

PARKING & TRAFFIC COMMISSION

Minutes of Public Hearing
August 13, 2003

Downers Grove Public Works Facility
5101 Walnut Avenue, Downers Grove

Chairman Johnson called the August 13, 2003 meeting of the Parking and Traffic Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. He then asked for a roll call.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners: Messrs. Kren, Thurston, Wendt, Yeksigian and Chairman Johnson.

Absent: Commissioners: Messrs. Carlquist, Stapleton

Present: Staff: Mr. Dorin Fera, Sgt. Jim Nehls, Ms. Chris Chalberg, Recording Secretary.

Visitors: Mr. Jack McGuire, 1425 Gilbert Avenue; Mr. Kevin Daly, 6721 Barrett Street; Mr. Paul Runyon, 6767 Fairmount Avenue; Mr. Rick Hale, 6800 Fairmount Avenue; Mr. Mike James, 1430 Ridgewood Circle; Mr. Mike Cipra, 6734 Blackburn Place; Mr. Michael Wake; 6260 Fairmount Avenue; and Ms. Melissa Weber, 6260 Fairmount Avenue.

Chairman Johnson informed the public that the meeting was being recorded on Village owned equipment to aid in the preparation of the meeting minutes. Commissioners were asked if they had changes regarding the minutes of the July 9, 2003 meeting.

COMMISSIONER WENDT MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 9, 2003 PARKING AND TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING BE ACCEPTED AS PRESENTED.

COMMISSIONER THURSTON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Motion carried by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

File #12-03: Regulatory Control at the Intersection of Summit Street and Carpenter Street.

Chairman Johnson read the staff report for File #12-03.

BACKGROUND

From requests received from the neighbors, staff has initiated a review of this intersection. Concerns are raised regarding safety issues from vehicles speeding on both streets, but especially on Summit Street. There are no posted speed limit signs in this section, but with the passage of the recent ordinance, the statutory speed is 25 miles per hour (mph). Carpenter Street is classified as a Collector roadway in this area, while Summit Street is a local street. There are 4-hour parking restrictions on the west side of Carpenter, and on the south side of Summit Street. Also, the east side of Carpenter has "No Parking this side of Street" posted. And currently, there is no centerline striping on either roadway. Summit Street is only 20' wide, while Carpenter is 24' wide north of Summit Street, then 26 feet to the south.

The Main Street reconstruction project by the DuPage County DOT is underway from 55th Street to south of 63rd Street. It is anticipated to be completed in mid-October, 2003.

STUDY

Staff has measured and observed vehicular traffic traveling along both streets in July, 2003. The Average Daily Traffic (or ADT) volume on Carpenter Street is 1800 vehicles north of and 1600 vehicles south of Summit Street. On Summit Street the ADT volumes is under 200 vehicles per day. The average traffic volumes on Village local streets is typically 800 vehicles per day. The 85th percentile speed recorded along Fairmount Avenue is 27 mph, and on Summit Street it is 30 mph.

From 2000 to June, 2003, there were three recorded vehicular crashes at or near this location. None of these types indicate a serious accident pattern is occurring.

Staff believes that due to the Main Street construction, motorists are using Summit Street as a cut-thru on their way west to 55th Street, since southbound Main Street is reduced to one traffic lane. Also, Carpenter Street traffic has the consistent traffic expected for a Collector roadway.

The 85 percentile speed is indeed higher on Summit Street than on Carpenter Street. This suggests Summit Street motorists are quickening their pace toward 55th Street. The 24-hour total of entering vehicles at this intersection is approximately 1900 vehicles. This volume does satisfy the Yield sign requirement. In staying consistent with Village policy and good traffic engineering practice, the minor street will be controlled, allowing the Collector roadway to flow freely. The installation of a Yield sign with proper enforcement will direct westbound Summit Street motorists to slow down and pause before entering the intersection.

In addition, a temporary turn restriction at Main Street and Summit Street will serve to reduce some of the cut-thru traffic. This restriction could be lifted after the Main Street construction is completed.

RECOMMENDATION

In summation, it is Staff's judgment, based upon detailed observation and effective traffic engineering practice that an upgraded form of intersection control is appropriate at this intersection. In order to provide more positive guidance to Summit Avenue motorists as they approach a Collector roadway, it is staff's position that the requirements for Yield control are satisfied.

Staff advises that the Parking and Traffic Commission forward a positive recommendation to the Village Council such that the following be implemented:

INSTALL A YIELD SIGN AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION OF SUMMIT STREET AND CARPENTER STREET, REGULATING WESTBOUND TRAFFIC ON SUMMIT STREET.

IN ADDITION, INSTALL A TEMPORARY TURN RESTRICTION SIGN ON MAIN STREET AT SUMMIT STREET, STATING THAT RIGHT TURNS ARE PROHIBITED BETWEEN 4:00 P.M. AND 6:00 P.M. MONDAY THRU FRIDAY.

