

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
Report for the Village Council Meeting
9/7/2021

SUBJECT:	SUBMITTED BY:
Traffic Safety Improvements at Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue	Andy Sikich Public Works Director

SYNOPSIS

Motion to direct staff to construct traffic safety improvements at the intersection of Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The goals for 2019-2021 include *Top Quality Infrastructure*.

FISCAL IMPACT

If approved by the Council, this project will be included in the FY2022 – 2026 CIP.

UPDATE

UPDATE

This item was discussed at the August 17, 2021 Village Council meeting. Staff recommends action at the discretion of the Village Council.

Right Turn Only on Northbound Forest at Franklin

If northbound Forest Avenue at Franklin Street was restricted to a “right turn only,” using signage or physical improvements or both, staff expects:

- Increase in traffic on Franklin
- Increase in traffic on Main
- Non-compliance issues with drivers ignoring signage and physical barriers.

Change in Signal Timing at Franklin/Main

The traffic signals on Main are interconnected and synchronized from Grant Street to Maple Avenue, and are coordinated in the north/south direction to alleviate congestion on Main Street. Currently, the traffic signal at Main and Franklin provides a short amount of green light time for vehicles traveling on Franklin. If the green light time for Franklin were to be increased, staff expects:

- Disruption to the interconnected and synchronized traffic signal system on Main Street.
- Increase in traffic congestion on Main Street.
- Increase in drivers seeking alternative routes through the neighborhood to avoid traffic congestion on Main

Continued on next page...

UPDATE*Impacts on Emergency Services*

If Forest were closed at Prairie:

- Most Police and Fire emergency responses would not be affected
- When responding to a fire at a house near the closed intersection, fire apparatus would be staged on Prairie
- An additional fire hydrant would be needed on the 4800 block of Forest.
- No significant impacts to response time in the neighborhood would be expected.

Impacts on snow plowing, garbage trucks, delivery trucks, etc.

If Forest were closed at Prairie:

- 4800 block of Forest would change from Priority 1 snow route to Priority 3, and snow storage areas would be needed at the turn-around.
- Garbage trucks would either make a three-point turn in the cul-de-sac or drive in reverse on Forest
- Most delivery vehicles could turn around in a 50' cul-de-sac using a three-point turn.
- Semi-trucks would likely need to back down the street upon leaving.

BACKGROUND

There have been a significant number of traffic accidents at the intersection of Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue. From January 2015 through April 2021, 24 vehicle accidents occurred at this location. Contributing factors to these accidents include traffic volume and speeds on Prairie, traffic volume on Forest crossing or turning onto Prairie, and sight distance obstructions (primarily looking west from northbound Forest).

When residents reached out to Village staff in 2020, the Village's initial response included pruning the parkway trees to improve sight lines, and deploying driver speed feedback signs. Police presence and enforcement has also been increased at this location. On March 30, 2021, a neighborhood meeting was held, which was well attended by residents. At that time a petition was presented, which was signed by residents representing 10 of the 17 total households on Forest between Prairie and Franklin, requesting that this block of Forest be closed at Prairie. At that meeting, staff presented proposed improvements that included a median on Prairie, to provide traffic calming and prevent crossing Prairie or turning left, additional striping and signage.

In May 2021, temporary improvements were implemented at this intersection, which simulated the proposed median. The plan was to keep the improvements up for 60 days to determine their effectiveness and to evaluate their impact on neighborhood traffic patterns. The temporary improvements were removed after less than two weeks, however, due to observed dangerous driving behaviors.

The TaP Commission considered this issue at their July 14, 2021 meeting. Public comment was received at that meeting, and the draft minutes are attached. At that meeting, staff presented several options for improving the safety of this intersection. These include:

- Stop signs (either 3-way or 4-way)
- Right-in/Right-out (on either the south leg or both legs)
- Permanent closure of Forest at Prairie (on either the south leg or both legs)

Each of these possible options presents varying anticipated benefits and challenges.

Stop Signs

A four or three-way stop could be added at this location. In the three-way scenario, westbound Prairie would not stop, similar to the intersection of Forest and Franklin. Either of the two stop sign options has the anticipated benefits of reducing angled collisions at this intersection, reducing speeds on Prairie in the immediate vicinity of the intersection, and left turns could once again be allowed from Prairie onto southbound Forest (they are currently prohibited). The anticipated disadvantages of a stop sign at this location are possible traffic backups on Prairie, which could potentially impede traffic on Main in the 4-way scenario, a possible increase in traffic on Forest, increased non-compliance, a possible increase in rear-end collisions, and possible driver confusion in the 3-way scenario.

Right-In/Right-Out

This option could be applied to the south leg only, or to both legs of Forest. The anticipated benefits of this approach would be a reduction in angle collisions, some traffic reduction on Forest, and a possible increase to pedestrian safety, particularly if coupled with some additional traffic calming on Prairie, such as a median or bump outs. The potential disadvantages of this option include increased non-compliance, changes to the neighborhood traffic patterns, a possible increased risk of dangerous driving behaviors (similar to those seen in the trial), possible impacts to emergency service access, and modifications to snow/ice removal operations.

Closure of Forest at Prairie

This option could be applied to just the south leg, or to both legs of Forest. The anticipated benefits include a high reduction of angle collisions, increased pedestrian safety (primarily in the east/west direction unless coupled with additional traffic calming on Prairie) and a significant reduction in traffic on Forest. The potential disadvantages of this option include significant changes to neighborhood traffic patterns, possible impact to emergency service access, significant modifications to snow/ice removal operations, a likely increase in speeds on Prairie unless some additional traffic calming measures are deployed, and insufficient space to install a standard cul-de-sac within the existing right-of-way.

In addition to any of these three primary options, staff recommends additional striping and signage to call attention to the stop signs and crosswalks at this intersection (to the extent they are not modified or eliminated by the selected option), as well as improving the sight lines to the extent possible and/or required based on the selected option. Staff also presented two other options that could be added to any of the primary options above. These include the use of programmable traffic signal heads, which cannot be viewed until a motorist is a predetermined distance from the signal (this helps to reduce speeding to “catch the light”), and additional traffic calming measures on Prairie, such as medians or curb bump outs, which will reduce speeds and improve pedestrian safety.

In addition to adding additional striping and signage, and improving sight lines to the extent possible, the TaP Commission recommended that:

- The north and south legs of Forest Avenue at Prairie Avenue be closed with no access to Prairie.
- Additional traffic calming measures be installed on Prairie at this location.
- Programmable signal heads be installed on the eastbound side of the traffic signal at Prairie and Main.
- Traffic flow to and from Forest between Warren and Franklin should be assessed to optimize neighborhood traffic flow and maximize the use of Main Street.
- Pick-up and drop-off patterns should be discussed with District 99 to ensure that they are coordinated with these improvements.

