

DRAFT Meeting Minutes  
Transportation Commission  
Tuesday, April 11, 2023 – 7:00 PM  
Council Chambers - Village Hall

1. Call to Order

Chair Burke called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Roll Call

Present: Camille Fink, Jenna Holzberg, Julie Johnston-Ahlen, Brian Straw, Ron Burke

Absent: None

Staff: Staff Liaison Jill Juliano

2. Agenda Approval

Commissioner Straw made a motion to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Commissioner Johnston-Ahlen. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

3. Approval of the Draft March 14, 2023 Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Holzberg made a motion to approve the draft March 14, 2023 Transportation Commission meeting minutes. It was seconded by Commissioner Straw. The motion was approved 4 to 0 by a voice vote, with one abstention (Commissioner Johnston-Ahlen).

4. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Jason Nudelman spoke about issues he experiences while trying to cross the Ontario St and Harlem Ave intersection during his commute to work. He explained that the beg buttons trigger both legs of the intersection, so if you don't push it at the right time, it triggers a walk signal for the unintended intersection. He also mentioned that drivers turning southbound onto Harlem Ave often do not yield to pedestrians and he gets stuck in the intersection while trying to cross, including tonight while commuting to this meeting. He asked that the Village consider installing bump-outs at this intersection as he believes they would make it easier for pedestrians to cross the street.

This comment was mistakenly thought to be for an agenda item and was therefore given at the end of the meeting.

5. Old Business

Q: Why does staff prefer option two over option one? A: It's about the fact that a bike lane might eventually be put in here and a bump-out on Erie St would then impact that bike lane.

The Commission discussed the following topics:

- The importance of considering the Greenways Plan, but not allowing it to constrain what implementations can be done at intersections that run along the Greenways
- If a bike lane will even be necessary on this section of Erie St
- The importance of all aspects and modes of the Greenways Plan, not just those related to bicycling
- How to best improve the safety of this intersection without substantially impacting the safety of surrounding streets

Martha Irvine suggested that speed bumps might be helpful since they are so close to Austin Blvd. She also mentioned that she is in favor of raised crosswalks, additional Police presence, and speed monitoring if those might still be options. She also noted that the crossing guard at N Ridgeland Ave and Erie St deserves a medal because she is amazing and saves a lot of kids from trouble. Commissioner Straw asked if she had a preferred option and she responded that she'd prefer option one to see what kind of impact it has, especially since it's temporary.

Commissioner Straw made a motion to recommend option one with the addition of the use of temporary speed radar signs as they are available on this block of N Lombard Ave. It was seconded by Commissioner Holzberg.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: Straw, Holzberg, Fink, Johnston-Ahlen, Burke

Nays: None

The motion passed unanimously 5 to 0.

## 6. New Business

### 6a) PETITION TO INSTALL A TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICE AT THE INTERSECTION OF EAST AVENUE AND GREENFIELD STREET

Staff Liaison Juliano shared background information on the item, including when the petition was submitted and that it exceeded the number of points required on the scoring table to be presented to the Commission. The reasons for the petition include concern regarding pedestrian safety as motorists speed on East Ave, drivers on Greenfield St

erroneously think that it's an all-way stop intersection, and because it is one block east of St Giles, lots of pedestrians and cars go through the intersection. She then explained the speed and volume data that was collected. Crash data and collision diagrams were also presented to the petition. Based on their findings, staff's recommendation includes 1) upgrading from two-way to all-way stop signs at the intersection of East Ave and Greenfield St, 2) deploying portable speed radar signs, and 3) upgrading to a continental or high visibility crosswalk on the southern leg of the intersection.

Commissioner Straw requested that source data be included in the agenda packets for all future petitions. Staff clarified that it is always included in the agenda that is posted online but is not generally included in the printed agenda packet for Commissioners in an effort to not waste paper as it can be extensive. Chair Burke confirmed that it is helpful information but doesn't need to be in the printed packet.

Following the presentation, the Commission asked questions regarding the item. Below is a summary of the questions and staff responses.

Q: Why not use bump-outs on the south side if there are all those pedestrians? A: We feel that the stop sign will be more than enough with regard to protecting the pedestrians. We try to consider the situation and make a recommendation that will be effective at eliminating the issue, without causing additional issues. The concerns along East Ave were more about the speeds and lack of a stop sign than pedestrian safety.

Q: If we're not using it to control speed in general, is the issue that there's confusion there and that's what we're seeing with the accidents? A: It's partially that, but that wasn't specifically called out in the crash reports that I saw.