Because no additional comments from staff followed, **Chairman Johnson** opened the meeting to the public:

Mr. Jack McGuire, 1425 Gilbert Avenue, travels Carpenter from Gilbert Avenue and across 55th Street daily to about 8:00 p.m. and did not see any problems. He inquired as to the issues being raised, wherein **Chairman Johnson** explained the posted speed limit was 25 miles per hour but the speed study indicated that 85% of the motorists on Summit were traveling at or below 30 miles per hour and that 15% were traveling above that amount. More recently, he explained the Village Council approved a 25 mile per hour speed limit on residential streets.

Mr. McGuire inquired as to why one section on Summit Street had a post limited of 20 miles per hour, wherein the chairman explained the area had extenuating circumstances.

Mr. Fera stated several calls came into the office regarding the speed of cars on Summit Street coming to Carpenter Street and some close accidents. From staff's observation, the problems began to arise when construction began and Mr. Fera believed those motorists may continue to cut through after construction is completed. Staff's recommendation to place the matter on a temporary condition was still being requested but if there was not a change in motorist behavior, then the matter may become permanent. Staff briefly commented that the parked cars on the one side of the street already regulated some of the traffic.

Chairman Johnson raised the question of whether a stop sign would be more appropriate rather than a yield sign. However, **Mr. Fera** believed the traffic volume would not meet the stop sign requirements and the road was not heavily traveled. Staff was of the opinion that a yield control would provide initial guidance.

Commissioner Yeksigian commented there was only one accident that would have been avoided on that street. Regarding the second part of staff's recommendation for the No Right Turn, he asked whether other streets should have turn restrictions since the construction on Main Street was occurring and traffic had to go somewhere.

Mr. Fera agreed other streets should be reviewed, however, the predominant directional changes for motorists were at the intersection, i.e., from 59th to 55th Streets, where motorists wanted to make a shortcut. He could not confirm yet how the proposed restriction would work since it was from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

A short discussion followed on the prior restrictions placed since cut through traffic was occurring.

Commissioner Wendt questioned the sign's effectiveness between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. since there was no intention of enforcement, wherein **Sgt. Nehls** explained a certain number of motorists would be curtailed.

Refreshing commissioners' memories, **Mr. Fera** indicated that a intersection improvement was planned at 55th and Main Street but was a separate project one or two years away. Chairman Johnson believed that change would improve traffic in the future.

From **Commissioner Kren's** observation, he has seen the cut-through traffic in the area. Chairman Johnson agreed and was surprised that not more accidents were occurring. He agreed the signage should be temporary.

Commissioner Kren raised concern that motorists who roll and go through stops signs would continue to roll and travel right around the corner, whereas, the yellow yield sign may get motorists attention because they pay attention more to look out for the other motorists.

COMMISSIONER KREN MADE A MOTION TO MAKE THE YIELD SIGN BE INSTALLED ON THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SUMMIT AND CARPENTER TO REGULATE WESTBOUND TRAFFIC ON SUMMIT AND INCLUDE THE TEMPORARY TURNING RESTRICTION ON MAIN STREET TO STATE THAT RIGHT TURNS ARE PROHIBITED BETWEEN 4:00 P.M. AND 6:00 P.M, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY.

COMMISSIONER WENDT SECONDED THE MOTION.

While **Commissioner Yeksigian** agreed with the first part of the yield sign, he did not agree that it should be temporary unless it was done consistently down Main Street, since problems existed to avoid the construction.

In response, **Chairman Johnson** said this was the only street in which many complaints were received. **Sgt. Nehls** added that the westbound Blanchard from southbound Main had traffic concerns as well.

Roll call: **AYE: Kren, Thurston, Wendt, Chairman Johnson**
 NAY: Yeksigian

Motion carried: 4:1

Chairman Johnson reminded the attending public that the Parking and Traffic Commission was a recommending body to the Village Council and the Village Council will act upon the above-discussed matter. He suggested the residents to attend that meeting.

File #13-03 68th Street: Fairmount Avenue to Fairview Avenue Safety Review

BACKGROUND

From the Parking and Traffic Commission's request at the April 9, 2003 monthly meeting, staff has initiated a safety review of this section of 68th Street. This roadway is classified as a local street. There is no posted speed limit in this section. Parking is permitted along the entire length. El Sierra Grade School is located immediately south of 68th Street, between Fairmount Avenue and Blackburn Place.

In addition, the roadway is 28-feet wide between Fairmount Avenue and Briargate Drive, and 34' wide from there to Fairview Avenue. The topography is flat. There is an S-curve at Blackburn Place. East of Blackburn Place there is a straight section to Fairview Avenue. Currently, there is some centerline striping around the S-curve near Briargate Drive, but not to the east toward Fairview Avenue. There is sidewalk along both sides of 68th Street, but it is not continuous.

