

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION
Minutes

September 14, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

Council Chambers - Village Hall
801 Burlington Avenue, Downers Grove

Chairman Pro tem Saricks called to order the September 14, 2016 meeting of the Transportation and Parking Commission at 7:00 p.m. An explanation of the meeting's protocol followed.

Mr. Schiller led the meeting with the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call followed and a quorum was established.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Pro tem Saricks, Commissioners Aguzino, Carter, Schiller, Wilkinson, and Wrobel

Absent: Chairman Stuebner

Staff Present: Public Works Dir. Nan Newlon; Traffic Engineer Will Lorton

Public: Mr. Phil Palczynski, 1312 Brookside, Downers Grove; Mr. Don Jankowski, 1312 Blanchard Street, Downers Grove; Mr. Lyle Cheever, 1208 Blanchard, Downers Grove, Ms. Kelly Dunne, Downers Grove.

MINUTES OF JULY 13, 2016

MINUTES OF THE JULY 13, 2016 MEETING WERE APPROVED ON MOTION BY MR. WROBEL, SECONDED BY MR. CARTER. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE OF 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT (on non-Agenda items) – None.

Public Works Dir. Newlon introduced new Traffic Engineer Will Lorton.

File #07-16 Venard Road at Brookside Lane – 2-way Stop: Mr. Lorton described the location for this case, noting it was a T-intersection and a current Yield sign exists on the east leg of Brookside Lane. Residents expressed safety concerns and requested consideration of an all-way stop at this location.

Mr. Lorton stated a four-way stop warrant was not met for this location per the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, MUTCD. Staff's proposal includes three new stop signs at three intersections. In addition to changing the current yield sign to a stop sign it also includes adding stop signs at Duchess Court at Brookside Lane and at Golden Bell Court at Venard Road, both currently uncontrolled intersections. Per Lorton, this action would help establish right of way at these intersections and increase safety in the entire area.

Commissioners were invited to provide input. Mr. Carter shared concerns about being on the interior of a reverse curve, along with a vertical curve, at Venard and Golden Bell. He believed there were visibility concerns there and questioned whether they were looked at by staff. He further asked if it was feasible to have a stop sign four feet behind the crosswalk.

Mr. Saricks confirmed with staff that there was discussion about a general policy underway to replace existing yield signs with stop signs because drivers were not paying attention to them.

Director Newlon confirm and further explained that the commission may want to consider streamlining the process by recommending a policy to replace yield signs with stop signs throughout the Village.

Following another commissioner's question about the placement of warning signs being located prior to an upcoming stop sign, Dir. Newlon explained that typically flags are placed on a new stop sign to improve visibility. If there is a sight issue approaching the sign, she added that a sign stating "Stop Sign Ahead" is placed before the actual stop sign.

The public was invited to speak.

Mr. Phil Palczynski, 1312 Brookside, Downers Grove, summarized an event that took place last fall when the sidewalk on the east side of Venard at Lazy Creek was closed for a construction project. He proceeded to explain that a crosswalk was installed, east and west, on the south side of the intersection for children to cross and to walk to school. Mr. Palczynski stated the stripes were put down and a sign was placed in the middle of the intersection, but the sign was hit at least three times, one of which he witnessed. He stated he sent the village the petition on September 8, 2015. He does not believe that changing the yield sign to a stop sign "would not help the problem." Instead, he hoped the village could install a crosswalk with striping and a stop sign, since many children were in the area. He clarified that he preferred a stop sign be placed for northbound and southbound traffic on Venard, noting northbound traffic was the worst because of the hill.

Asked what staff was doing to address the traffic flow at the location being discussed, Mr. Lorton agreed that adding a striped crosswalk and signage at the location would be a positive remediation.

Mr. Wilkinson raised concern when the traffic counts were taken and pointed out that two issues affected the intersection – traffic that was traveling to Doerhoffer and traffic traveling to Bellaire in the mornings and afternoons. Another issue included the cut-through traffic on Saratoga from Brookside to Venard to get out of the neighborhood to the east. In response, Mr. Lorton reported when the counts were taken.

Dir. Newlon also confirmed for the commissioners that traffic counts were taken using mechanical devices on Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays. She stated staff could continue to review the traffic again and consider traffic calming measures to reduce speed.

Mr. Phil Palczynski, 1312 Brookside, agreed speed was a concern but stated that distracted drivers and/or people not paying attention caused them to veer off the lane and into the center of the street, where the in-street sign was hit.

Mr. Saricks called for a consensus to move the recommendation forward, as it stands, with the conditions that additional investigation of traffic volume on the weekends (Saturday) be done; consider striping and signing a crosswalk if warranted; and consider other traffic calming measures be included in the investigation.

