



rRemarks Data for October 12, 2021 Village Council Meeting

Agenda Section: Manager's Report

Agenda Item: A. Forest and Prairie Update

Commenter: Brian D Tropeck, Downers Grove

Comment: Hello Everyone,

I've emailed you all on this issue separately, but would like this formally on the record for this meeting as well. As stated in my email, the item of closing off Forest Avenue at Prairie due to traffic safety is met with disagreement from members of Prince St. This change in traffic flow would likely result in added safety concerns for neighboring streets as well as potentially decrease safety for said residents of Forest avenue. These Forest residents submitted a prospectus to the council citing potential concerns as a result of this new measure eliminating the ability to pass through the North end of the street. The first item brought to attention was access for Emergency vehicles, this would result in altered routes of Emergency vehicles for not only Forest residents but those of neighboring streets as there will be an increase in traffic as well as potential for these vehicles to take alternate routes depending on where they're coming from resulting in crucial response time lost. It was mentioned that a fire prevention apparatus would need to be set up on Prairie to service the North end of Forest. This would cause a logjam of traffic and chaos on Prairie which will spill out into the neighboring area as well as cause a concern of distracted drivers not aware of the approaching situation causing risk of an increase in traffic accidents, the very thing this petition was created to eliminate. This large apparatus would likely cause said traffic backup to spill onto neighboring Main St. the main thoroughfare for the entire village which will create a butterfly effect throughout town. Garbage trucks, Semi sized delivery truck, service vehicles etc. needing to potentially REVERSE BACK DOWN THE BLOCK in order to exit the area if they are not able to turn around. Or needing to make numerous maneuvers to turn around and exit the block as normal. This puts residents of Forest, children, animals etc. at risk as these large vehicles have LIMITED lines of sight in reverse. This results in a safety risk to all of those above as well as to any parked vehicles etc. This traffic that normally navigates Forest will now be pushed onto neighboring streets which will result in the same traffic concerns as originally discussed.

This now increases safety concerns for those areas, which kicks the proverbial can down the road for these streets to deal with. Therefore, this closure of Forest does not increase safety for the neighborhood and creates additional problems for many more residents. It is in this light that I ask this request be denied and I ask you, the village council to take these concerns into consideration and keep the safety of the entire neighborhood, and not just a few residents in mind.

Thank you

Brian Tropeck
4717 Prince St.

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Commenter: Bruce (Andy) Hardy, Downers Grove

Comment: Dear Mayor and Council

My name is Andy Hardy and I live at 4736 Prince St. I'm concerned with the uptick in traffic on our street as a result of the council's choice to completely cut off Forest and Prairie. I went back and listened to some of the feedback in the previous meetings and I just want to reiterate a few points and add a couple of my own.

1. As a community member on Forest pointed out at one of the meetings, the crashes on the southeast corner of Forest and Prairie is not a "Forest" problem but a "speeding on Prairie" problem. Whether it's from trying to make the light or the fact that a car will just accelerate naturally coming down the hill after Saratoga, cars are just plain going too fast. This is the main reason for the crashes and should be the issue that we as a community are really trying to solve. Mayor Barnett mentioned to another resident that he was ok with a congestion of cars as it means people are slowing down and following the law. I am on board with him. Let's put multiple stop signs down Prairie before 1 child dies from crossing it to get to school.
2. By adding a cul-de-sac to Forest we are naturally moving more traffic to main street (as the council wanted) but also moving traffic to Prince Street for those that need to go west on Prairie or get to the schools. Prince Street already sees heavy traffic for school drop offs since Forest and Prince are the 2 streets where drop offs can take place. Now the council is making it even worse with the new cul-de-sac.
3. It's unfortunate to hear about the accident that occurred when the original stop signs were implemented. The unfortunate problem with ALL stop signs is that at times people blow through them, ESPECIALLY, new ones that they aren't used too. As 1

member pointed out it takes 2 people to make a crash and the other person did not wait to see if the oncoming car was slowing down.