- Temporary improvements should be installed initially, to simulate the proposed improvements, so that effectiveness and overall impacts to neighborhood traffic can be evaluated prior to final improvements being designed.

As the majority of the accidents that have occurred at this intersection have involved traffic on the south leg of Forest, Staff believes that the closure of only the south leg of Forest, leaving full access to the north leg of Forest, could also provide substantial benefit at this intersection, with a reduced impact to overall neighborhood traffic.

If the Council desires to move forward with these improvements, staff recommends installing temporary improvements for a period of sixty (60) days to observe their impact on neighborhood traffic, prior to performing final design and bidding of the permanent improvements.

ATTACHMENTS

Staff report to the TaP Commission

Neighborhood Petition

Draft minutes from July 14, 2021 TaP Commission meeting

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
COUNCIL ACTION SUMMARY

INITIATED: Public Works DATE: September 7, 2021
(Name)

RECOMMENDATION FROM: _____ FILE REF: _____
(Board or Department)

NATURE OF ACTION:

STEPS NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT ACTION:

- Ordinance
- Resolution
- Motion
- Other

Motion to direct staff to install (option a-f) on a temporary basis at the corner of Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue.

- (a) a 3-way stop control at Prairie & Forest;
- (b) a 4-way stop control at Prairie & Forest;
- (c) a median in Prairie restricting northbound traffic on Forest to eastbound only on Prairie;
- (d) barriers closing the south leg of the intersection at Prairie & Forest;
- (e) barriers closing the north and south legs of the intersection at Prairie & Forest
- (f) a median restricting northbound traffic on Forest to eastbound only on Franklin

Enya

SUMMARY OF ITEM:

Adoption of this motion shall direct staff to install traffic control on a temporary basis at the corner of Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue.

RECORD OF ACTION TAKEN:



VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
REPORT FOR THE TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION
JULY 14, 2021 AGENDA

SUBJECT:	SUBMITTED BY:
File #1-21 Prairie & Forest Traffic Safety Improvements	Andy Sikich Director of Public Works

BACKGROUND

The intersection of Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue is located one block west of the traffic signal at Main Street and Prairie. There were 24 vehicle accidents at this intersection between January 2015 and April 2021. Staff has been working with neighboring residents to improve the safety of this intersection for vehicles and pedestrians without significant impacts to traffic in the area.

ANALYSIS

Recent traffic counts indicate that Prairie Avenue carries roughly 6,000 vehicles per day, and Forest Avenue carries roughly 2,000 vehicles per day. Forest south of Prairie has significantly higher traffic than the majority of all other side streets off of Prairie between Main St. and Belmont Avenue. Contributing factors to the high number of vehicle accidents at this intersection appear to be the traffic volume and speeds on Prairie, the volume of traffic on Forest that either crosses or turns onto Prairie, and sight distance obstructions.

A neighborhood meeting was held on March 30, 2021, where staff presented a proposal to construct a median on Prairie at Forest, which would prevent left-turns and through movements on Forest, while also providing traffic calming on Prairie. In May, staff installed temporary improvements that simulated the proposed median in order to gauge effectiveness, but these were removed after just two weeks due to observed dangerous driving behaviors. A petition has been received, representing 10 of 17 households on Forest between Franklin and Prairie, requesting that access to/from Prairie be blocked completely (see attached).


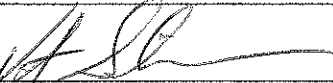

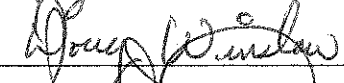


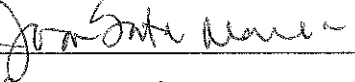

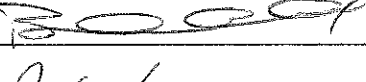

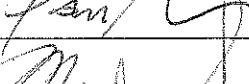
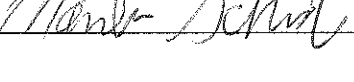
Additional detail is included in the attached slide deck, which will be presented at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff has identified several options to help improve traffic and pedestrian safety at this intersection. The Commission is asked to provide a recommendation to the Village Council.

Petition to Village DG re Traffic Safety

Petition summary and background	Numerous accidents at the corner of Forest Ave and Prairie Ave - Village meeting 3/30/21
Action petitioned for	Place a barricade and NOT a median at the end of 4800 block Forest Ave at Prairie Ave