The chairman entertained a motion.

MOTION BY MR. WILKINSON TO ADOPT STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION WITH THE CONDITION THAT ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATION OF TRAFFIC VOLUME ON THE WEEKENDS (SATURDAY) BE DONE; CONSIDER STRIPING AND SIGNING A CROSSWALK IF WARRANTED; AND CONSIDER OTHER TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES IN THE INVESTIGATION.

SECONDED BY MR. SCHILLER. A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN.

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 5-1 (NAY: MR. CARTER)

File # 08-16 Middaugh Avenue at Blanchard Street – 2 way Stop: Chairman Pro tem Saricks summarized this case was similar to the above case and involved replacing yield signs on northbound/southbound Middaugh with stop signs. Mr. Lorton reviewed the request briefly noting it was raised by residents interested in increasing the safety at Middaugh and Blanchard due to the number of children present. The warrants did not support having a four-way stop at the intersection. To improve communication to drivers about right-of-way, staff is recommending that the existing yield signs be replaced with stop signs and this intersection as well as at Brookbank (north/south) at Blanchard and Jefferson and Middaugh for east/west traffic.

No comments were received from the commissioners. Chairman Pro tem Saricks opened up the meeting to public comment.

Mr. Don Jankowski, 1312 Blanchard Street, Downers Grove, stated his wife witnessed one accident at Blanchard and Middaugh and noted others have occurred. He described the blind hills that exist in the area. As a biker to the train station, he also had a close call with a driver who did not yield to the yield sign and he reported the driver to the police. He agreed a stop sign was needed. He emphasized that Blanchard was a dangerous road and it needed stop signs because plenty of children were in the area.

Mr. Lyle Cheever, 1208 Blanchard, Downers Grove, stated that Brookbank ends but it will eventually link up with Jefferson due to the development going on at Nelson Meadows.

Mr. Don Jankowski returned and commented that he was almost hit by a car where the new development was proposed. He asked to install the stop signs to the south, especially before the new development started construction.

Mr. Saricks agreed that traffic will probably increase on Blanchard once the new development comes in and that staff and the commission will have to revisit the issue again. He asked the commissioners on how to proceed with the case.

MOTION BY MR. WROBEL TO ADOPT STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION WITH THE CONDITION THAT MONITORING OF THE INTERSECTION TAKE PLACE AFTER THE STOP SIGN IS INSTALLED AND ALSO DUE TO THE ANTICIPATED CHANGE IN TRAFFIC/PEDESTRIAN PATTERNS.

SECONDED BY MR. CARTER.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE OF 6-0.

File # 09-16 Sterling Road at 40th Street – 2 way Stop: Mr. Lorton summarized the case before the commissioners, noting the traffic counts did not meet the warrants for four-way stop signs, based on the volume. Staff's recommendation is to replace the yield signs at this intersection with stop signs.

Asked if future development or some traffic pattern change could be anticipated, Dir. Newlon indicated there was none, other than teardowns.

As to the warrant requirement for all-way stops, Mr. Wrobel asked staff where that requirement came from, wherein Mr. Lorton stated it was from the MUTCD, the manual on uniform traffic control devices, put out by the Federal Highway Commission. Dir. Newlon confirmed the village always followed the MUTCD even though the village was home rule municipality. She explained the village wanted its rules to be defensible in a court of law and moving counter to that made the village more liable. Justifications followed.

The public was invited to speak.

Mr. Don Jankowski, 1312 Blanchard Street, stated that a yield sign to most people is a "suggestion", while a stop sign means to "stop." He encouraged the village to put in the stop sign.

MOTION BY MR. CARTER TO APPROVE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION, AS PRESENTED.

SECONDED BY MR. WROBEL.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE OF 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Dir. Newlon mentioned that a small neighborhood traffic study will be held in response to a petition received and will take place north of the railroad tracks and west of Belmont. The area was annexed into the village in 2012. Recalling an older petition to review sidewalks, Dir. Newlon stated the village recently approved a contract with KLOA. A short update followed on a pedestrian/bike path that the commissioners discussed some time ago.

COMMUNICATIONS – See packet for any communications.

Staff was asked to provide a list of upcoming petitions, if any. Dir. Newlon reported that one parking item was scheduled for the next meeting.

Mr. Wilkinson mentioned the recent relocation of Doggie Depot which will impact some parking dynamics. He wanted to bring it to the attention of the commissioners and staff. He also provided an update from the recent Plan Commission meeting.

ADJOURN

MR. SCHILLER MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:00 P.M.

MR. WILKINSON SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE OF 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Celeste Weilandt
Recording Secretary
(Transcribed from MP3 recording)