

**Minutes of the Transportation Commission Meeting held on Wednesday, December 14, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Second Floor Training Room at Village Hall, 1200 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091.

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Members Present: Amy Panici, Chairperson  
Paul Chouinard  
Clay Weaver  
Mark Wagstaff  
Eileen Miller-Girson  
Rachel Nocera

Members Absent: Jim Grosh

Staff Present: Brigitte Mayerhofer, P.E. Director of Engineering  
Linda Reilley, Engineering Assistant II  
George Carpenter, Police Chief  
Ron Andrews, Traffic Coordinator

Also Present: Charles McElhenie, 700 Forest  
Casey & Tamara Tangney, 2245 Thornwood

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

**1. Review of Minutes**

**Motion to approve the November 9, 2005 minutes.**

**Motion by:** Commissioner Miller-Girson  
**Second:** Commissioner Weaver  
**Discussion:** Comments reflected in revised minutes.  
**Action:** Approved by unanimous voice vote

**2. First Presbyterian Church Pre-School---Discussion**

This agenda item was not discussed because staff was informed the proposal for the pre-school has been deferred. The applicant was not present at the meeting.

**3. 2006 Traffic Calming Projects---Discussion**

- Chairperson Panici welcomed the two residents in attendance and asked staff to provide a summary of the packet materials. Ms. Mayerhofer outlined the two issues for discussion including the accident experience in the Birchwood neighborhood between Ridge

Road and Hunter Road and traffic calming options on Hunter Road, north of Lake Avenue.

- The five-year accident history at the intersections in the Birchwood neighborhood indicates a low accident experience. A discussion ensued concerning the effectiveness of yield signs. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated the volumes would not support “all-way” stop signs, but the yield signs could be replaced with stop signs on the north/south streets.
- John LaPlante, TY Lin International, indicated the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) has recently approved yield bars that correspond to yield signs.
- Chief Carpenter indicated that it may be difficult to test the effectiveness of yield bars.
- Commissioner Nocera asked if the yield bars would affect speed. Mr. LaPlante stated he has not yet seen any data indicating speeds would be reduced. He continued to say a before and after study could be conducted to collect data on whether or not the yield bars were effective.
- Commissioner Miller-Girson asked if yield bars are used in any other location in the area. Mr. LaPlante indicated they are approved nationally, but he does not know of any local applications. He said they are typically used at mid-block crosswalks.
- The Commission concurred that if a pilot project is conducted in spring, it will be important to collect baseline data.
- Chairperson Panici wrapped up the discussion by indicating the Lake Avenue and Ridge Road improvements may ultimately affect traffic patterns in this area and therefore traffic calming will be revisited after the construction next year.
- Chairperson Panici introduced John LaPlante who provided a summary of three striping concepts for traffic calming on Hunter Road, north of Lake Avenue. The concepts consist of striping an edge line, center median and parking lanes of various widths and adding a raised crosswalk at the existing crosswalk between Thornwood and Greenwood.
- Mr. LaPlante indicated the center median at the intersection of Hunter Road and Lake will serve as a safe haven for pedestrians. He said the corners are tight, so some large turning vehicles may encroach over the median. The concept provides a standard 140-foot taper to transition northbound drivers into the interior lane where parking begins on the outside lane.
- Mr. LaPlante discussed the traffic signal at Hunter and Lake, indicating the signal could be modified to reduce the green time extension for cars traveling southbound on Hunter Road. This would deter drivers from speeding up to the intersection to “make the light.” A discussion ensued concerning adding protected left turn lanes on the north and south legs of this intersection. Mr.

LaPlante indicated he did not believe the geometry allowed for left turn lanes to be striped without widening on the south side of Lake Avenue.

