

Engineering
Department



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MEETING MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

October 22, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Second Floor Training Room

Wilmette Village Hall

Members Present: Chairperson Pat Lilly
Commissioner Susan Barton
Commissioner Libby Braband
Commissioner Craig LeMoyne
Commissioner Brendan McCarthy
Commissioner Steve Santacruz
Commissioner Michael Taylor

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Brigitte Berger, P.E., Director of Engineering Services
Dan Manis, P.E., Civil Engineer II
Brian King, Police Chief

Guests Present: Peter Lemmon, Traffic Analysis and Design, Inc.
Melvin Seglin, 1616 Sheridan Road
Anthony Chambers, 1822 Elmwood
Peter Lipsey, 1624 Walnut
Mary and Frank Cavalier, 507 Kenilworth, Kenilworth
Sharon and William Wallin, 1715 Walnut
Dan Johnson, 1726 Walnut
Arlene Steinhoff, 1131 Ridge
Esla Moritz, 2010 Greenwood
Tanja Chevalier, 789 Michigan
Arthur Haut, 1616 Sheridan
Hilary Holder, 1833 Elmwood

Clark and Kevin Smale, 822 Sheridan

I. CALL TO ORDER.

Chairman Lilly called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES; TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING OF JUNE 23, 2014.

Chairman Lilly directed the Commission's attention to the draft minutes of the Transportation Commission meeting of June 23, 2014. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

The motion passed.

III. REQUEST FOR CROSSWALKS ON RIDGE ROAD AT ELMWOOD AND WALNUT AVENUES

Dan Manis, Civil Engineer, said the Village recently received resident requests for marked crosswalks on Ridge Road at Walnut and Elmwood Avenues. Residents have expressed concern for pedestrians being able to safely cross Ridge Road due to the relatively high volume and speed of traffic compared to typical neighborhood streets. Ridge Road carries approximately 8,000 vehicles per day at a speed limit of 30 M.P.H. and is under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Village staff takes a measured approach when determining whether or not to paint crosswalks at unprotected street crossings. Unprotected street crossings can occur mid-block or at intersections that are not stop or yield controlled. It is poor practice to mark crosswalks and encourage pedestrians crossing at locations that may be unsafe. However, staff also recognizes that in the case of Ridge Road, there are logical destinations on the west side of Ridge Road (Mallinckrodt Park and Ronald Knox Montessori School) and the east side of Ridge Road (Forest Park) that generate pedestrian traffic. The Village engaged the services of the traffic consulting firm of Traffic Analysis and Design, Inc. (TADI) to perform a pedestrian safety review of Ridge Road, north of Lake Avenue. Mr. Peter Lemmon of TADI has performed a series of pedestrian studies for Wilmette, including those on Wilmette Avenue near McKenzie School and along the Sheridan Road corridor.

Peter Lemmon, Traffic Analysis and Design, Inc (TADI), gave results of a study that he performed to evaluate if a crosswalk was warranted at these intersections. He went out to two locations at Ridge and Elmwood and Ridge and Walnut. Due to the line-of-sight challenges at Ridge Road/Elmwood Avenue and the general concern for southbound speeding vehicles approaching the intersection, TADI does not recommend establishing a crosswalk on Ridge Road at Elmwood Avenue. Marked crosswalks are preferred locations for pedestrian crossings that with appropriate signs/markings help designate right-of-way

between pedestrians and motorists. If a marked crosswalk is desired, of the two considered locations, installation of a crosswalk is most appropriate on Ridge Road on the south side of Walnut Avenue. This location does not have visibility issues for pedestrians and approaching vehicles as are present at Elmwood Avenue.

Commissioner Braband asked Peter if the predominance of pedestrian traffic is actually heading north, what have you really gained in putting a crosswalk at Walnut? If the primary pedestrian generator is the Metra station, would a better place for a crosswalk be up where Greenwood diverts?