4. If one wants to really prevent what happened in number 3 then why not add a 4 way stop sign at Prince and Prairie? The odds of someone blowing through 2 stop signs (on accident) is slim to none. To make it even better add 1 speed bump in between Prince and Forest on Prairie.

5. As Commissioner Greg Hose pointed out, this was a very drastic change that the council made. I'm a little bit shocked that we never addressed Prairie as a whole before we came to the conclusion of the cul-de-sac. Seems like an obvious chicken before the egg situation.

6. Cul-de-sacs are highly desirable, especially in high traffic areas very close to downtown. If cul-de-sac change is permanent will the village be increasing the property taxes of those on Forest as it will dramatically increase the value of their homes? On the flip side will the village be decreasing property taxes for my house and the rest of Prince Street as it would be devaluing the homes on that street due to the council's drastic decision?

I know the council is trying to do what is best for the village. However, I would ask that everyone would truly take a step back and really be open minded on the comments opposing this cul-de-sac. I appreciate the council's time and dedication and look forward to an open dialogue about the subject matter.

Take care
Andy Hardy

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Commenter: Kathi Straight

Comment: I have been a resident on Prince Street for 15 years. When I relocated to the northwest area of Downers Grove, I didn't choose a home on Forest or Saratoga because I recognized them as busier streets due to the stop light at Saratoga and Ogden and the coveted rail crossing on Forest. Those streets are paved and designed for the expected traffic. I chose the 4700 block of Prince because it was a quiet, safe neighborhood street. The recent barricade at Forest and Prairie has quickly transformed my street into a noisy, dangerous race route. Please consider other options to address traffic concerns on Forest that do not shift the danger to us. Thank you.

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Commenter: Mark E. Brenner

Comment: Due to the blockade of Forest, Prince Street traffic has increased. I have concerns over safety (pulling out of driveway, children playing), as well as the way this has been handled. It seems only those on Forest were consulted while the area as a whole should be included. This intersection should also be included as part of the broader Prairie Street study (new stop signs) and not as it's own "one off" project. Current signs and speed limits should be enforced prior to blocking off the street. A police presence would discourage violators, and generate revenue for the Village. I don't recall a 4-way stop sign solution being piloted--both times the stop signs were added additional blockades were installed in both the center of the road and on the south side of Prairie. Speed bumps on Forest and/or Prairie could be tried. Forest has been a through street for decades, and the owners knew that when they purchased their homes. They likely paid less for their homes because of that. They now want to shift that traffic to Prince, reducing our home values while increasing theirs. It seems the hearing notifications were sent to only those on Forest, while they are not the only street impacted. Only residents of Forest have signed the petition. Forest traffic will go from busy to zero, while Prince will go from moderate to busy. Where is the equity in that? Who will pay for the cost of the fire hydrant, cul-de-sac, and the necessary hauling of snow in the winter? In short, this decision seems to benefit the 4800 block of Forest immensely, while simultaneously causing harm to Prince Street. All residents of the E.H. Prince subdivision should have a say in this, not just those on Forest. Finally, the Village is setting precedent with this cul-de-sac. With three schools in northwest Downers Grove, traffic is always heavy. Every street will want special consideration for safety purposes, and you will have to consider their requests for cul-de-sacs as well. In summary, the Village has chosen the most extreme solution to the traffic issues on Forest/Prairie, without trying less intrusive measures. There is a benefit to only one street, while negatively impacting many others.

Agenda Section: First Reading

Agenda Item: B. ORD 2021-9145 An ordinance amending certain traffic control provisions along Prairie Avenue.

Commenter: Kenneth Marshall

Comment: Blocking Forest at Prairie is only moving the problem, not resolving it, for residents.

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Commenter: Kenneth Marshall

Comment: I agree with stop signs in multiple locations on Prairie between Belmont and Main St. Cost effective in reducing speeding as well as accidents.