

COUNCIL WORKSHOP ITEM

ITEM: File #02-02
DATE: March 24, 2003
PREPARED BY: John J. Bajor, Jr., Public Works Director
Dorin Fera, Traffic Manager
PURPOSE: To Amend Ordinance to Include No Parking Anytime Restrictions on Prairie Avenue between Highland Avenue and Bryan Place

DISCUSSION:

This location has been previously investigated by staff for the January, 2002, February, 2002, November, 2002, and the latest date of December, 2002 Parking and Traffic Commission meetings. At the last meeting following a discussion of possible design and operational alternatives, staff was directed to conduct additional engineering investigations and operational reviews at and near this intersection.

It is Staff's judgment, based upon a detailed field observation of the steady east-west volumes on Prairie Avenue and the sight distance issues with the hill, that parking should be restricted at all times on the south side of Prairie Avenue from Highland Avenue to Bryan Place.

ATTACHMENTS:

Recommendation of Parking and Traffic Commission – March 12, 2003

March 12, 2003 Minutes of the Parking and Traffic Commission, File #02-02 discussed on pages 4 through 10.

RECOMMENDATION:

Place this item on a future Council Workshop Agenda.



March 24, 2003

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MAYOR BRIAN KRAJEWSKI AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

**COMMUNITY RESPONSE
CENTER**

RE: P & T File # 02-02

**Parking Restrictions on Prairie Avenue
between Highland Avenue and Bryan Place**

630.434.CALL (2255)

Dear Mayor Krajewski and Council Members:

CIVIC CENTER
801 Burlington Avenue
Downers Grove
Illinois 60515-4776
630.434.5500
TDD 630.434.5511
FAX 630.434.5571

On Wednesday, March 12, 2003, the Parking and Traffic Commission adopted the following motion:

**FIRE DEPARTMENT
ADMINISTRATION**
6701 Main Street
Downers Grove
Illinois 60516-3426
630.434.5980
FAX 630.434.5998

**COMMISSIONER THURSTON MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE
VILLAGE COUNCIL TO RESTRICT PARKING AT ALL TIMES ON THE
SOUTH SIDE OF PRAIRIE AVENUE FROM HIGHLAND AVENUE TO
BRYAN PLACE.**

COMMISSIONER WENDT SECONDED THE MOTION.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

POLICE DEPARTMENT
825 Burlington Avenue
Downers Grove
Illinois 60515-4783
630.434.5600
FAX 630.434.5690

It is Staff's judgment, based upon a detailed field observation of the steady east-west volumes on Prairie Avenue and the sight distance issues with the hill, that parking should be restricted at all times on the south side of Prairie Avenue from Highland Avenue to Bryan Place.

Sincerely,

**PUBLIC WORKS
DEPARTMENT**
5101 Walnut Avenue
Downers Grove
Illinois 60515-4074
630.434.5460
FAX 630.434.5495

**Ross Johnson, Chairman
Parking & Traffic Commission
VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE**

RJ/cc

**DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES**
842 Curtiss Street
Downers Grove
Illinois 60515-4761
630.434.5595
FAX 630.434.5599



Roll Call: **AYE: Mr. Yeksigian, Mr. Wendt, Mr. Stapleton, Mr. Thurston,
and Chairman Johnson.**

NAY: None.

Motion Carried: 5:0

OLD BUSINESS

File #02-02 Prairie Avenue and Highland Avenue Traffic Study and Intersection Update

BACKGROUND

This location has been previously investigated by staff for the January, 2002, February, 2002, November, 2002, and the latest date of December, 2002 Parking and Traffic Commission meetings. At the last meeting following a discussion of possible design and operational alternatives, staff was directed to conduct additional engineering investigations and operational reviews at and near this intersection.

The following actions and investigations have been conducted for this meeting and are summarized below:

SUMMARY

Lowering of Prairie Avenue profile

- 1.) A detailed field survey was completed for the proposed lowering of the Prairie Avenue pavement by 2-feet to improve the intersection sight distance. In addition, the associated preliminary cost estimate was also prepared. The preliminary cost was calculated to be approximately \$215,000.
- 2.) The proposed lowering of the Prairie Avenue profile by 2-feet would cause the driveway profile of the 929 Prairie Avenue residence to be increased from 15% to approximately 25%. In practical terms, this would result in a severe driveway profile, which would not work. To complete the lowering of the Prairie Avenue pavement would then require the purchase of this residence, since the garage is attached to the house. This additional cost has not been included in the pavement work. The total improvement cost would be well over \$450,000.
- 3.) Driveway surveys and photographs were taken of the potential driveways that would also need to be lowered, and compared with similar driveways in this area of town.

