator

Also Present: Thirty-two residents:

Mr. Bill Marshall, 1239 Elmwood
Mr. Alex Sarkisian, 1310 Elmwood
Mr. Kevin Stettler, 1312 Elmwood
Mr. & Mrs. Jon Lerner, 1317 Elmwood
Mr. Jay Sullivan, 1337 Elmwood
Ms. Julie Zander Zoller, 1318 Forest
Ms. Macaire Trapp, 1332 Forest
Mr. Tom Schneck, 1420 Forest
Mr. Mark Kusatzky, 1228 Lake
Mr. George Baker, 1405 Lake
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Witt, 1506 Lake
Mr. Tim McDonnell, 1532 Lake
Mr. William Henzlik, 1616 Lake
Ms. Marion Rudy, 1618 Lake
Mr. Forbes Robertson, 1700 Lake
Mr. Andy Elbert, 1724 Lake
Ms. Siobhan Ni Bhuachalla, 2307 Lake
Mr. Jim Kiamos, 2307 Lake
Ms. Maureen Shea, 2311 Lake
Mr. Terry Coughlin, 2547 Lake
Ms. Eleni Sfondouris, 3106 Lake
Mr. Robert Pollard, 910 Thirteenth Street
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Hogstrom, 913 Thirteenth
Ms. Cheryl Parry, 914 Thirteenth
Ms. Sally Kaulas, 921 Thirteenth

Ms. Kathy Ballantine, 925 Thirteenth
Mr. Jay Blunk, 929 Thirteenth
Mr. & Mrs. David Johnsen, 1011 Thirteenth

Call to Order at 7:31 p.m.

1. Review of April 16, 2003 minutes.

Motion to approve the April 16, 2003 minutes.

Motion by: *Commissioner Schlickman*

Second: *Commissioner Panici*

Discussion: *Corrections made to add Barbara Lusky as absent and clarification of second bullet under "Other Business."*

Action: **Approved by unanimous voice vote**

2. Presentation of Bicycle Task Force Minutes & Pending Issues

- Ms. Reilley reported that the bicycle map will be presented to the Village Board in an upcoming issue of Manager's Notes. Chairman Swanson stated the Commission is pleased with the Bike Task Force's work on the bike map.

3. Thirteenth Street Traffic Counts

- Chairman Swanson introduced the discussion by asking for resident comment.
- Bill Marshall (1239 Elmwood) summarized the petition that was presented stating cut-through traffic and speed are the two issues residents are most concerned with. He stated that any traffic calming measures would also be welcomed.
- Chairman Swanson stated that the Village took counts in anticipation of traffic concerns on Thirteenth Street. He continued to say that the volumes of traffic in the northbound direction far exceed those in the southbound direction, indicating a cut-through traffic problem. Chairman Swanson also explained the difference between average speed and 85-percentile speed.
- Tom Schnecke (1402 Forest) stated that he represents the neighborhood on the west side of Green Bay Road. He presented opinion that the cut-through problem extends beyond the study area.
- Kevin Stettler (1312 Elmwood) concurred with his neighbors on the problem, but does not agree that one-way southbound is a good idea. He believes the problem should be addressed at the train station. He stated there is a park at the intersection of

Elmwood and Green Bay Road where site distance is very poor. This puts children in danger.

- Jay Blunk (929 13th Street) suggested making 13th Street from Lake Avenue to Forest Avenue southbound only. Among his suggestions was adding speed humps to Forest.
- Robert Pollard (910 13th Street) said the spillover traffic from Lake and Green Bay Road is the problem. He suggested the split phase signals make the problem worse. He requested stop signs at Forest and Elmwood.
- Chairman Swanson provided information about the ICC requirements related to intersections adjacent to at-grade railroad crossings.
- Jon Lerner (1317 Elmwood) does not want 13th Street southbound only because this action would increase traffic on 12th Street. He requested a four way stop at Elmwood and Forest and “No entry to 13th Street” sign at the Lake Avenue exit for the Metra lot. A speed limit reduction is not realistic.
- Alex Sarkisian (1310 Elmwood) stated the Metra Lot and changes to Green Bay Road have created the problem. He suggested prohibiting left hand turns off of Green Bay Road at Lake Avenue. Chairman Swanson stated that vehicles should be encouraged to use Lake Avenue, so a turning restriction would not be recommended.
- Mark Kusatzky (1228 Lake Avenue) said the Village should implement structural changes, because the Police Department cannot be relied on to solve all of the traffic problems. He suggested making it troublesome to get around the Village, such as installing speed humps.
- Cheryl Parry (914 13th Street) concurs with her neighbors.
- Terry Coughlin (2547 Lake) asked if a speed study were ever done for Lake Avenue. Chairman Swanson said the Lake Avenue discussion would be next on the agenda.
- Tom Schnecke (1402 Forest) said he was aware of a new railroad gate technology that would solve the traffic problems on Green Bay Road. Chairman Swanson and other members of the Commission were not aware of this technology.
- Amalia Johnsen (1011 13th Street) stated she realizes that no particular solution will please everyone, but prefers the one-way solution during rush hour.
- Chairman Swanson opened the floor for Commissioner comments.
- Commissioner Schlickman asked where the cars would go if the right [out] exit on Lake Avenue at the Metra Lot were closed. Ms. Mayerhofer stated that the options were Washington Court to 12th Street or Central Avenue. It is unknown what the trip distribution would be.

