

Minutes of the Transportation Commission Meeting held on Wednesday, July 23, 2003 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber at Village Hall, 1200 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091.

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

Members Absent: None

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

Also Present: Rick Treiber 2649 Hillside Lane, Evanston

Ninety-one residents:

Charles Martin, 900 Seneca
Sam Eadie, 2010 Lake
Al Rosenfield, 2311 Lake
Maureen Shea, 2311 Lake
James Kiamos, 2307 Lake
F. Braskamp, 900 Oxford
H. O. Herlocker, 915 Yale
R. Golding, 2501 Lake
Ann Beckwith, 2501 Lake
Richard Johnson, 744 Illinois Road
George Baker, 1405 Lake
Jay Statland, 2408 Birchwood Lane
Vicki Keywood, 1126 Linden
David Cottingham, 420 Park Avenue
Mr. & Mrs. Terry Coughlin, 2547 Lake
Jim Ammon, 3119 Lake
Doris Schafer, 2240 Lake
Marion Rudy, 1618 Lake
Dan Keller, 2240 Lake
Dick Stiffler, 2021 Lake
Gary Williams, 2021 Lake
Jim Fox, 900 Locust (NE corner Lake / Locust)

Debbie Stacey, 2403 Lake
Scott Pemberton, 2631 Lake
Larry Axelrood, 1404 Forest
Kim Fitzgerald, 1417 Forest
George Skoul, 2002 Lake
Tricia & David Atlas, 2323 Lake
Walter & Johanna Chorle, 2341 Lake
Scott Goldstein, 1426 Lake
David Brubaker, 934 Cornell
Lillian Slotten, 2809 Lake
Judith Goodie, 2837 Lake
Jake & Marianne leuter, 1535 Lake
Bob Dixon, 1539 Lake
Steve Wilkovich, 910 Cherokee
James Fox, 843 Chilton
Colleen Remsberg, 2939 Indianwood
Axel Feller, 2014 Lake
Betty Treiber, 1450 Lake
Helen Zimmermann, 1000 Mohawk
Mary Jeffers, 2627 Lake
Carolyn & Carl Rutstein, 910 Locust Rd.
Kirk & Hilary Steinhaus, 2140 Lake
John & Henri Tosarello, 2525 Lake
John & Eleni Pronos, 840 Westwood
Kristen Pettersen, 2006 Lake
Carolyn Glenn, 2145 Lake
William McCue, 1630 Lake
Jane Yust & A.M. Khan, 2040 Lake
Jack DiClementi, 2509 Lake
Minnie DiClementi, 2527 Lake
DL Rnle, (illegible) _____ Lake
Jan & Dave Gerber, 2510 Lake Avenue
Ron Deger, 2136 Lake
Scott Johnson, 246 Westmoreland
Adrian Paternostro, 2815 Lake
Elise & Patrick Crawford, 1612 Lake
Victoria Jiang, 2315 Lake
Charles & Olga Leahy, 2125 Lake
John Hillman, 1521 Lake
Sally Pfoertner, 1444 Lake
Gayle Alexander, 2504 Lake
Patricia & Anthony Fitzpatrick, 2525 Lake
Richard Duncan, 2924 Indianwood
Juan Pechokas, 2135 Lake
Kathy Immenhausen Martin, 2319 Lake
Katie Thinnes, 901 Locust

Howard Noel, 1606 Lake
Renata Buehler (Terzakis), 1033 Illinois
James Conroy, 2841 Lake
Gabriele Albrecht-Buehler, 909 Illinois
Kevin Williams, 1511 Lake
Laura Polkoff, 1514 Lake
John Thanos, 827 Ridge
Sheppard Eisenberg, 2645 Lake
Jack Martin, 2319 Lake
Bill Thinnes, 901 Locust
E. Fahmy, 2031 Lake

Call to Order at 7:32 p.m.

1. Review of May 14, 2003 minutes.

Motion to approve the May 14, 2003 minutes.