Programmable Traffic Signals

- 1.) The provision of programmable traffic signals directed to a specific area would cost approximately \$15,000.

Dimming of Existing LED Signals

- 1.) Regarding the dimming of the LED signals (facing east) at the Main Street and Franklin Street intersection, staff talked with the Village's signals contractor, and also the supplier of the signals. These signals cannot be dimmed.

Alternative Intersection Improvements

- 1.) Staff has created the following Westbound signs for installation on Prairie Avenue to improve intersection visibility, alert motorists of the school crossing, and distinguish between Highland Ave and Main Ave intersections:
 - a.) Westbound Cross Road Ahead, with "Highland Ave" name plate warning signs.
 - b.) Westbound "Main St." name plate under the Signal Ahead sign.
 - c.) Westbound and Eastbound directional arrow warning signs under each of the "School Crossing" signs, to point more specifically to the actual crossing location.
 - d.) Relocate the Eastbound School Crossing sign assembly closer to the actual crossing location.

The location of each of these sign installations has been coordinated with the other No Parking and school advance signs currently for westbound Prairie Avenue.

However, due to frozen ground conditions, staff has not been able to install any these signs in the field, but will look to do so at the first opportunity.

Traffic Consultant Study Comparison

- 1.) Traffic counts were also conducted at both the Prairie Avenue and Main Street and Franklin Avenue and Main Street intersections. The purpose of these counts was to address the potential traffic pattern and volume changes resulting from the new traffic signal at Franklin Street and Main Street intersection. This was envisaged in the Consultant study for that location. The counts were taken approximately six months since traffic signal was installed on September 10, 2002. Traffic engineering practice suggests that six months of time is sufficient for traffic patterns to stabilize.
- 2.) The Consultant study stated that between January and June, 2002 there were 6 crashes. Staff has determined that the total vehicle crashes at this intersection between January and December, 2002 was 7.

- 3.) Based on a comparison of the Consultant forecast and actual traffic counts, the following are the results:
- a. At the Prairie Avenue intersection, there has been strong growth in both eastbound and westbound PM traffic ranging between a 23% EB and a 37% WB increase in traffic. The Consultant projections had stated a decrease.
 - b. At the Franklin Street intersection, for the EB direction, there has been a significant decrease of 50% in the AM and 21% in the PM peak hour of travel. The Consultant had forecasted an increase. For the WB direction, both the Consultant forecasts and the actual counts agree that there is an increase.
 - c. The overall travel pattern shows that traffic flow still prefers Prairie Avenue. They are not going out of their way to use Franklin Street. In the AM, those motorists who used to go eastbound on Franklin, now use Prairie Avenue. On Franklin Street westbound motorists are aware of the signal at Main Street and are taking advantage of the one-way operation. But, they are not coming from Prairie Avenue, but rather from south Highland Avenue and east Franklin Street.

RECOMMENDATION

It is staff's position that the proposed lowering of Prairie Avenue pavement should not be pursued. Instead, the proposed alternative intersection improvements presented here should be implemented. These alternative solutions are proposed to alert driver awareness, draw their attention to several critical street elements within a short distance. These treatments would be consistent with requirements of the MUTCD, which all motorists should adhere to, and are typical of the traffic control interventions present in other parts of the Village.

Staff advises that the Parking and Traffic Commission approve the following traffic control modifications along Prairie Avenue near the Highland Avenue intersection:

UPGRADE THE PRAIRIE AVENUE AND HIGHLAND AVENUE INTERSECTION WITH THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS ALONG PRAIRIE AVENUE:

- 1.) Install Westbound Cross Road Ahead, with "Highland Ave" nameplate warning signs.
- 2.) Install Westbound "Main St." nameplate under the Signal Ahead sign.
- 3.) Install Directional arrow warning signs under Westbound and Eastbound "School Crossing" signs, to point more specifically to the actual crossing location.
- 4.) Re-locate the EB School Crossing sign assembly closer to the intersection

Chairman Johnson asked Mr. Fera to elaborate on the details of the programmable traffic signal.