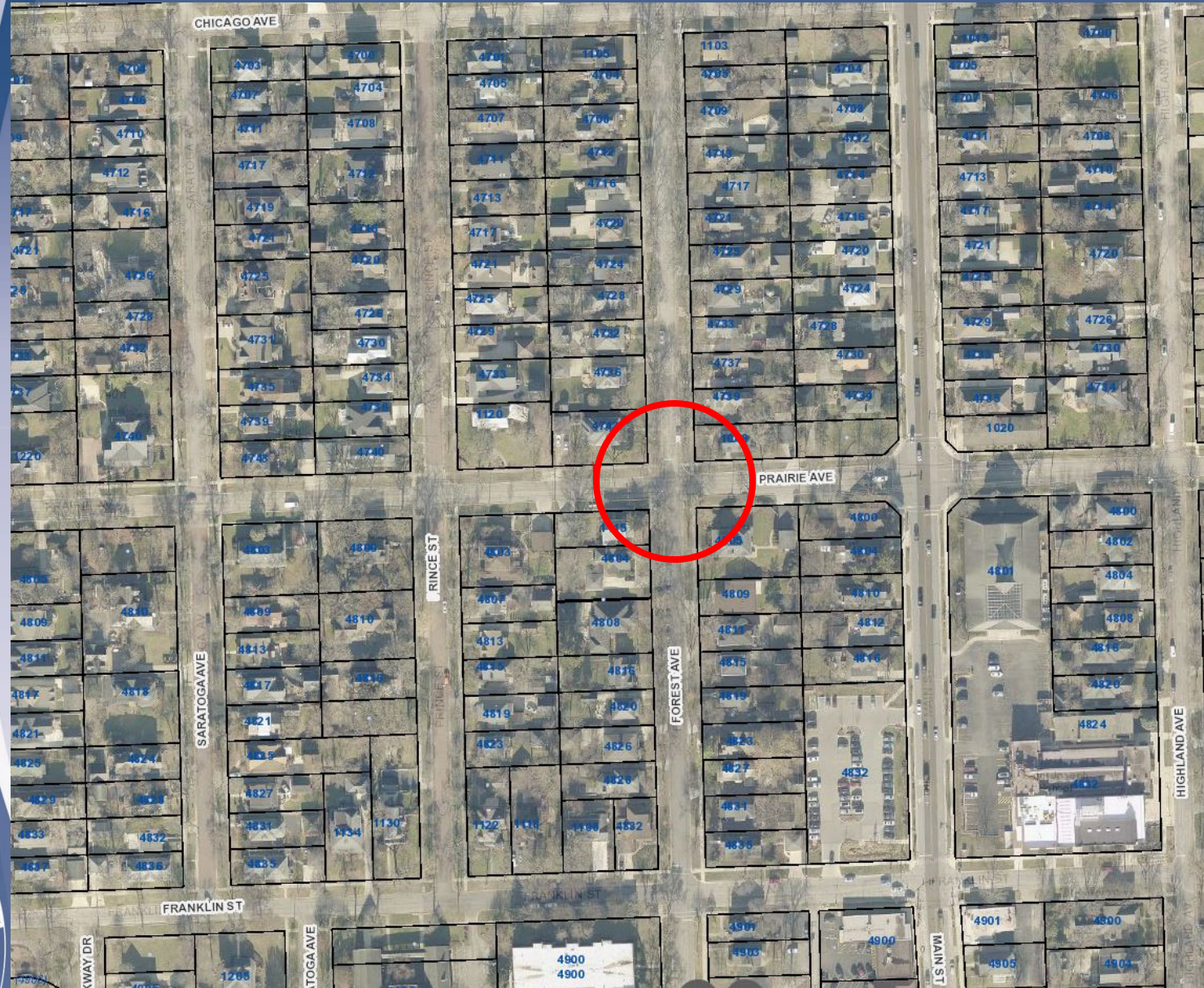
Printed Name	Signature	Address	Comment	Date
SHARON SCILIANO		4808 FOREST AVE		03/21/2021
VITO SCILIANO		" " "		"
Angie Winslow		4816 FOREST AVE		03/21/2021
Doug Winslow		" " "		"
Steve Scott		4811 FOREST	ITS ABOUT TIME	3/21/21
Debbie Scaviati		4811 FOREST AVE.		
Jean Santa Maria		4816 Main St		
Michiel Ghilswine				
BRANDY GABRY		4806 Forest		3-21-2021
Antonia Coby		" "		" "
TOM SCHEPERS		4815 FOREST AVE	PLEASE NO MEDIAN. BARRICADES TSDAT END.	3/21/21
MARLENE SEXTON		" "		3/21/21

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Comment	Date
Caroline Shields	C. S. Shields	4820 Forest Ave		3/21/21
BRIAN SHIELDS	B. S. Shields	4820 Forest Ave		3/21/21
Gina Conti	G. Conti	4819 Forest Ave		3/21/21
Lama Temple	Lama Temple	1115 Prairie Ave		3/21/21
Jacquelin Eric	J. Eric	4805 Forest Ave		3/21/21
Brian Erickson	B. Erickson	4805 Forest Ave		3/21/21
Jeremy Dhein	J. Dhein	1048 Prairie Ave		3/21/21
Brandy Ormond	B. Ormond	4739 Forest Ave		3/21/21
Gary Kline	G. Kline	4742 Forest Ave		3/22/21
Lou Buttny	L. Buttny	4828 Forest Ave		3/22/21
Bridget Bryan	B. Bryan	4832 Forest Ave		3/22/21

Prairie & Forest Traffic Safety Improvements

Village Council Presentation
August 3, 2021





**24 ACCIDENTS AT THE
INTERSECTION
OF PRAIRIE & FOREST
BETWEEN JANUARY 2015
AND APRIL 2021**



Accident Distribution

	EB Prairie	WB Prairie
NB Forest	14	6
SB Forest	4	0



Contributing Factors

- Traffic Volume/Speed on Prairie
- Traffic on Forest Crossing or Turning onto Prairie
- Sight Distance Obstructions





Traffic Volume & Speed



6/16/2021



Looking West from Northbound Forest (when stopped at stop sign)



Looking West from Northbound Forest (when advanced north of stop sign)

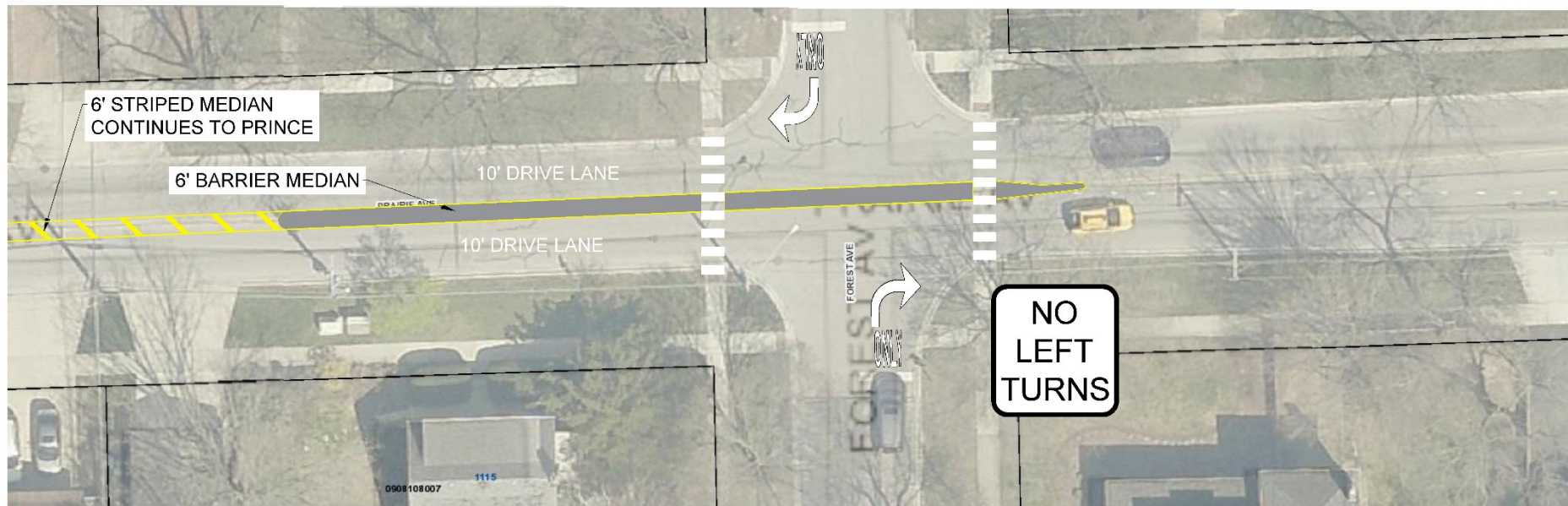


Initial Village Response

- Pruned Parkway Trees to Improve Sight Lines
- Driver Speed Feedback Signs Temporarily Deployed
- Neighborhood Meeting Held on 3/30/21
 - Well attended by local residents
 - A petition was presented representing 10 of the 17 households on Forest between Franklin and Prairie requesting that access to/from Prairie be blocked completely
 - Staff presented proposed improvements including a median on Prairie, striping and additional signage
- Increased Police Presence and Enforcement