There is sufficient parkway width, so pedestrians are not in close proximity to the roadway. Field observations have not revealed much pedestrian activity. However, staff realizes that later afternoons, and when El Sierra School resumes, pedestrian activity will increase.

Westbound 68th Street at Fairmount Avenue is controlled with a Yield sign. Eastbound 68th Street at Fairview Avenue is controlled with a Stop sign.

STUDY

Staff has conducted traffic counts in July, 2003, and field observed this section of 68th Street. The Average Daily Traffic (or ADT) volume on 68th Street in this section is 1,200 vehicles per day. The average traffic volumes on Village local streets is typically 800 vehicles per day. Historically, the ADT volume on 68th Street has stayed constant, dating back to 1998. The 85th percentile speed recorded along 68th Street is 30 mph west of Blackburn Place, and 33 mph east of Blackburn Place. However, the vehicular speed has increased somewhat. For example, between Blackburn Place to Osage Avenue, the 85% speed has increased from 30 mph to 33 mph since 1998.

From 2000 to June 2003, there was one recorded vehicular crash in this section.

Staff is concerned with reducing the potential for vehicle and pedestrian conflicts in this area. Vehicular speeding is clearly an issue which needs to be addressed. With the flurry of pedestrian activity due to the school, it is appropriate to take action here. Therefore, staff believes that one direct approach is to provide centerline striping. The striping basically offers two benefits: it keeps motorists generally in their lane; and also provides a slight narrowing of the useable roadway pavement.

At this time, on-street parking can remain. The presence of on street parking especially does provide some reason for motorists to slow down.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the installation of centerline striping along 68th Street, between Fairmount and Fairview Avenues. In addition, since parking is permitted here, staff is proposing an experimental striping program, wherein, the parking lane would be striped with a solid white line. The purpose of this approach is to narrow the effect of the roadway, expecting that motorists would slow down somewhat. Currently, they stare at a 34' wide roadway with clear lines, and which does little to discourage speeding.

Mr. Dorin Fera explained that he hoped residents in the audience would better explain the situation. In general, Mr. Fera reported the street was wider than normal, at 34 feet, and motorists viewed the street clearly, with nothing to really slow them down during their driving.

Commissioner Wendt agreed the road was wide and could understand why traffic was moving quickly but questioned whether the striping would work. In response, **Mr. Fera** said the striping was painted and was not really experimental since striping was used all the time. However, on the local streets there was no need to provide that striping. Per Mr. Fera, if the streets were consistent in width, there would be no need to stripe. However, a handful of wider roads existed and the proposed recommendation was a small intervention to address the issue. Mr. Fera observed motorists tend to follow striping better than posted signage.

Commissioner Wendt believed it may be beneficial to paint the 25 M.P.H. on the street itself, wherein **Mr. Fera** was open to the suggestion as long as the Commission concurred.

Discussion followed on the traffic speed percentiles and some of those motorists who go beyond the posted speed limit as well as getting a more accurate reading since the nearby school was not in session yet. **Mr. Fera** explained more accurate counts could be taken once the school was open, or, between September and March, to review figures.

Chairman Johnson opened the meeting to the public:

Mr. Mike Cipra, 6734 Blackburn Place, asked as to how the speed limit figures were obtained wherein Mr. Fera said roadway tubes were utilized. Mr. Cipra believed the motorists were going fast down the street. He agreed the S-curve was a problem and presented photos of the area. Additionally, he believed staff's observation of pedestrian activity was not accurate since many people walked their dogs and children walked to and from school in the morning as well as walked to the park. Mr. Cipra has children himself and is concerned about safety. He supported the striping, as it would help the situation.

He further asked whether consideration was made for a stop sign somewhere along 68th Street to slow down traffic, especially around the S-curve, traveling eastbound. He noted a prior fatal accident, which took place at Fairmount and 68th Street in addition to another accident about five years ago. Photos of same were handed out.

Additionally, he presented photos of the house north of him which experienced a vehicle accident and almost involved his young son. He was very concerned about the traffic and noted many motorists were younger drivers.

Mr. Paul Runyon, 6767 Fairmount Avenue, agreed the added striping would be beneficial to the area. He feels no parking should be located around the S-curve. He recommended installing a stop sign rather than a yield sign at Fairmount Avenue and 68th Street coming eastward. In addition, he believed staff needed to study the traffic when baseball season begins in the spring and after school.

Mr. Mike Weber, 6760 Fairmount Avenue, is self-employed and has lived at his residence for three years. He sees nothing less than a three-way stop. He is out during the day and sees cars traveling between 30 to 50 miles per hour. A yield sign would not make a difference, nor would stripes, since he has seen several near misses, some of which have not been reported. He agreed many of the motorists were young drivers.