Mr. Fera said the programmable signals would be angled to face the required MUTCD distance. Motorists traveling westbound on Prairie Avenue would not have a clear view from the Washington Street and Prairie Avenue intersection. The intent would be to slow motorists speeding to make it through the Main Street signal. He said this signal would be similar to the one at Belmont Road and Burlington Avenue.

He further said he spoke to the electrical contractor regarding supply of the signals. They are expensive as compared to the standard LED signals. This is due to the amount of time required to set each lens installation, and the actual material cost.

Chairman Johnson asked if there was sufficient distance for the signals to be effective.

Mr. Fera replied that yes, he feels this particular feature of the signal would work well. He said it would be a matter of justifying the costs compared to the overall benefit.

He further stated there was a concern raised over the brightness of the Main Street and Franklin Street signals. He stated that the signals cannot be dimmed as one of the residents has requested.

Chairman Johnson asked if this brightness was the standard for all new signal installations.

Mr. Fera replied yes, this was the new standard for signal installations. The Village as well as IDOT and the County are following these standards.

Chairman Johnson said he was surprised that eastbound Franklin Avenue traffic west of Main Street had decreased after the installation of the Main Street and Franklin Street signal.

He asked if a possible reason for the volume decrease was due to the signal timing. He had spoken to Bob Schiller earlier in the day and he indicated that up until recently the signal had not been sequenced in with the other signals. There may be an increase in traffic volume with this change.

Mr. Fera stated the signal sequencing was completed in December 2002. The priority of the signal coordination is primarily along Main Street.

Commissioner Thurston said another issue is the closure of Rogers Street. This may be interfering with the traffic volumes.

Mr. Fera said he feels Rogers Street will be busier with the development of Station Crossing. Traffic patterns may change due the land uses that were not present four to five years ago. There may be emphasis on the left turn lane onto Rogers Street for

southbound Main Street. This may then take away from the left turn lane at Warren Avenue.

Chairman Johnson asked if the Main Street and Franklin Street crossing guard has reported any improvement since the installation of the signal.

Mr. Sembach replied that the crossing guard has not witnessed anything out of the ordinary. The only issue is motorists not paying attention to the signals but this is nothing specific to this intersection.

Chairman Johnson said he noticed the utility pole located at the Prairie Avenue and Highland Avenue intersection had been removed.

Mr. Fera said a handout was included in the packet showing the removed utility pole.

Chairman Johnson summarized the staff report and asked Mr. Fera to elaborate on the staff recommendation relating to this issue.

Mr. Fera stated staff is attempting to remain consistent with other locations throughout the Village and also conform to the MUTCD standards. Lowering the roadway is not feasible due to the adverse impacts to several residences along with the high construction costs. Staff has investigated other possible solutions, which still target the key issue of westbound motorists being unaware of the approaching intersection and school crossing. The recommendations can be used as a short term solution to see what affect they have on motorists. He further stated there are parking restrictions on the south side of Prairie Avenue restricting parking from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Chairman Johnson said he feels parking should be restricted at all times at this location as it creates a sight distance issue for westbound Prairie Avenue motorists.

Mr. Fera stated the Consultant recommendations could be readdressed at a later date if the additional signage is not effective. These Consultant recommendations are more severe for the residents of the area. He said these recommendations may not address the Prairie Avenue traffic.

He further stated the Parking and Traffic Commission's approval of additional signage would not require Village Council approval.

Commissioner Wendt stated he concurs with Chairman Johnson that parking should be restricted at all times. He said the no parking restriction should be from Main Street to Washington Street. He asked if additional residents should be notified prior to implementing any additional restrictions.

Chairman Johnson stated that when traveling on Bryan Place caution must be taken when turning left or right onto Prairie Avenue. He feels the no parking restrictions should be in place up to Bryan Place to allow for better sight distance.

Chairman Johnson welcomed audience members to come forward with any questions or comments.

Mr. David Eckmann, 4831 Highland Avenue, stated he concurs with eliminating parking along Prairie Avenue. He feels this is a general consensus of the neighborhood. He expressed concern over the sight distance safety hazard with the present parking.