Trial Improvements



- Barrier Median on Prairie at Forest
- Striped Median West to Prince
- Striped Crosswalks
- Signage



Anticipated Benefits

- Reduced Speeds on Prairie
- Reduced Number and Severity of Collisions
- Pedestrian Refuge/Safety
- Reduced Traffic on Forest
- No Driveways Blocked by Median



Trial Improvements

- Installed temporary improvements on a trial basis
 - Traffic calming on Prairie
 - Prohibited left turns and crossing Prairie on Forest
 - Took baseline traffic counts and speeds throughout neighborhood prior to installing barricades
 - Intended to leave in place for 60 days – removed them after less than two weeks due to observed dangerous driving behavior



Anecdotal Observations*

- Generally, drivers on Prairie did slow down
- Traffic volume on Forest south of Prairie was reduced

*No counts were taken with improvements in place to quantify the results



Unanticipated Consequences

- Some drivers chose to make a left turn from northbound Forest into oncoming traffic on the wrong side of the median
- Some drivers chose to make a right turn from northbound Forest, then make a 3-point turn east of the median to head back westbound.
- Drivers making a right turn from northbound Forest often “rolled” the stop sign without stopping.



Unanticipated Consequences



Options

1. Stop sign (3-way or 4-way)
2. Right-in/Right-out on Forest
3. Permanently close south leg or both legs of Forest at Prairie

In addition to any of these options:

- Additional striping and signage will be added
- Sight lines will be improved
- Additional traffic calming can be added



Option 1 – Stop Signs

4-way; or 3-way (with westbound Prairie not stopping)

Benefits

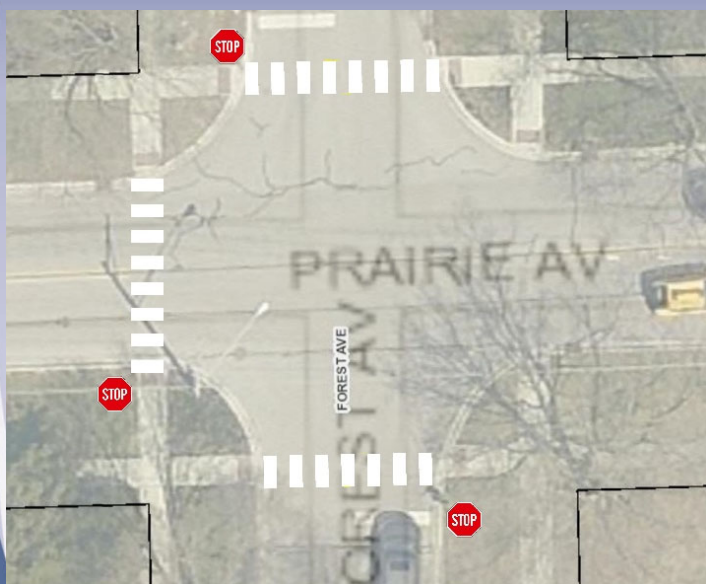
- Reduction in angle collisions
- Speed reduction on Prairie in immediate vicinity of Forest
- Left turns could again be allowed from westbound Prairie to southbound Forest

Disadvantages

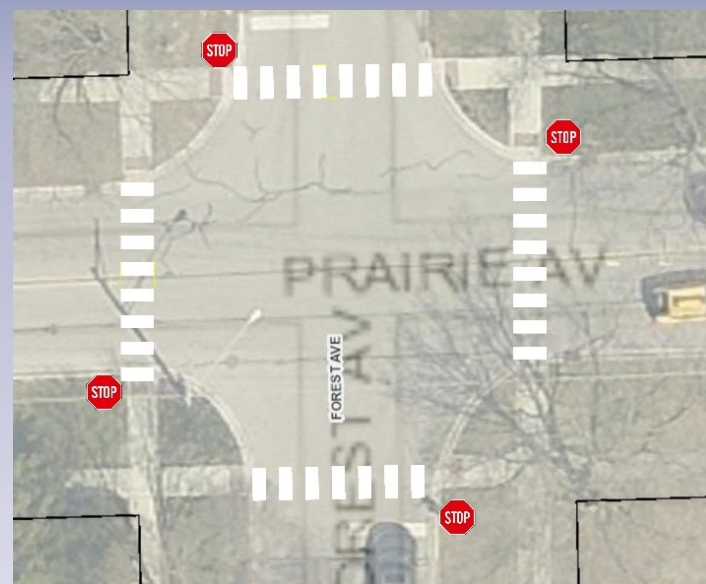
- Possible backups on Prairie
- Possible increase in traffic volume on Forest
- Increased non-compliance
- Possible increase in rear-end collisions
- Possible driver confusion (3-way option)
- Traffic backups could interfere with traffic on Main St. (4-way option)



Option 1 – Stop Signs



3-way Stop



4-way Stop



Option 2 – RI/RO on Forest

South leg only; or both legs

Benefits

- Reduction in angle collisions
- Some traffic volume reduction on Forest
- Possible increase to pedestrian safety (greater increase if median/bump outs on Prairie)

Disadvantages

- Increased non-compliance
- Changes to neighborhood traffic patterns
- Possible increased risk of dangerous driving behavior
- Possible impacts to emergency service access
- Modification to snow/ice operations