Mr. Lemmon said that there are also other pedestrian traffic generators and was not sure if this location was still in the Village's boundary and that commuters would be unlikely to walk a block out of their way to cross at a marked crosswalk.

Commissioner Santacruz said most of the comments received from parents and families were concerned about kids crossing at the Mallinckrodt crossing and not the adults crossing to get to the Metra station.

Dan Johnson, 1726 Walnut, thanked the commission for taking the time to listen to the residents and to hire an engineer to study their requests. He said that Commissioner Santacruz is correct, there is a lot of Walnut and Forest pedestrian traffic along with the Treasure Island shopping center traffic. The Mallinckrodt residents also have submitted about 15 or so written comments that mention the need for a crosswalk with curb cuts. There are also 95 comments or so on the petition website.

Peter Lipsey, 1624 Walnut, said it's a race course on Ridge and disagrees that most of the walking traffic is heading towards the Metra. Many kids and families are heading towards the park and it's a racecourse on Ridge and it's impossible to cross safely. He is worried that an accident will happen before some safety measure is put in. He believes that Walnut is the place for a crosswalk since traffic is not going as fast at that intersection. He likes the flashing lights at Prairie and Wilmette intersection and says that cars stop when a pedestrian hits the button and the lights start to flash. He emphasized his desire for a crosswalk at Walnut.

Anthony Chambers, 1822 Elmwood, said he is impressed by the depth of the report. He initially wanted some sort of stop at Elmwood, but after hearing all of the information at this meeting now thinks going down to Walnut may be a better option for a crosswalk. There is an issue with cars moving fast southbound down Ridge.

Hillary Holder, 1833 Elmwood, said she is the mom trying to cross Elmwood everyday with kids and dogs. She is incredibly concerned about the safety both of crossing Ridge at Elmwood as well the oncoming traffic that comes out of Kenilworth onto Ridge. She is open to the proposed location at Walnut and still concerned by the speed of the southbound traffic on Ridge.

Commissioner McCarthy questioned Ms. Holder if she saw herself walking to Walnut if a crosswalk is put in there.

Ms. Holder said she would walk to cross there and teach her children to walk to Walnut to cross safely. She would prefer Elmwood due to proximity, but would use the Walnut crosswalk if that what was available. She commented that she likes the idea of a raised medium refuge island.

William Wallin, 1715 Walnut, said he wanted to echo that he agrees there is a sight problem on Elmwood and there is no convenient crossing anywhere so he crosses wherever he can. He said he would like to see a curb cut on the west side of Ridge in the winter when the snow piles up it is hard to cross over the parkway.

Mary Cavalier, 507 Kenilworth said she walks to Treasure Island and Mallinckrodt Park there is not one crossing area from Lake Ave to Winnetka Ave. and that you cannot cross safely anywhere especially when New Trier traffic is in session. She stated that she is to walk over to Walnut if it were on the north side of Walnut.

Frank Cavalier, 507 Kenilworth said there is a crosswalk there for school and he saw a kid standing waiting to cross, he stopped but 7 cars coming the other way did not stop. There are no crossing people for the junior high students.

Chairman Lilly asked if staff had any formal pedestrian volume requirements for crosswalks.

Brigitte Berger, Director of Engineering, said we don't have any formal volume requirements for crosswalks. She said the next agenda item will discuss a crosswalk policy and that surprisingly there is no other policy in the surrounding communities that is quantitative in nature.

Chairman Lilly asked if staff had an idea of the cost to install crosswalks.

Ms. Berger stated that in this case with new sidewalk, curb cuts, pavement marking, and signage that the cost would be less than \$5,000.

Commissioner Santacruz asked that since Ridge is under IDOT jurisdiction, what will be the likelihood of success of them permitting a crosswalk at this location or of getting permission for the raised median.

Mr. Lemmon said that given the need for a crosswalk and that Ridge is not a marked route that IDOT should be more willing to permit the crosswalk.