- Mr. LaPlante explained that a raised crosswalk functions similar to a speed hump, except the top of the hump is flat instead of curved. The raised crosswalk could be designed for any speed, but a minimum height of 2-1/2 inches is recommended. He also recommends the speed limit be reduced to 25 miles per hour, in addition to these changes. Ms. Mayerhofer asked if the raised crosswalks would have to be handicapped accessible, to which Mr. LaPlante indicated they would.
- A discussion of speed humps / raised crosswalks took place. Chairperson Panici also recommended a raised crosswalk further south to connect the east side of Hunter Road with the carriage walk on the west leg of Iroquois Road. Ms. Mayerhofer reminded the Commission there may be concerns with adding speed humps on Hunter Road, which is classified a collector street. The fire department has previously expressed concern with speed humps on collector streets.
- Mr. LaPlante indicated that he was not aware there was parking allowed in the narrow section of Hunter Road. He stated that parking could not be allowed if there is a striped center median because it would put through vehicles in the same path as parked cars. He stated another option is to allow the parking and remove the striped center median. On-street parking is an effective means of calming traffic. The Commission concurred that removing parking may be a concern for some residents on Hunter Road and therefore their input is important.
- Commissioner Wagstaff suggested it may be possible to keep the center line stripe up to Elmwood because there are fewer affected homes in this area.
- The residents in the audience indicated they are in favor of the striping concepts being discussed and also the raised crosswalk.
- Commissioner Nocera asked if the pedestrian sign discussed at the last meeting could be used. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated these signs are being used in the Village Center as a pilot project and if successful could be added here as well.
- Commissioner Weaver suggested that the sign could be used for the crosswalk at Iroquois, as an alternative to installing another raised crosswalk.
- Chairperson Panici asked if a raised median could be incorporated into the plan. Mr. LaPlante indicated this was possible; as long as it was set back from the intersection so turning movements could be accommodated.
- The Commission discussed the traffic calming policy and their ability to add traffic calming on collector streets. Ms. Mayerhofer

indicated that the reason why traffic calming is not typically used on collector streets is because the function of collector streets is to connect local traffic with arterial streets. Traffic calming should not be used to deter traffic from collector streets. Chairperson Panici suggested that the plan be shown to the fire department. Mr. LaPlante indicated the raised crosswalks could always be designed for higher speeds if emergency response is a concern. The Committee reviewed the policy which does not strictly prohibit traffic calming on collector streets.

- Commissioner Chouinard asked about the signal timing change at the intersection to which Chairperson Panici stated the change can be incorporated with the County's project next spring.
- Commissioner Wagstaff asked if Elmwood was also going to be considered for traffic calming. Chairperson Panici stated there are several factors that will impact Elmwood Avenue, including the Ronald Knox Montessori School, the Lake Avenue restriping and the improvements at Lake Avenue and Ridge Road. She suggested that the Commission wait to make any changes on Elmwood. Commissioner Wagstaff agreed, but asked that this be communicated to the residents in the area.
- Ms. Mayerhofer indicated the previous Village Board asked that the meeting notification area be broadened to include the neighborhood surrounding the affected street. In this case, she recommends including all the households on the east-west streets to 21<sup>st</sup> Street on the east and Pontiac on the west.
- The January meeting will be used to finalize one or two traffic calming concepts for Hunter Road. Staff will draft a resident notice for the Commission's review. The residents will be invited to comment on the plan at the February 8, 2006 meeting. Chairperson Panici told staff not to recopy all of the same exhibits and asked the Commission to bring the current packet to provide background information.
- Chairperson Panici asked Mr. LaPlante to include the raised medians in his revised concept drawing. Commissioner Nocera asked who would maintain the plantings in a landscaped median. The Commission concurred that the garden club or another group could maintain the plantings.

#### **4. Old Business / Pending Matters / Next Meeting**

- Chairperson Panici introduced Officer Andrews who provided follow up information on the Central School changes that were implemented at the start of the school season. He indicated that for a ten minute period in the morning and afternoon the back up of vehicles waiting to pick up/drop off students extends through the intersection of Central and 8<sup>th</sup> Street. His observations are that

cars are not using the entire drop off area effectively and that it would help if the school had someone in front directing cars to stage all the way to the west. Officer Andrews did not observe a problem with the cars wanting to travel north and south on 8<sup>th</sup> Street, nor with the traffic in the alley. He said many parents park their cars to the east and walk their child a block or two to the school.

- Chairperson Panici indicated that Romona and Harper Schools have people assigned to assist with pick-up and drop-off. She also asked staff to consider making the do not enter times consistent on 9<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Under old business, Ms. Mayerhofer asked the Commission to review the report from TY Lin on the Montessori School. The Zoning Board hearing for the school is on January 4, 2006.
- A brief discussion ensued concerning IDOT's Willow Road project in Northfield.

**The next meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2006. The Bike Task Force will be presenting their proposal for the five-Village bike trail along the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad.**

**Feedback**

- None

**Motion to adjourn.**

**Motion by:** Commissioner Chouinard

**Second:** Commissioner Miller-Girson

**Action:** Approved by unanimous voice vote

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Brigitte Mayerhofer.