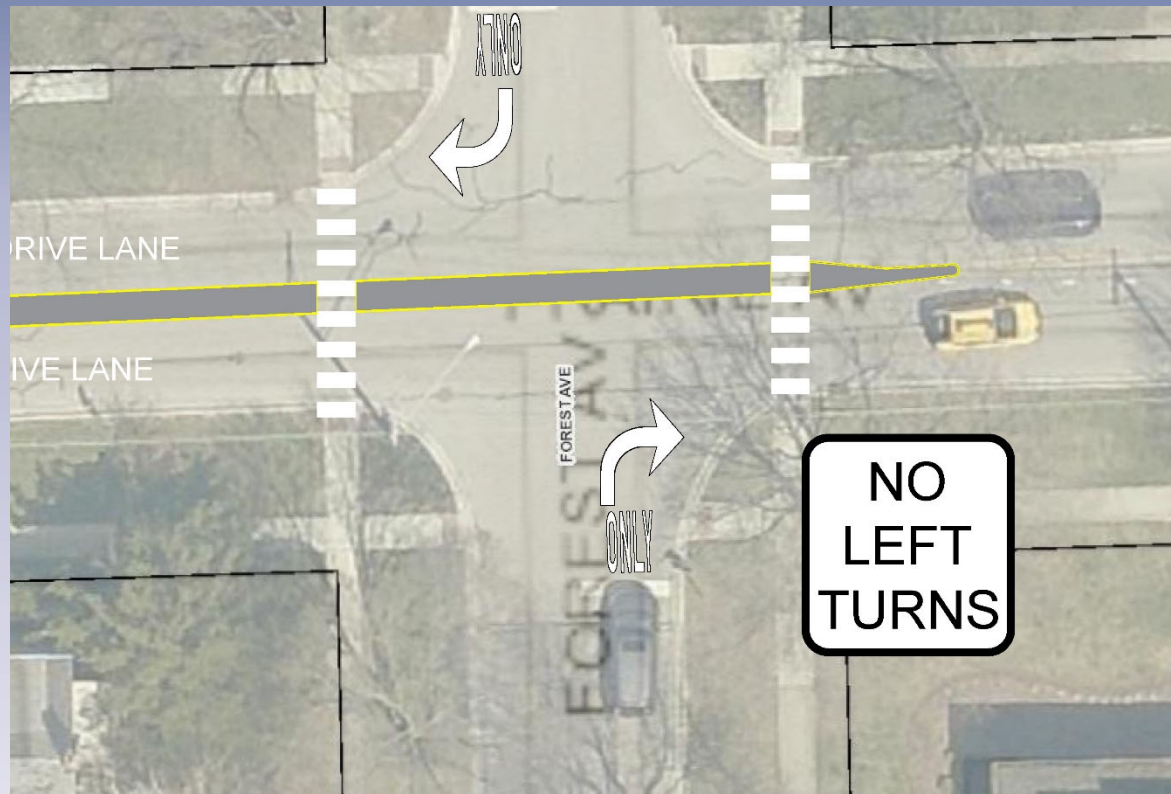
Option 2 – RI/RO on Forest



“Porkchop” Island(s)



Option 2 – RI/RO on Forest



Center median

(would need to extend farther east and west than trial median to discourage dangerous behaviors)



Option 3 – Close Forest

South leg only; or both legs

Benefits

- High reduction in angle collisions
- Increased pedestrian safety (primarily east/west unless with median/bump outs on Prairie)
- Significant traffic volume reduction on Forest

Disadvantages

- Significant changes to neighborhood traffic patterns
- Possible impact to emergency service access
- Significant modifications to snow/ice operations
- Possible increase in speeds on Prairie (without addition of median/bump outs)
- Insufficient space for standard turn-arounds



Option 3 – Close Forest



Could be accomplished with a substandard cul-de-sac or hammer-head turn-around



Option 3 – Close Forest



50' Cul-de-sac



**Hammerhead
Turn-around**



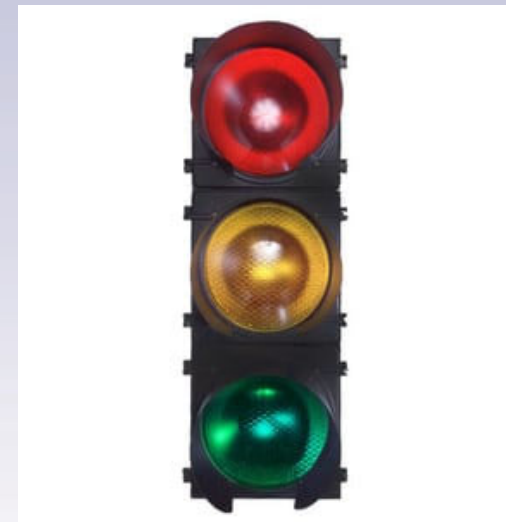
Additional Option – Programmable Signal Heads

Benefits

- Reduction in speeds on eastbound Prairie nearing Main St.

Disadvantages

- Possible Driver Confusion



Additional Option – Median/Bump Outs

Benefits

- Reduction in speeds within vicinity of measures
- Increased pedestrian safety

Disadvantages

- Possible impacts to emergency service response and plowing



Summary of Options

1. Stop sign (3-way or 4-way)
2. Right-in/Right-out on Forest
3. Permanently close south leg or both legs of Forest at Prairie

Additional Traffic Calming Options on Prairie

- Programmable signal heads
- Center median or “bump outs”



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TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION
Minutes – July 14, 2021
Council Chambers – Village Hall
801 Burlington Avenue, Downers Grove

Chairman Carter called the July 14, 2021 meeting of the Transportation and Parking Commission to order at 7:02 P.M. and led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Carter, Commissioners O’Malley, Novak, Saricks, Shiliga,

Absent: Commissioners Carlson & Heverin

Staff: Public Works Director Andy Sikich, Public Works Traffic Engineer Will Lorton, Community Service Officer Jim Hartleb, and Police Support Services Manager Bill Budds

Visitor Roster: Laura Temple, Karen Laio, Stephanie Slavkin, Andrew Wood, Karen Thomas, Jacqueline Erickson, Bridget Ryan, Vito Siciliano, Caroline Shields, Angie Winslow, Brandon Gabry, Brian Erickson, Lisa Lockerby, Louis Buttny, Bill Sweeney, Toni Gabry, Megan Sweeney, Gary Kline, Jean Franklin

A quorum was established.

Chairman Carter reviewed the procedures to be followed for the meeting, explaining that the Commission will forward a recommendation to the Village Council for approval.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 22, 2020 MINUTES

Chairman Carter asked for one amendment to show that he was not present at the October 22, 2020 meeting.

COMMISSIONER NOVAK MOVED TO ACCEPT MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED. COMMISSIONER SARICKS SECONDED THE MOTION.

ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE 5:0.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No public comment on non-agenda items.

Chairman Carter proceeded to the files on the agenda.

File #1-21 Prairie Avenue & Forest Avenue Traffic & Safety Improvements

Public Works Director Andy Sikich presented information regarding the intersection of Prairie Avenue & Forest Avenue located approximately 300 feet from the traffic signal at Main Street & Prairie Avenue. The primary reason this is being addressed is due to the high number of traffic

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accidents at this intersection since 2015. Twenty-four accidents occurred at the intersection between January 2015 and April 2021. The majority of these accidents involved vehicles on northbound Forest Avenue colliding with vehicles on eastbound Prairie Avenue, totaling 14 out of 24. Contributing factors to most of the incidents appear to be traffic volume and speeds on Prairie Avenue, the traffic volume on Forest Avenue turning onto Prairie Avenue, and sight distance obstructions primarily looking west from northbound Forest Avenue.