Motion by: *Commissioner Schlickman*

Second: *Commissioner Panici*

Action: **Approved by unanimous voice vote**

2. Lake Avenue Traffic Study

- Presentation by John LaPlante of TY Lin International. ***[See attached presentation.]***
- Commissioner Schlickman asked Mr. LaPlante if Cook County's disinterest in the three lane option is reasonable. Mr. LaPlante stated that in his opinion it was, because he felt the County was concerned about the precedent a lane reduction project would set for other County roadways.
- Commissioner Panici stated that it would be to everyone's benefit if the focus was on options that would be acceptable to the County and positive for the Village.
- Chairman Swanson stated that the Cook County Highway Department has a different perspective on traffic than Wilmette residents.
- Commissioner Lusky asked how much time the Village has to make a decision on Lake Avenue. Brigitte Mayerhofer responded that although the County is anxious for the Village's proposal, they are willing to work with us and try to incorporate the changes into next year's resurfacing project.

- Commissioner Lusky asked what the cost impact would be to the Village. Ms. Mayerhofer responded that the County has programmed funding for a resurfacing job, and that it is unknown at this time how changes to the scope of work will be paid for. Commissioner Lusky also asked John LaPlante for his recommendation. Mr. LaPlante responded that there are pros and cons with all of the options, but minimizing tree impact and maximizing safety such as in the 3-lane and 4-lane hybrid options are most desirable.
- Chairman Swanson asked Mr. LaPlante if a 33-percent increase in the accident rate over the state average was significant. Mr. LaPlante concluded it was very significant.
- Commissioner Panici asked what the cost of the four-lane hybrid would be, to which Mr. LaPlante responded approximately 1/3 less than the five-lane option.
- Commissioner Gubman recommended looking at modeling the intersections of Ridge Road and Hunter, because of the greatest accident experience at these intersections.
- Commissioner Panici asked if an advance green arrow would be effective. Mr. LaPlante responded that it is only effective if the left turners are in the front of the queue, otherwise it has little impact.
- Chairman Swanson asked when counts were taken, to which Mr. LaPlante responded midweek in April. He added that the counts were peak hour manual counts at the signalized intersections from 6:30 to 9:30 AM and 3:30 to 6:30 PM.

Resident Comments

- Alan Rosenfield (2311 Lake) stated he is in favor of the three lane option and submitted over 100 petitions to the Village of other residents in the area who also support a three lane option. He cited speed, child safety, and numerous accidents as the primary concerns.
- Jane Yust (2040 Lake Avenue) said nothing less than four lanes would work. She questioned why there are not four lane roads through Northfield and Winnetka. She concluded stating that there should be more speed enforcement on Lake Avenue.
- Sam Eadie (2010 Lake Avenue) said there is a significant amount of foot traffic on Lake Avenue and there is only a 36-inch wide parkway. He continued to say that the offset intersection at Harvard is dangerous and asked why the Police Department couldn't enforce the speed limit. He stated the four lanes were fine if the speed limit were maintained, otherwise a three lane option was preferred.
- Scott Goldstein (1426 Lake) said a three lane option would make it easier to cross Lake Avenue and added that Green Bay Road is dangerous to cross.

- Larry Axelrood (1404 Forest) said that as a representative of Forest Avenue, he is not in favor of any option that would encourage additional cut-through traffic.
- Scott Pemberton (2631 Lake) said that speed should be reduced and that the Village should not just “roll over” because the County says a three lane section wouldn’t work.
- Jim Fox (900 Locust) stated that “if you build it, they will come.”
- Judith Goodie (2837 Lake) stated that traffic should remain as four lanes. Lake Avenue is a major east-west arterial and it doesn’t make sense to encourage traffic to use the side streets.
- Richard Johnson (744 Illinois) said that Lake Avenue has a beautiful canopy of trees and that any loss of trees would be undesirable.
- Steve Wilkovich (910 Cherokee) said that the study was excellent and he is in favor of the three lane option.
- John Hillman (1521 Lake) stated that the primary responsibility should be safety. Wilmette and Kenilworth are the only two North Shore towns with at-grade signal crossings, so they should not be targeted to take the additional traffic.
- Rick Treiber (2649 Hillside, Evanston) said he represented St. Joseph School. Mr. Treiber pointed out that school children and parishioners have difficulty crossing Lake Avenue.
- James Kiamos (2307 Lake) stated that there should not be any loss of trees. He requested that the Village ask Cook County to lower the speed limit on Lake Avenue.
- Sally Pfoertner (1444 Lake) said that the speed from Ridge to Lake Avenue is excessive.
- Richard Duncan (2924 Indianwood) suggested that truck traffic should be eliminated and that accidents can end up on parkways and on resident’s front yards if the curbs are moved any closer to the homes.
- Jim Fox (900 Locust) said the three lane option is not ideal. It would make backing out of driveways onto Lake Avenue even more difficult, and noted that heavy truck traffic and noise levels have increased immeasurably.
- Maureen Shea (2311 Lake) said there are a significant number of pedestrians on Lake Avenue that should be considered.
- Bill Thinnes (901 Locust) said that there are stop signs and two lanes in Arlington Heights on Euclid Avenue, which is Lake Avenue west of Wilmette. Lake Avenue in Wilmette should be similar.
- Carolyn Rutstein (910 Locust) stated that safety is the number one concern.
- George Baker (1405 Lake Avenue) wants to retain the parking on Lake Avenue at Green Bay Road, even if a right turn lane were to be installed. He appreciates the Commission’s efforts.

