

Minutes of the Transportation Commission Meeting held on Wednesday, July 12, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Training Room at Village Hall, 1200 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091.

Members Present: Clayton Weaver, Chairman
Jim Grosh
Paul Chouinard
Cathy Albrecht
Mark Wagstaff
Eileen Miller-Girson
Rachel Nocera

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Brigitte Mayerhofer, P.E., Director of Engineering
Linda Reilley, Engineering Assistant
George Carpenter, Police Chief

Also Present: Nancy Blake, 2300 Birchwood
John & Nancy Hoagland, 2301 Birchwood
Jackie Heilbrunn, 524 Hunter Court
Leanne Reinhart, 2301 Schiller
Sue Peckham, 2230 Birchwood

Chairman Weaver called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Review of Minutes

Motion to approve the June 14, 2006 minutes.

Motion by: Commissioner Wagstaff
Second: Commissioner Chouinard

Approved by unanimous voice vote

2. Review of the Bike Task Force Meeting Minutes

- Ms. Reilley informed the Commission that the Bike Task Force will be requesting funding from the Village Board to help fund some of the safety programs that were previously funded through the Badge grant. In addition, the Five Village Trail Committee has had their second meeting. The group will be contacting the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation to request their assistance in preparing a feasibility study. The Committee is also looking at possible grant opportunities. Commissioner Chouinard indicated he thought it was

a positive sign that each community is financially committed for at least \$8,000.

3. Hunter Road from Lake Avenue to Wilmette Avenue---Continued Discussion

- Ms. Mayerhofer introduced this item by discussing the exhibits in the agenda packet. The aerial drawings show the existing conditions as well as options for striping edge lines, parking lanes and a median at the south leg of the Hunter and Lake Avenue intersection. She indicated the goal of the striping is to visually narrow the road so that drivers slow down. Wilmette Avenue is an example of striping having a positive impact on speeding. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated the most important consideration is the width of the travel lanes.
- John Hoaglund, 2301 Birchwood, indicated he likes the exhibit with just the edge lines, because it is less busy than the parking lanes. He also likes the option of installing a planted median at the intersection of Lake Avenue and Hunter Road. He indicated he is most concerned about speeds from Illinois Road to Lake Avenue.
- A discussion ensued concerning the intersection striping for Lake and Hunter. Chief Carpenter asked if there is space for a car to go around vehicles staged to turn left. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated if the vehicle pulls into the intersection a short distance another car could get around.
- A discussion ensued concerning the timing of the light at Hunter and Lake. It was determined that the timing works well and therefore should not be changed.
- Commissioner Nocera asked if it would help if cars parked on both sides of Hunter Road. Mr. Hoaglund stated he would prefer to keep parking on only one side.
- Commissioner Chouinard asked under which option parking on both sides would be acceptable. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated that the road is too narrow to stripe in parking lanes on both sides of the street. She stated parking could be allowed on both sides with a centerline or edge line.
- Chairman Weaver asked if there is a concern for parked cars straddling an offset edge stripe. The Commission could not think of another location where this was allowed and agreed that it could be a concern.
- Nancy Blake, 2300 Birchwood, indicated she prefers the option of striping in the parking lane.
- Chief Carpenter asked what the lane widths would be if a striped parking lane were installed. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated that with an 8-foot parking lane, there would be (2) 9-foot travel lanes and a 2-foot edge line on the west side of the street. She indicated the road is 28-feet wide from edge of pavement to edge of pavement.

- The Commission discussed the lane configuration on Wilmette Avenue which is (2) 11-foot travel lanes and (2) 7-foot parking lanes.
- Commissioner Albrecht asked Ms. Mayerhofer if the 12-foot lanes proposed for south of Illinois Road were narrow enough, given the higher speeds in this area. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated that the Committee could set the lane widths to whatever they felt was appropriate. The remaining pavement would be striped with an edge line.
- A brief discussion ensued concerning the possibility of striping in three or four foot bike lanes on Hunter Road. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated that if bike lanes were installed parking would not be allowed.
- Ms. Hoaglund requested a striped crosswalk across Hunter Road at Birchwood. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated that the safest location for people to cross Hunter Road is at the all-way stop at Hunter and Illinois. An anonymous resident indicated that cars do not obey the stop sign.
- Mr. Hoaglund commented that the crossing guard has a difficult time crossing children at Highcrest School. It was mentioned that the crossing guard crosses children diagonally, which is not a conventional way to cross an intersection. Chief Carpenter stated he recognizes the concern, but this method of crossing seems to work well, considering the geometry of the intersection.
- Mr. Hoaglund and Ms. Blake stated they like the option of a planted barrier median at the intersection. Commissioner Chouinard noted that the residents north of Lake Avenue did not like the idea of a planted median for safety purposes. Commissioner Nocera asked if the residents would maintain the plantings. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated she was concerned for safety and would recommend that Village staff maintain them.
- Commissioner Chouinard asked why it was necessary to only allow one vehicle through the intersection at a time, rather than keeping it wide enough for a multiple movements at the same time. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated that on the north leg of Lake Avenue, the purpose of the median is to slow cars down and make the intersection less desirable as a cut-through route.
- Chairman Weaver recommended installing a painted median to start and then perhaps building on the plan at a later date.
- Ms. Blake suggested installing a raised crosswalk at the intersection at Illinois and Hunter Roads. Chief Carpenter indicated the diagonal crossing makes raised crosswalks ineffective.
- Commissioner Nocera asked Chief Carpenter if it was possible to get an additional crossing guard at this location. Chief Carpenter indicated that this would be possible with a budget increase. He

suggested studying all of the other crossing locations to be consistent.