Mr. Sikich explained that traffic volumes on Forest Avenue are quite high compared to other side streets off of Prairie Avenue between Main Street and Belmont Road. Most of the other streets carry anywhere from 300-1,000 cars per day, but Forest Avenue is consistently at or above 2,000 cars per day. Prairie Avenue averages between 6,000-6,500 vehicles per day. The sight line of motorists northbound on Forest Avenue looking west is obstructed, causing drivers to move past the stop sign to get a better view of oncoming traffic. When residents reached out regarding this intersection, the Village's initial response was to prune parkway trees to improve sight lines and to deploy driver speed feedback signs at the intersection. Police presence and enforcement has also been increased at this intersection.

Mr. Sikich said that a neighborhood meeting was held on March 30, 2021, where staff presented proposed improvements including a median on Prairie Avenue, additional striping and signage. These improvements would prevent left turns and would prevent traffic on Forest Avenue from crossing Prairie Avenue. It would also provide traffic calming on Prairie Avenue and increase pedestrian safety. Also in March, a petition was presented to staff representing 10 of the 17 households on the block of Forest Avenue south of Prairie Avenue and north of Franklin Street, requesting northbound Forest Avenue be completely blocked at Prairie Avenue.

In May, staff installed temporary improvements to simulate the proposed improvements, consisting of a median of water filled barricades, and additional striping and signage. Baseline traffic counts were taken throughout the neighborhood immediately prior to the installation. The intent was to leave the improvements in place for 60 days and then take another set of traffic counts to determine the effect of the improvements on neighborhood traffic. However, the improvements were removed after less than two weeks due to observed dangerous driving behaviors, such as drivers making a left turn into oncoming traffic on Prairie Avenue, drivers making three-point turns at the end of the median, and a significant number of drivers rolling the stop sign on northbound Forest Avenue.

Mr. Sikich then presented several potential options for improvements at this location, along with the anticipated benefits and challenges associated with each. The three primary options identified by staff included (1) Stop signs, 3-way or 4-way; (2) Right-in/Right-out on Forest Avenue, applied to just the south leg or both legs of Forest Avenue; and (3) Permanent closure of Forest Avenue at Prairie Avenue, applied to just the south leg or both legs of Forest Avenue.

In addition to the primary options, additional striping and signage will be added to the intersection to call attention to crosswalks, stop signs, etc., and sightlines will be improved to the extent possible. If desired by the Commission, additional traffic calming elements can be added to Prairie Avenue as well. This could consist of programmable signal heads on the eastbound side of the traffic signal at Main Street, and/or a median or curb-bump outs in the vicinity of the intersection at Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety.

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COMMISSIONER CARTER OPENED DISCUSSION AMONGST THE COMMISSION

Mr. Shiliga asked about the financial cost of the options. Mr. Sikich stated that specific costs have not been developed, but that he does not believe cost is a major factor.

Mr. Novak is concerned about any improvements relocating the problem to another intersection along Prairie Avenue, and asked about best practices that have been done in other communities. Mr. Sikich stated that the options presented are what staff believes are the best practices that are most applicable to this situation, and that a trial of the improvements is recommended before actual implementation so that the impacts on neighborhood traffic could be evaluated.

Mr. Saricks asked about the possibility of having a roundabout. Mr. Sikich stated there is not enough room to incorporate a roundabout with adequate pedestrian safety.

Ms. O'Malley asked if there has been any impact to the neighborhood traffic subsequent to the changes at 55th Street and Washington Street. Mr. Sikich stated that he does not know if there is any data on changes to the traffic patterns since that work was done by the County.

Mr. Saricks asked if this meets warrants needed to install stop signs. Mr. Lorton said that yes, the number of crashes within a 12 month period would warrant a stop sign at this location.

Mr. Shiliga is concerned that a 4-way stop sign would back cars up onto Main Street, and asked how many cars on average could be stopped at the stop sign before it would be a concern. Mr. Sikich believes that about nine cars would be able to be stopped and not cause an issue on Main Street.

Chairman Carter stated that he is not opposed to closing Forest Avenue, but that it may impact traffic using the Forest Avenue railroad crossing. Mr. Sikich stated that is one of the things that would be evaluated during a trial period.

Chairman Carter asked if signaling the intersection was considered. Mr. Sikich believes it would likely have to be combined with the signal at Main Street and it would be expensive. He believes that the three options presented are the best solutions at this time.

Mr. Shiliga asked if there is a staff preferred option. Mr. Sikich stated that all of the options have pros and cons, and will have varying degrees of impact to the neighborhood traffic. Staff is asking for input from the Commission, and supports any of the options presented.

COMMISSIONER CARTER OPENED UP THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

PUBLIC COMMENT ON FILE #1-21

Laura Temple, 1115 Prairie Avenue, stated that she is concerned that the median would block her driveway if moved further west, and also would be between her house and the fire hydrant on the opposite side of the street. She is concerned that the trial counts were taken when school was out at North High School. Ms. Temple stated that Forest Avenue is busy in the morning on the way to and from North High and the Forest Avenue circle is a key drop off point. She is not in

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favor of closing Forest Avenue. She would prefer to see increased enforcement at this intersection.

Karen Laio, 4608 Forest Avenue, stated that North High school changed the drop off pattern to the school in about 2015 when they changed the parking areas. She saw a significant increase in cars on Forest Avenue after the change, with a line of cars past Chicago Avenue waiting to drop kids off. She believes that Prince Street. should be opened up for drop offs, as well as Main Street. Her husband walks every morning and has almost been hit on that block by a car on several occasions. Her husband feels that trees block the view of pedestrians, and cars drive very fast.

Stephanie Slavkin, 4640 Forest Avenue, stated that she walks from the train to her house and crossing Prairie Avenue during rush hour is dangerous. She would like to see a stop sign farther west on Prairie Avenue.

Andrew Wood, 1115 Prairie Avenue, has observed many accidents at this intersection over the 27 years he has lived there. Feels that the issue is primarily eastbound and northbound traffic, with eastbound going too fast, and northbound not stopping. He believes these solutions are going too far, and would like to see more attention paid to the stop signs that are already in place.

Karen Thomas, 4713 Forest Avenue, is a teacher at North High school and frequently walks up and down Forest Avenue. She stated that it is very difficult to see down Prairie Avenue, and she agrees that parkway trees are a sight obstruction and that additional stop signs should be added on Prairie Avenue, possibly at Oakwood Avenue and Saratoga Avenue. She stated that North High school closed Prince Street for drop off because the busses drop off in that location.

Jacqueline Erickson, 4800 block of Forest Avenue, stated that she would like to see stop signs or speed bumps on Prairie Avenue. She thinks people will speed to make the green light at Main Street, even if a stop sign is placed on Prairie Avenue at Oakwood Avenue.