- Commissioner Panici suggested restricting both right turns and left turns onto Thirteenth Street. Ms Panici asked Chief Carpenter if this would be difficult to enforce, to which he responded it was enforceable.
- Commissioner Ferrari stated that as a member of the Metra Task Force he was involved in the decisions that were made when designing the lot. Mr. Ferrari stated that he did not believe that closing the eastbound Metra exit was the best option. He is also concerned with any option that would encourage more traffic on 12th Street.
- Commissioner Lusky stated that she is concerned with cars using 13th Street to avoid the intersection of Lake Avenue and Green Bay Road. She described the criteria and procedure that the Village follows before speed humps or other traffic calming devices are installed.
- Commissioner Schlickman referenced the suggestion to lower Lake Avenue under the tracks saying this would be very disruptive and uneconomical. He continued to say he believes the signals on Green Bay Road have a greater affect on traffic than the reconfiguration of Green Bay Road.
- Commissioner Grosh suggested limiting access to Forest and Elmwood at Green Bay Road, to discourage cut-through traffic.
- Chairman Swanson said that the commuters who park in the Metra lot need options to access the station. He stated they should be commended for using public transit rather than further congesting the roadways. Chairman Swanson suggested that the best option is making 13th Street one-way from the alley to Lake Avenue. He said stop signs and other regulatory signs are less likely to be effective if they are overused in the wrong applications.
- Chief Carpenter added that the Village has adopted the policy referenced as the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) as our guide for regulatory signage. Chief Carpenter also suggested placing “No Left Turn” signs at the intersections of 12th and 13th Streets at Forest and Elmwood Avenues.
- Commissioner Ferrari stated that enforcing restricted left turns in four areas would be difficult and that the residents support the one-way option.
- Laurie Lerner (1317 Elmwood) suggested that the Commission should start with the least restrictive option and then add more restrictions if necessary.
- Bill Marshall (1239 Elmwood) stated that he felt the “No Left Turn” signs would be unenforceable and that he supported one-way southbound from the alley.
- Ms. Mayerhofer reminded the Commission that 13th Street is part of the Green Bay Trail, and therefore bicyclists must be exempt

from the one-way status. John LaPlante from TY Lin stated that an exemption for bicyclists is possible and done elsewhere.

- Commissioner Schlickman reiterated that he favored eliminating the right turn out of the Metra Lot onto Lake Avenue.

Motion to make 13th Street one-way southbound from the alley to Lake Avenue, Monday thru Friday from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

Motion by: Commissioner Lusky
Second: Commissioner Ferrari
Discussion: Motion was amended by Commissioner Panici to include 7 pm as the restriction cut-off and also exclude bicycles.
Action: Motion approved by majority vote, with one dissenting vote by Commissioner Schlickman.

- Staff was directed to take benchmark traffic counts on 12th Street before the new signage is in place.

4. Locust Road Traffic Counts and Resident Survey Results

In light of the late hour, this agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

5. Lake Avenue Traffic Study

- Ms. Mayerhofer provided a brief introduction of this item, stating that the Commission wanted to further review Lake Avenue as a result of the balanced growth study that IDOT had performed a couple of years prior. Ms. Mayerhofer concluded that any recommended improvements would be suggested to Cook County for inclusion in the 2004 resurfacing of Lake Avenue from Skokie Boulevard to Green Bay Road.
- Ms. Mayerhofer introduced John LaPlante from TY Lin who presented the attached power point material.
- Commissioner Swanson opened the issue for discussion.
- Ms. Bhuachalla (2307 Lake) stated that she is most concerned for the children who have to cross Lake Avenue. She cited the issues of vehicle speed, lack of enforcement, truck traffic and use of cell phones as some of the problems. She stated that the three lane option is acceptable, but that five lanes would be even more unsafe for children.
- George Baker (1405 Lake) stated that as an owner of the businesses at Lake and Green Bay Road, he sees maintaining on street parking as very important.

- Jim Kiamos (2307 Lake Avenue) stated that he rarely sees trucks pulled over for tickets. He also stated the accident data seemed very low. He said he would consider the three lane option.
- Greg Whit of (1506 Lake) stated that speed is the problem and that he supported the previous comments from his neighbors.
- Gene Battin is a crossing guard at Lake and Hunter. She stated that this intersection is very unsafe for school children. Chief Carpenter recognized Ms. Battin and thanked her for her wonderful service and dedication as a crossing guard.
- Maureen Shay (2311 Lake Avenue) said she concurred with the previous comments and recommended a “hands free” cell phone law be passed. The Commission stated that for various reasons, this should be a state initiated law, rather than local.
- A resident complimented the Police Department on responding to accidents and cleaning up debris quickly.
- The Commission engaged in a short discussion on the options that were presented and then tabled any recommendations until the next meeting.

6. Annual Police Department report on the School Crossing Guard Program

- Chairman Swanson introduced this issue and turned discussion over to Chief Carpenter who stated there were no recommended changes in the crossing guard locations.
- Regarding Highcrest School, Officer Dworak suggested relocating the school buses to Hunter in the pickup zone south of the south parking lot. The recommendation from the Commission was for District 39 to continue staging their buses on school property.

7. Feedback—None

8. Old Business / Pending Matters / Next Meeting

Next meeting is Wednesday, June 11, 2003. ---*Changed to July 23*

Motion to adjourn: Commissioner Schlickman

Second: Commissioner Grosh

Action: Approved by unanimous voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Brigitte Mayerhofer.