Chairman Johnson stated he feels some simple solutions should be implemented first to see if there is a positive impact. At this point in time the Village will not expend \$450,000 to lower Prairie Avenue. Consideration may be given to changing the signals at a later date.

Mr. Fera stated that Main Street between Franklin Street and Ogden Avenue is scheduled for resurfacing this Spring. He stated a request will be made to the State to utilize funds for the signal modifications. The signal at Grant Street and Main Street is currently deficient in terms as there are two signals for each direction north and south and there should be three. The Village has requested funding for this signal upgrade. He feels the request for Prairie Avenue modifications would be a similar type of intersection improvement.

Commissioner Thurston asked if the no parking on the west side of Highland Avenue south of Prairie Avenue was adequate. He questioned if the restriction far enough from the intersection to allow for clear visibility on both sides. He has seen vehicles parked all the way to the sidewalk.

Chairman Johnson stated a no parking here to corner sign could possibly be posted. He questioned the required distance included in the existing law.

Mr. Sembach stated there is no parking within 20 feet of an intersection and within 30 feet of a stop sign.

Mr. Fera stated it may make sense to have no parking designations on Prairie Avenue from Main Street to Washington Street. This is due to Prairie Avenue being a high volume collector roadway.

Commissioner Wendt expressed concern over the lack of resident notification. He feels parking could be restricted to Bryan Place at this meeting and at a future meeting consideration could be given to additional parking restrictions.

Chairman Johnson said he concurs with Commissioner Wendt based on past experiences. He feels parking should be restricted on Prairie Avenue to Bryan Place.

COMMISSIONER WENDT MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE VILLAGE MANAGER DIRECT TO STAFF TO UPGRADE THE PRAIRIE AVENUE AND HIGHLAND AVENUE INTERSECTION WITH THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS ALONG PRAIRIE AVENUE:

- Install Westbound Cross Road Ahead, with "Highland Avenue" nameplate warning signs.
- Install Westbound "Main Street" nameplate under the Signal Ahead sign.
- Install Directional arrow warning signs under Westbound and Eastbound "School Crossing" signs, to point more specifically to the actual crossing location.
- Re-locate the Eastbound School Crossing sign assembly closer to the intersection

COMMISSIONER YEKSIGIAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

COMMISSIONER THURSTON MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL TO RESTRICT PARKING AT ALL TIMES ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF PRAIRIE AVENUE FROM HIGHLAND AVENUE TO BRYAN PLACE.

COMMISSIONER WENDT SECONDED THE MOTION.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

STAFF WAS DIRECTED TO INVESTIGATE AS PART OF THE MAIN STREET RESURFACING PROJECT THE INSTALLATION OF PROGRAMMABLE LENSES AFFECTING WESTBOUND PRAIRIE AVENUE TRAFFIC.

Further direction was given to staff to investigate the location of the no parking sign at the southwest corner of Prairie Avenue and Highland Avenue. Staff needs to review that there is adequate distance between the stop sign and parked vehicles.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Johnson asked Mr. Fera if there were any updates on Traffic Calming.

Mr. Fera replied that there were not any updates at this time as budget discussions are still underway.

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PARKING RESTRICTIONS ON PRAIRIE AVENUE

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the Village of Downers Grove, in DuPage County, Illinois, as follows: (Additions are indicated by shading; deletions by ~~strikeout~~.)

SECTION 1. That Section 14-98 of the Downers Grove Municipal Code is hereby amended as follows:

14-98. No parking zones—Generally.

No person shall park or let stand, any automobile, motor vehicle or other vehicle at any time in any of the following locations:

* * *

~~Prairie Avenue, on the south side from Highland Avenue to Bryan Place.~~

* * *

SECTION 2. That Section 14-103.3 of the Downers Grove Municipal Code is hereby amended as follows:

14-103.3. Same—Between 7:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M., except on weekends and holidays.

No person shall park or let stand any automobile, motor vehicle or other vehicle at any time between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M., local time, on any day except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays in the following locations:

* * *

~~Prairie Avenue, on the south side, from Highland Avenue~~ Bryan Place to Washington Street.

* * *

SECTION 3. That all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4. That this ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

Mayor

Passed:
Published:
Attest: _____
Village Clerk