Bridget Ryan, 4800 block of Forest Avenue, believes that too much traffic is using Forest Avenue as a bypass to avoid Main Street.

Vito Siciliano, 4808 Forest Avenue, stated that these same issues were discussed 20 years ago and all that was done was to restrict left turns from westbound Prairie Avenue to southbound Forest Avenue. He stated that nobody adheres to that restriction. He believes that speeding is out of control on Forest Avenue, and that drivers will even pass cars that are going to slow. He believes that stop signs on Prairie Avenue would be ignored by drivers. He believes that cars avoid Main Street because the lights at Franklin Street and Main Street and at Prairie Avenue and Main Street are not synchronized. He would like to see Forest Avenue blocked off at Main Street, and Franklin Street changed to one-way eastbound.

Caroline Shields, 4820 Forest Avenue, believes that the problem is that everyone is acting as if Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue are Ogden Avenue or Main Street. She has three young kids ages six to eleven and she and other moms do not want to let their kids cross Prairie Avenue anywhere, and definitely not at Forest Avenue, because it's unsafe. She agrees with closing Forest Avenue on the south side, while also ensuring traffic is not directed to Prince Street.

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Angie Winslow, 4816 Forest Avenue, is in agreement that the speeding on this block is ridiculous. She has video of cars passing other cars on Forest Avenue. She understands there is a concern about moving the problem somewhere else, but something has to be done to get some of the traffic off of their block. She is not in favor of a three or four-way stop at the intersection of Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue. She is in favor of closing Forest Avenue at Prairie Avenue.

Brandon Gabry, 4826 Forest Avenue, understands the concern about the railroad crossing on Forest Avenue, but believes that traffic should take Franklin Street to Main Street, and not the 4800 block of Forest Avenue. He is in favor of closing Forest Avenue at Prairie Avenue with a bump out into Prairie Avenue to help with traffic calming. He is concerned about driver complacency with a right-in/right-out northbound to turn east onto Prairie Avenue.

Brian Erickson, 4800 block of Forest Avenue, stated that the speed data on Forest Avenue was taken 18 feet from the stop sign, and he does not believe that putting a stop sign on Prairie Avenue will address the issue of people speeding on Forest Avenue and ignoring the stop sign. He is concerned that a kid on a bicycle will be hit by a car that does not stop at the stop sign. Mr. Erickson stated that the traffic counts on the blocks to the west on Prince Street, Saratoga Avenue, Linscott Avenue, Oakwood Avenue, etc. collectively have less than 2000 cars. He stated that Prince Street averages 320 cars per day, and Forest Avenue has 2500. He referenced an engineering study that categorizes local streets by the amount of daily traffic, with a “poor” rating given to any street with over 1,200 cars per day. He stated that Forest Avenue sees 2,500 cars on a day when the high school is closed. He disagrees with the stop sign option, and believes it may cause more accidents. He submitted a FOIA request which showed that 4 accidents have occurred at this intersection since April 15th. One of his neighbors recently got into an accident going into his own driveway. Mr. Erickson stated that he and his wife do not feel safe. He believes the only option that makes it a safer intersection for both drivers and kids would be to close Forest Avenue at Prairie Avenue. He requested that, if Forest Avenue is not closed off, at least 5 speed bumps be installed curb to curb on his street because they should not be seeing 2,500 cars every single day.

Lisa Lockerby, 4732 Forest Avenue, asked if she remembered correctly from the neighborhood meeting that many of the accidents were caused by people who were not from the area. Mr. Sikich stated that he believes so, but does not recall for certain. She said that every time she calls 911 for an accident the people say they thought there was a stop sign and they could not see because of all of the parkway obstructions. Her kids have also said they cannot see due to parkway obstructions such as trees and utility boxes, which she believes is part of the problem, especially for people who are not from the area.

Louis Buttny, 4828 Forest Avenue, was hit by a car heading northbound on Forest Avenue while he was backing into his driveway. He believes that something needs to be done. He found a study from 1998, and all they got was a “no left turn” sign. If something could be done for them they would appreciate it.

Bill Sweeney, 4641 Forest Avenue, stated that he appreciates the safety concerns, but he is opposed to permanently closing off Forest Avenue. As a resident he does use Forest Avenue to get downtown, and when it was temporarily blocked off he used Prince Street instead of Forest Avenue. He believes increased enforcement would help. He thinks something needs to be done, but he believes some of the other measures should be tried first, before closing off the street.

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Vito Siciliano, 4808 Forest Avenue, stated that he is for blocking Forest Avenue off at Prairie Avenue from both directions. He also believes that if speed bumps are used, there would need to be at least five of them on this block of Forest Avenue. He also would like the Village to synchronize the lights at Franklin Street and Main Street and Prairie Avenue and Main Street, and that Franklin Street has to be one-way.

Toni Gabry, 4826 Forest Avenue, is in favor of permanently closing Forest Avenue on the south end, because the 4800 block alone sees 2500 cars per day. She understands that the 4600 and 4700 blocks will be inconvenienced, but they are not seeing the high traffic volumes that the 4800 block is seeing per day.

Megan Sweeney, 4641 Forest Avenue, does not believe that closing Forest Avenue will help with speeding on Prairie Avenue. Pedestrians will still have to cross Prairie Avenue and that solution will not slow people down or make children safer crossing Prairie Avenue. She also believes that most of the traffic will move to Prince Street. She asked if there are problems with the intersection of Prairie Avenue and Washington, due to the railroad crossing at Washington. Mr. Sikich said that intersection is a bit of a different situation, but he is not aware that it has the significant number of accidents that Prairie Avenue and Forest Avenue does.

Gary Kline, 4742 Forest Avenue, stated that he has been working from home for the last 1.5 years, and every day he hears horns honking and tires screeching at that corner.

Brian Erickson, 4805 Forest Avenue, believes that the number of accidents is alarming, but what isn't captured are the near misses and horn honkings as Mr. Kline reported. He has sent a number of videos to Mr. Sikich and the Village Council, some have 10-13 year old kids riding bicycles, and the horn honks are chilling. When the barricade was implemented, people never stopped at the stop sign. He feels that the impact of the barricade was that people never stopped to go left or straight, and there was a parade of cars going one after the other right through the stop sign. He feels that a right-only will continue the issue of people not stopping.