Ms. Berger said she thinks the critical path to have anything built there is the funding. Having the Village Board commit dollars to it is the larger challenge given the economic climate.

Commissioner Braband noted the streets east and west don't match up.

Chairman Lilly said the continuing concern is ensuring people actually stop at crosswalks. He suggested people are beginning to understand what the signs mean.

Mr. Lemmon stated it's also a cultural thing and pedestrians need to understand that they can't just walk out into the crosswalk.

Chief King stated there is some confusion on the crosswalk laws. On the Ridge Road example cars going in the opposite direction are not required to stop until the pedestrians have reached into the intersection. What we want to do is encourage people to stop preemptively which will have a calming effect on traffic.

Commissioner McCarthy asked how long Mallinckrodt has been a senior center, to which staff indicated five or six years.

Commissioner McCarthy asked how long the speed limit has been 30 mph, to which staff indicated a long time.

A resident asked for the computerized speed monitor screen that tells you how fast you are going. Chief King stated the Police Department has a mobile unit that is used throughout the Village.

Chairman Lilly asked if there were any other comments or questions

Commissioner Barton commented on the compliance studies that have been done on Sheridan Rd at Wilmette Ave after crosswalks were installed.

Commissioner Santacruz moved that the Village of Wilmette apply for a permit with IDOT at Ridge and the south end of Walnut and form any needed curb cuts the street will need before the winter season begins ASAP.

Commissioner LeMoyne seconded the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** by unanimous voice vote.

IV. VILLAGE POLICY ON PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALKS

Typical enhancement options to be considered will include pedestrian crossing signage (In-Street or Roadside signs), pavement marking, bump-outs, refuge islands, and any other crosswalk treatment intended to increase safety. Approval of a policy by the Transportation Commission is the first step toward making the Village more pedestrian-friendly. If approved by the Commission, the policy will be presented to the Municipal Services Committee with potential adoption by the Village Board. It should be noted that pedestrian safety enhancements are not in the proposed 2015 budget. While pavement markings and signage are relatively

low cost treatments and can be absorbed in the operations budgets, other enhancements like curb extensions (bump-outs) and refuge islands can be costly. Therefore, once a policy is adopted by the Village, staff will propose funds for a designated Crosswalk Safety Enhancement Program be included in the Village's annual budget. Additionally, if pedestrian treatments are identified on a road slated for rehabilitation, staff will include said treatments as part of the road improvements.

A motion to approve the policy on pedestrian crosswalks was made and seconded. The **MOTION PASSED** by unanimous voice vote.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Staff provided an update on the Baha'i parking lot.

Staff indicated the Sheridan Road Bike Path is open after being closed for close to 3 years. This area needs better signage.

Ms. Berger updated the Commission on the Locust Road and Skokie & Hibbard Projects.

Staff indicated there was a pedestrian accident on Sheridan Road near Plaza de Lago. A letter was received requesting a crosswalk on Sheridan near Plaza del Lago where the old Starbucks was located. Staff proposes a staggered mid-block crosswalk.

Dr. Arthur Haut spoke in favor for some enhancement for pedestrian safety at 1616 Sheridan Road.

Chairman Lilly suggested this could be a two-step process; first install a crosswalk and then study the area to see if more is needed to enhance pedestrian safety.

Mr. Seglin, 1616 Sheridan Rd is also very concerned over pedestrian traffic and speed of traffic. He suggests a crosswalk at 10th Street and Sheridan and a pedestrian light.

Ms. Berger suggested surveying the condo owners about the proposed mid-block crosswalk to which Chairman Lilly thought that would be fine.

Mr. Smale, 822 Sheridan, said we have lived there since 2005 and are interested in getting a crosswalk there and at Sheridan at Washington.

Tanja Chevalier, 789 Michigan, said many believe there should be a crosswalk at Washington and Sheridan as well.

Chairman Lilly stated we will leave it to staff to study area.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded and the **MOTION PASSED** by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was thereby adjourned.