Commissioner Comments

- Chairman Swanson began the discussion by stating that he understands the residents' safety concerns, but that traffic still has to go some place. The three lane option has the potential to encourage cut-through traffic on other Wilmette streets that already have high volumes, such as Thornwood and Kenilworth Avenues. The predicted growth for Wilmette is very small and the number of cars on the road is a function of the number of drivers per household. He stated that the safety at Ridge Road and Hunter Road should be a focus as well as reducing the general speed on Lake Avenue. Chairman Swanson explained that; if the 85th percentile speed is ten miles per hour over the speed limit, then 15% of the traffic is traveling over ten miles per hour. He concluded by stating he is concerned that the three lane section may not work and that the four-lane section at Lake Avenue and Ridge Road is a viable option because of the lower volume on the east end of Lake Avenue.
- Commissioner Schlickman stated that he tentatively supports the three-lane option. He stated that the issues of speed and enforcement are recurring concerns. He recommended that the Police Department prepare a presentation addressing this issue at a future meeting.
- Deputy Chief King stated that the problem is competing interests with limited resources. He stated the Police Department would be open to a future presentation to the Commission.
- Commissioner Schlickman stated he was frustrated with the County's response to the three lane option and suggested that the residents contact our County representative, Larry Suffredin. He concluded by saying that Arlington Heights is not a precedent because it is a two lane roadway versus four lanes in Wilmette.

(For clarification, Ms. Mayerhofer was informed by Cook County that the section of Euclid Avenue that was discussed at the Commission meeting was actually transferred to Arlington Heights and is no longer under the County's jurisdiction. This note is for purposes of clarifying this discussion and is not intended to be a part of the official meeting minutes)

- Commissioner Lusky stated that she is concerned about the three lane option and that Lake Avenue is one of the few continuous east / west streets in town. Where would all the truck traffic go if prohibited on Lake? Commissioner Lusky stated she was interested in learning more about the four lane hybrid option, with a focus on Ridge Road and Hunter Road.
- Commissioner Ferrari expressed concern with the three lane section stating it would create a steady stream of cars all day long, making it

more difficult for residents to exit their driveways. He stated he is intrigued by the four lane hybrid, but would like to minimize tree impacts as much as possible.