Jean Franklin, 4716 Forest Avenue, stated that when the barricade was up she was very concerned with all the bicyclists, because there was no room for a bicycle to get down Prairie Avenue with a car. She saw a group of boys riding bikes going north on the 4800 block of Forest Avenue and they were all over the road due to the narrowness. She stated that she does not want the street blocked off at Forest Avenue 4700. She feels that everyone just went around to Prince Street when the barricades were up. She felt it was confusing for motorists. She prefers the 4-way stop sign option, and would like to see more stop signs all along Prairie Avenue. She understands that there is a lot of traffic on the 4800 block of Forest Avenue, and there have always been a lot of accidents at that corner since she's lived there.

Andrew Wood, 1115 Prairie Avenue, stated that he would be most affected by options 1 and 2. He stated that putting in a 3 or 4-way stop sign will create backups going well west and east on Prairie Avenue preventing them from getting in and out of their driveways. He also stated that a right-in/right-out with a median extension would go well west of their driveway, impeding their ability to get in and out. He feels that stop signs will create more fender benders there.

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CHAIRMAN CARTER CLOSED THE PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN CARTER OPENED DISCUSSION AMONGST THE COMMISSION

Chairman Carter asked if the Main Street project at North High school is still planned. Mr. Sikich confirmed that it is still planned, but the design process has just started. Chairman Carter stated that he is concerned that if Main Street is reduced to one lane in each direction, even the perception of impeding traffic could exacerbate the cut-through traffic on Forest Avenue. He asked what enforcement efforts have been done to help decrease the accidents and concerns. Mr. Budds said that enforcement has increased and since June 8th, 30 officers have spent extra patrol time at this intersection resulting in 13 traffic stops, and 12 tickets issued. The feedback received from officers mirrors what residents are seeing: cars not stopping completely at the stop sign and rolling through.

Chairman Carter would like staff to reach out to school District 99 to see if anything can be done to help alleviate the issue with drop off. He stated that he is not sure the stop sign option is viable, because it relies on enforcement. He asked if Prairie Avenue would get a stop sign if Forest Avenue were closed. Mr. Sikich responded no, but that traffic calming could be added to Prairie Avenue to help slow the traffic down, and programmable signal heads could be used to avoid speeding to “catch the light.” Chairman Carter questioned if the stop sign on Prairie Avenue could be done along with the dead end on Prairie Avenue. Mr. Sikich responded that he believes there would be significant non-compliance in that case.

Mr. Shiliga stated that Prairie Avenue is a long road without stops and is a major thoroughfare that could use additional stop signs. Mr. Sikich responded that stop signs are not generally used for speed control, because unwarranted stop signs tend to be ignored, and could potentially increase rear-end collisions.

Chairman Carter believes that there needs to be some additional hybrid options, combining some of the options together to meet the needs and safety of the public.

Mr. Novak stated that he is not sure about stop signs, and believes the timing of the Main Street signals is important. He asked if Downers Grove could implement speed cameras. Mr. Budds stated that the City of Chicago and the Department of Transportation are the only ones that can use speed cameras currently in the State of Illinois. Mr. Novak is concerned with sight obstructions on Prairie Avenue, and that there is not a lot of traffic calming. He stated that he does not think stop signs are a good option, and that the temporary barrier did not work. He does not want to impact property value, and believes that maybe there is another option.

Ms. O’Malley stated that traffic on Prairie Avenue does need to slow down.

Mr. Saricks asked if there was a plan to introduce traffic calming on Prairie Avenue to the west of this location, or just at Forest Avenue. He believes that coordinating the signals at Franklin Street and Prairie Avenue on Main Street is an excellent concept. He asked if a full area study needs to be done first so traffic is not diverted and dumped onto other areas. Mr. Sikich said the west part of Prairie Avenue is currently being studied in a neighborhood traffic study, and he believes the safety at this intersection can be improved with traffic calming and other improvements within this 1-2 block section.

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Mr. Novak asked if anything at Warren has been considered, where cars coming over the tracks on Forest Avenue would have to go east on Warren Avenue to force them to Main Street. Mr. Sikich stated that he believes the signal at Burlington Avenue and Main Street is not efficient enough to move that much traffic onto Main Street due to its proximity to the tracks.

Chairman Carter asked what dictates putting signalization at an intersection. Mr. Sikich stated that there are warrants that need to be met, and the traffic volumes here would not warrant a signal. Chairman Carter asked if the signals on Main Street could be interconnected. Mr. Sikich said that they are Village signals, and that part of the District 99 Pedestrian Safety Improvement project includes an evaluation and possible modification to signal timing on Main Street.

Chairman Carter said the stop sign option does not work for him. He feels that it would not really be addressing the issue of speeding. He likes the idea of changing lenses on the Main Street signal to prevent people from seeing that they can catch a light. He stated that the right-in/right-out would depend on how it's constructed and what could be done to improve sight lines and move utilities. He believes that permanently closing the legs of Forest Avenue seems like a viable option, but it wouldn't stop the speeding on Prairie Avenue. He believes a hybrid solution is the best solution. Mr. Sikich said that traffic calming could be added to any of the options, to help slow traffic on Prairie Avenue.

Chairman Carter is in favor of temporarily closing the north and south legs of Forest Avenue for evaluation, and also adding programmable signal heads at Main Street and Prairie Avenue, and some sort of traffic calming to slow traffic on Prairie Avenue. Mr. Saricks agreed.

Mr. Novak believes a conversation should be opened with District 99 regarding drop offs, and he agrees that Forest Avenue should be closed at Prairie Avenue on a trial basis. He asked that whatever notices are sent to the neighborhood residents be extended further north to the 4600 and 4500 blocks of Forest Avenue.

WITH RESPECT TO FILE #1-21, MR. NOVAK MOVED TO RECOMMEND:

- 1. CLOSURE OF BOTH THE NORTH AND SOUTH LEGS OF FOREST AVENUE AT PRAIRIE AVENUE;**
- 2. ADDING TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON PRAIRIE AVENUE AT FOREST AVENUE;**
- 3. ADDING PROGRAMMABLE SIGNAL HEADS ON THE MAIN STREET TRAFFIC SIGNAL AT EASTBOUND PRAIRIE AVENUE;**
- 4. DISCUSSING DROP OFF PATTERNS WITH DISTRICT 99;**
- 5. EVALUATING TRAFFIC PATTERNS OFF OF WARREN AT FRANKLIN; AND**
- 6. DOING THESE MEASURES ON A TRIAL BASIS FIRST TO ASSESS THE IMPACT ON THE NEIGHBORHOOD.**

SECONDED BY MR. SHILIGA.

ALL IN FAVOR. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE 5:0.

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DISCUSSION OF OLD BUSINESS

No old business at this time.

Communications

No communications at this time.

ADJOURN

**MR. NOVAK MOVED TO ADJOURN, SECONDED BY MR. SARICKS.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE 5:0.**

Commissioner Carter adjourned the meeting at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Andrea Banke
Recording Secretary