Q: In addition to staff's recommendation, why wouldn't also applying the paint and post treatment be appropriate here to close the crossing distance and provide a visual reminder to drivers that even though this is a collector street, it is still residential? A: What we're looking at is effectively dealing with the concerns and issues that come up for a particular location based on the data we collect. Based on the data collected for this particular one, the crash rate was above the critical crash rate so we're calling for stop signs, which will also help protect pedestrians.

Q: Are there speed tables farther north on East Ave coming off North Ave? A: Yes. They're on Columbian Ave, East Ave, Linden Ave, and Euclid Ave.

Q: Despite those speed tables, we're still seeing considerable speeding on these streets? A: Coming southbound, yes.

Q: What is the cost for the bump-out? A: It would be about \$5,000-10,000, most of which would be to have a contractor come out to do the work. Once we're able to start doing it in-house, that cost will go down.

Q: Would there be a reduced cost to do both intersections at the same time? A: That's likely, but I can't tell you what that cost would be.

The Commission discussed the following topics:

- If the changes in driver behavior post-pandemic should be factored in to Commission recommendations moving forward since the baseline seems to have changed
- The differences in traffic data between 2017 and 2022
- Considering the benefits of bump-outs
- That vehicle crashes can be an indicator of unsafe environments for pedestrians
- If a stop sign alone will be effective given that there is a church and school in the neighborhood
- Speeding in north Oak Park
- If budget should be a consideration since there are so many petitions in the queue

Ryan McCarthy mentioned that he believes the bigger issues are speeding and the intersection. Because of the close proximity and unobstructed access to North Ave, a lot of Uber drivers use their block to get to and from North Ave and they are often less familiar with the locations of stop signs and tend to speed quickly down the block. He noted that he and his neighbors have experienced or witnessed many near misses.

Jonathan Biag noted his surprise that East Ave is designated as a collector street since he was under the impression from attending a previous Transportation Commission meeting that Columbian Ave was the collector street since they have a traffic signal at North Ave. He also mentioned that because Columbian Ave is one-way southbound during the beginning of the school day, that likely diverts a lot of traffic onto their street. The residents of this block have dealt with this for many years and the primary focus here should be the safety of all of the children and the pedestrians in the area. He thinks the stop signs would be great and if any additional measures could be taken to make it safer for the kids on the block to play, that would be wonderful.

Brad Ginn lives on the corner and shared that he sees near misses almost daily. There are also frequent unreported accidents, including one involving a teenager who was clipped while riding his bike. He explained that he was present to advocate for a four-way stop because based on his observations, the people approaching on Greenfield St don't realize that East Ave doesn't have a stop sign and that is causing these accidents. He recognizes that speeding is also present and hopes that can be addressed, but his main request is for a four-way stop.

Michael Raines shared that he approves of staff's recommendation. His son walks to St Giles every morning and is always talking about how cars are driving really fast. He hopes that measures can be put in place before another accident occurs.

Thom Carpenter spoke about the changes he's seen to the block over the 42 years he's lived there. His children grew up playing and riding bikes in the street and now it's not even safe for kids to play in their yards. He spoke about an incident with a speeding car that lost control and went up onto a neighbor's yard and mentioned that shortly after the incident, a new family moved in with children who often play in the front yard. Had children been playing in that yard when the incident occurred, he believes they would have been killed. He hopes that the excessive speeding can be addressed before a child is hurt. He also shared that he often comes off North Ave and down Columbian Ave and the speed table there is ridiculous, doesn't impede traffic, and may even entice drivers to go faster to go it.

Kelsey Begley moved to Oak Park from Seattle and noted that pedestrians are regarded in a completely different way here and it can take 10 minutes to cross the street because cars just don't stop for pedestrians. She shared her support for any additional measures that could improve pedestrian safety and asked that the Commission do as much as they can.

Gwendolyn Walski shared that she won't let her eight-year-old daughter walk alone to her friend's house, which is a block away, because of how dangerous it is to cross this intersection. She expressed her support for both the four-way stop and the bump-outs.

Staff Liaison Juliano read the one written public testimony aloud. The comment, in its entirety, is attached to these minutes.

Commissioner Straw made a motion to accept staff's recommendation with the addition of paint and posts in a format similar to option two from the prior agenda item on the southern leg of East Ave. It was seconded by Commissioner Holzberg.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: Straw, Holzberg, Fink, Johnston-Ahlen, Burke

Nays: None

The motion passed unanimously 5 to 0.

## 7. Adjourn

With no further business, Commissioner Straw made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Fink. Prior to the vote, Chair Burke congratulated Commissioner Straw on being elected to the Village Board. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 PM.

Submitted by:  
Anna Muench  
Administrative Assistant- Engineering