- Commissioner Albrecht asked if the high speeds south of Illinois Road were registered during school times. Ms. Reilley indicated that the high speeds were outside of school times. Chairman Weaver reminded the Commission that this is also a school zone.
- Commissioner Chouinard asked why there are wider lanes south of Illinois. Commissioner Wagstaff indicated this is because there is no parking in this area because of school traffic. Chairman Weaver also mentioned there were numerous driveways in this location.
- It was suggested that the lighted stop signs (similar to those at Lake and Wilmette) be placed at Hunter and Illinois. Commissioner Albrecht stated that even the lit stop signs become less effective when you go through them everyday.
- Commissioner Wagstaff asked how striped bike lanes might benefit the bike plan. Ms. Reilley stated there is a primary route through Highcrest School property. Several of the residents in the audience stated they need to be able to park on Hunter Road because it is their only option for parking.
- An anonymous resident asked if there were plans for any improvements to Hunter Road at Wilmette Avenue. Ms. Mayerhofer stated that IDOT owns and maintains the intersection and that striping in a left turn lane would require loss of parking on the north side.
- Chief Carpenter asked about changing the lenses on the Hunter Road traffic signals to reduce their visibility from a distance. Ms. Reilley indicated that she spoke to our traffic consultant about such lenses. He indicated they are very sensitive to wind and a maintenance problem. For these reasons, IDOT does not use them. It was determined that this was not the correct application for them.
- A resident asked if the speed limit could be reduced to the school zone limit of 20 mph at all times. Chief Carpenter stated that speed limits cannot be reduced unless an engineering study is completed and warrants for reduction are met. He does not recall if Hunter Road was approved for a speed limit reduction. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated a study was done in the mid-1990's. Staff will review the results to determine if a speed limit reduction warrant is met. She also stated a change in the Village Code for speed limits would require Village Board approval.
- Chairman Weaver asked for Commissioner comments. Commissioner Chouinard stated he likes option C.
- Ms. Mayerhofer stated she recommends a hybrid of option C with 7-foot parking lanes and 10-foot travel lanes. In the area south of

Illinois, she recommends a 3-foot edge line offset with would leave (2) 11-foot travel lanes.

- Commissioner Wagstaff asked if there is any value to installing bike lanes from just Lake Avenue to Illinois Road. Ms. Reilley stated it would bring bikers to Highcrest School. Commissioner Albrecht agreed that there are many children riding to school, but she hoped they would be on the sidewalk. It was determined that striped bike lanes would just encourage more on-street riding, which could be potentially unsafe.

Motion recommending striping option “C” with a modification to include 7-foot parking lanes on the east side of the street, (2) 10-foot travel lanes and a 1-foot offset edge stripe. Where parking is not allowed, the striping will consist of 3-foot edge lanes and (2) 11-foot travel lanes. No change at the intersection of Hunter Road and Illinois Road, except possible addition of LED lit stop signs. Recommendation includes option “D” at the intersection of Hunter Road and Lake Avenue with a striped median at Hunter Road to mirror the median on the north leg of the intersection.

Motion by: Commissioner Chouinard

Second: Commissioner Nocera

Action: Approved by unanimous voice vote.

- Commissioner Albrecht asked about the timing for the striping improvements. Ms. Reilley stated the goal is to have the work done before school starts, but it depends upon budget and contractor availability.
- Commissioner Nocera stated she is still very concerned about the safety of the crossings and asked what it would take to increase the budget for additional assistance. Chief Carpenter stated that the Commission could conduct a study and make a recommendation to the Village Board. He cautioned, however, that this is one of sixteen crossings and equal consideration should be given to all crossings.
- Mr. Hoaglund stated when he was young there were student crossing guards. Chief Carpenter indicated the school district does not support student crossing guards because of liability.
- Staff will send a letter to the residents of Hunter Road, south of Lake Avenue, communicating the proposed striping plan.
- Commissioner Albrecht asked about the timing of the school zone flashing beacons on Lake Avenue. Ms. Mayerhofer indicated that they should be installed before school starts.

4. Old Business / Pending Matters / Next Meeting

The August meeting is tentatively cancelled.

Feedback

- None

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by: Commissioner Grosh

Second: Commissioner Wagstaff

Action: Approved by unanimous voice vote

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Brigitte Mayerhofer.