- Commissioner Gubman thanked the residents for attending the meeting and said he is concerned with unintended consequences like the situation with Green Bay Road. He suggested that enforcing the speed limit is a concern. Commissioner Gubman stated he did not want to see the project over-engineered, but is willing to sacrifice a few trees in the interest of safety.
- Commissioner Grosh concurred with the comments of the other Commissioners and stated he would support exploring the four lane hybrid option. He is also concerned with excessive speed and the safety of Lake Avenue.
- Commissioner Panici is not in support of the four lane hybrid because it would add more lanes at Hunter, where it is already difficult to cross the street. She went on to say that the “No Left Turn” restrictions on Illinois and Locust would likely encourage cut-through traffic onto side streets. Commissioner Panici concluded by stating she agreed that speed and truck traffic were an issue and suggested that trucks be given a lower speed limit if possible.
- Chairman Swanson stated that he thinks it would be worth while to look at truck routes in Wilmette and in surrounding communities. He also stated that the hybrid option kept a four lane section at Ridge and Lake and would like TY Lin to look at the same concept at Hunter Road, depending on directional volumes. This would eliminate the additional lane Commissioner Panici was concerned about. Commissioner Panici requested that the four lanes be considered for Locust as well. A westbound left turn lane at Locust should be considered because of the heavy school traffic, but not for eastbound because of the traffic calming improvements on Locust Road, north of Lake Avenue.
- The Commission agreed not to make a decision at this meeting, but to defer the discussion until the August meeting.
- Village staff will meet with the County in advance of the next meeting to discuss hybrid options and reducing the speed limit on Lake Avenue.
- Commissioner Schlickman asked staff to request that the County be in attendance at the next meeting.
- Chairman Swanson stated that the residents would be notified of the next meeting to continue discussions.
- The Commission thanked John LaPlante for the work on the study.

3. Locust Road Traffic Calming

- Chairman Swanson introduced this issue and referred to the speed data that was collected without the speed humps. He stated that there was likely an error on the volume counts, which could also be indicative of an error in speed data as well. The skewed data changes staff's conclusion in the memo that there was not a dramatic reduction in speed after the humps were installed.
- Commissioner Ferrari stated that there were several residents who requested an additional speed hump just north of Iroquois.
- The Commission agreed to poll the residents on Locust of their interest in another speed hump. Staff will revise the drawing to indicate the actual hump locations and include a location for an additional hump north of Iroquois.
- Commissioner Lusky stated that the Commission should also look at other areas for speed humps.
- Commissioner Ferrari suggested that the letter to the residents should mention that the results showed the majority of the residents were in favor of the speed humps and several residents requested adding an additional hump.

4. 2003 Traffic Calming Locations

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

5. Old Business / Pending Matters / Next Meeting

Discussion on Green Bay Road

- Mr. LaPlante stated that as a part of the Green Bay Road study, he has been looking at options to eliminate the split phase signal timing on Green Bay Road. One of the options is to add protected left turn channelization on the east legs of the intersections.
- Commissioner Ferrari asked if this would require major reconstruction, to which Mr. LaPlante responded that the center railroad signal would need to be removed and relocated on Lake Avenue. He has not looked at the other intersections.
- Chairman Swanson suggested that Central Avenue would be relatively simple because it is not necessary to have two lanes coming over the tracks. Wilmette Avenue would be similar.
- Commissioner Panici asked if the intersections were originally like that, to which Linda Reilley stated there were never left turn lanes on the east legs of the intersections.

- Commissioner Ferrari asked if you can just change Central and Wilmette Avenues. Mr. LaPlante stated that the problem would still be at Lake Avenue and that all the intersections would need to be modified to see an improvement in traffic flow.
- Chairman Swanson informed the Commission that Trustee Chung is interested in forming a sub-committee of the Commission to look at Green Bay Road traffic. Once T.Y. Lin's report is ready for discussion, the meeting date will be set. Ms. Mayerhofer will inform the Commission of the details and all interested parties are welcome to attend.
- David Cottingham (420 Park Avenue) addressed the Commission thanking them for the "No Right Turn" on Wilmette at Park. Mr. Cottingham discussed several accidents that occurred in the area of Park and Linden and suggested that a speed hump be installed on Linden between the alley and Park Avenue.
- Chairman Swanson stated that the Village will take additional traffic counts on Park Avenue, south of Wilmette to determine how effective the traffic changes have been.

Other Business

- Ms. Mayerhofer updated the Commission on the progress of the Edens Plaza signal.
- Chairman Swanson stated he would like to be informed of the meeting with the County to discuss Lake Avenue so that he could attend.
- Mr. LaPlante had one last suggestion on Lake Avenue which included a three lane section at Hunter and Locust, which means four lanes mid-block and "necking" the intersections down from two lanes to one lane in each direction. Chairman Swanson thought that option might work at Hunter Road, but was skeptical about Locust Road.

Next meeting is Wednesday, August 13, 2003 at 7:00 PM

Motion to adjourn: **Commissioner Panici**
 Second: **Commissioner Lusky**
 Action: Approved by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Brigitte Mayerhofer.