While **Chairman Johnson** understood Mr. Weber's comments, he explained a new set of criteria must be met to install stop signs.

Mr. Rick Hale, 6800 Fairmount Avenue, acknowledged the commission was discussing 68th Street and the installation of a stop sign at that intersection; however, he believed that if a stop sign was placed at 68th Street and Fairmount Avenue, people would realize they must stop and eventually slow down. Since he has lived at his residence, he has seen the fatality, which took the former fire chief's daughter and witnessed motorists coming around the corner and taking down the trees on the El Sierra lot as well as a neighbor's yard.

Mr. Kevin Daly, 6721 Barrett Street, is a member of the El Sierra School Safety Committee and was at the last meeting wherein discussion took place that there was going to be yield sign at Parkview Drive, on the other side of the school. At that time the Parking and Traffic Commission addressed this intersection indicating it would run a study in October 2003 for traffic and not during the summer. He agreed the traffic patterns were dramatically different at different times of the year, especially during school time. He encouraged staff to provide another study soon based on the traffic count, commenting that the figures staff was providing were very low, even with bypasses, to avoid 63rd Street and Main Street .

Chairman Johnson agreed there was a universal problem occurring in every street in the community and it was difficult to deal with because motorists were in a hurry. Many times, staff found that the speeders lived in the area.

Commissioner Kren's understanding of staff's recommendation of striping was to see if the speeding could be reduced before another test takes place and prior to the school year beginning so that some form of measure was in place. If it did not work, then something else could be tried.

Chairman Johnson concurred and discussed how the village was taking into consideration the various traffic calming measures throughout the village.

Mr. Mike Cipra, 6734 Blackburn Place, believed each area had specific needs and supported the stop sign when heading westbound but before the S-curve. A combination of the striping, a posted speed limit sign, and/or stop signs would show motorists the changes and hopefully they would see the deterrent taking place.

Chairman Johnson continued a discussion on the warrants for a stop sign as well as the different requirements for various types of stop signs, i.e., one-way stop, three-way stop, etc. and also discussed how intersections can become more dangerous when warrants are not adhered to, as well as liability issues to the Village. He felt that a stop sign at Blackburn would not meet the warrants and if a stop sign was placed entering 68th Street, it would then give motorists on 68th Street a clear shot to continue because they would not have to slow down for motorists on Blackburn.

In that regard, **Commissioner Wendt** wondered whether the stop sign issue in lieu of the current yield sign at 68th Street and Fairmount should be discussed as an extension of this project.

Mr. Paul Runyon, 6767 Fairmount Avenue, said the yield sign was only there a few years. It worked well initially, but did not slow the motorists down anymore. He supported the recommendation and believed the striping would make a difference. However, in the future, he would like to see a stop sign installed.

Mr. Fera indicated he was not present during the discussion about the intersection's yield sign versus stop sign, but recalled many complaints were received about different speeds because the road went from Fairview Avenue all the way to Fairmount Avenue. He agreed with the comments made and that an addendum to this study could take place in September or October when school was back in session and other school activities were occurring. The study would then provide a more accurate read of the activity taking place and data could be reviewed.

In closing, **Chairman Johnson** agreed that above idea was a good example of carrying the traffic calming measures further and would only encourage striping in an extremely dangerous areas. Discussion followed on who would be responsible for installing the striping, wherein Mr. Dorin indicated it would be Public Works.

COMMISSIONER KREN MADE A MOTION TO HAVE PUBLIC WORKS STAFF INSTALL A CENTER LINE ALONG 68TH STREET AND AN EXPERIMENTAL STRIPING PROGRAM OR PARKING LANE WOULD BE STRIPED WITH A SOLID WHITE LINE IN ORDER TO NARROW THE STREET AND REDUCE SPEED AND TRAFFIC. AFTER SCHOOL BEGINS, DATA COULD BE REVIEWED AGAIN.

COMMISSIONER WENDT SECONDED THE MOTION.

**Roll call: AYES: Messrs. Kren, Thurston, Wendt, Yeksigian, Chairman
Johnson**

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 5-0

Chairman Johnson suggested readdressing this matter when school was in session and place the roadway tubes out when the soccer/football/baseball activities were in session. He also reminded commissioners that when the Main Street construction neared completion, it could affect the traffic numbers as well.

A resident asked to have the next notices sent out earlier.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion was raised on keeping the Parking and Traffic Commissioners informed of the parking deck discussions; skateboards and scooters issues; and overnight parking issues. Mr. Fera updated Commissioners on the upcoming meeting topics.

COMMISSIONER KREN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

COMMISSIONER WENDT SECONDED THE MOTION. Motion carried. 5:0

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
(as transcribed by tape)

/s/ Celeste K. Weilandt

Celeste K. Weilandt
Recording Secretary