

APPROVED Meeting Minutes
Transportation Commission
Tuesday, June 14, 2022 – 7:00 PM
Remote Participation Meeting

1. Call to Order

Staff Liaison Jill Juliano called the remote participation meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Staff Liaison Juliano read the following statement into the record:

"The Village President has determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent due to the COVID-19 outbreak during Governor J.B. Pritzker's current disaster proclamation. It is also not feasible to have persons present at the regular meeting location due to public safety concerns related to the COVID-19 outbreak."

Roll Call

Present: Camille Fink, Garth Katner, Brian Straw, Ron Burke

Absent: Meghann Moses

Staff: Parking & Mobility Services Manager Sean Keane, Parking Restrictions Coordinator (PRC) Takeshi Thompson, Commander Dave Jacobson, Staff Liaison Jill Juliano

Staff Liaison Juliano noted that with four Commissioners, there is a quorum.

2. Agenda Approval

Commissioner Katner made a motion to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Commissioner Straw.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: Katner, Straw, Fink, Burke

Nays: None

The motion passed unanimously 4 to 0.

3. Approval of the Draft April 12, 2022 Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Straw made a motion to approve the draft April 12, 2022 Transportation Commission meeting minutes. It was seconded by Commissioner Katner.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: Straw, Katner, Fink, Burke

Nays: None

The motion passed unanimously 4 to 0.

4. Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

5. New Business

5a) PETITION TO INSTALL TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICE ON THE 500 AND 600 BLOCKS OF NORTH TAYLOR AVENUE

Staff Liaison Juliano presented the item to the Commissioners and explained the circumstances that led to this petition being moved ahead of the other traffic calming petitions in the queue. The petition was submitted due to concerns about the volume and speed of vehicles, bypass traffic from Austin Blvd onto their blocks, traffic from the BP gas station at the northwest corner of N Taylor Ave and Chicago Ave, crashes, and concerns about gunshots that have occurred on the blocks that are believed to be (at least in part) due to the traffic coming from the BP gas station. Crash reports and other data were collected and then a scoring table was completed for each block. They both exceeded the minimum score necessary to be reviewed by the Transportation Commission. Staff Liaison Juliano explained the vehicle volume and speed data and noted that the findings were fairly consistent with what they'd expect overall, but there does appear to be a slight speeding issue on the 500 and 600 blocks of N Taylor Ave. Based on the findings, staff's recommendation is to deploy portable speed radar signs and speed radar signs that can be installed onto light poles on an intermittent basis to bring down the speeds along those blocks.

Commissioner Straw asked why no weekend data was collected, as that may have led to a specific traffic pattern that occurs on weekends being missed. Staff responded that they look at the letter of explanation when determining when data is collected and typically only collect data on weekends when it is indicated that the problem is specifically occurring on the weekends.

Diane Ratekin, a resident from the 600 block of N Taylor Ave, spoke about why the petition organizers brought their petition to the Village Board and why they believe that staff's recommendations do not adequately address the actual experience that they have on their blocks. She specifically mentioned that because of speeding cars and gunshots, residents are concerned about safety and quality of life on their blocks and that they believe that many of their concerns stem from the 24-HR BP gas station at Chicago Ave and N Taylor Ave. She also shared several alternative solutions that the residents feel would be more effective.

Kathleen Bokar, a resident of the 500 block of N Taylor Ave, spoke about her family's decision to move to Oak Park and the concerns they have regarding speeding cars that barely stop at stop signs. She asked that more attention be paid to the safety concerns on their street so that the safety of the neighborhood and her daughter is preserved.

John Gagliano, a resident of the 500 block of N Taylor Ave, also spoke about what led him to move to Oak Park and mentioned that safety was a primary concern for him. He noted that the concerns go beyond speeding and that non-resident traffic on N Taylor is the cause for their unsafe neighborhood. He does not believe that staff's recommendation is appropriate and requests that the recommendation be reconsidered and that a meaningful solution be provided to address the safety concerns before they escalate.

Karl Leonard, a resident of the 600 block of N Taylor Ave, mentioned that the violent crimes that are happening in their neighborhood (specifically around the BP gas station) have prompted conversations with his children about gun violence and have forced him to consider restricting the freedoms he allows his children. He mentioned that while he is concerned about speeding, the shootings and other violence are what prompted him to speak. He believes that a solution that curbs the traffic to the BP gas station will improve the safety of the neighborhood.

Carolyn Newberry-Schwartz, a resident of the 500 block of N Taylor Ave, mentioned that she shares the concerns of her neighbors who previously spoke. She mentioned that they have a sense of urgency around these issues of traffic and violence that have occurred over the past few years. They believe that a creative traffic calming measure that deters some of the traffic would be helpful and would be a more community-friendly way of approaching the problems than having an increased Police presence.

Following the presentation and public testimony, Chair Burke opened the item up for discussion.

Commissioner Straw asked Commander Jacobson what impact he believes that traffic calming measures can have on gun violence. Commander Jacobson responded that when we talk about traffic calming, there are several different measures that can be considered. I don't know that I would say that any one measure would definitively, completely eliminate the possibility of gun violence. In most of these incidents, they are random acts of violence, so to say that a specific type of traffic calming measure would completely eradicate that threat of gun violence- I don't know if we could say that. There could be a positive effect, depending on the type of traffic calming measure you took, but you'd have to go on a case-by-case basis with regards to the actual incidents themselves.

Commissioner Fink stated that while she understands how the petition ended up back with the Commission, she doesn't feel that it's the right place or that they would need to work with another Commission or other folks. Deciding about whether these traffic

calming measures are going to prevent violence isn't something that she feels she can speak to.

Chair Burke suggested that it seems reasonable that as the Transportation Commission, they focus on what makes sense to address the traffic concerns that have been raised, with the understanding that those measures may or may not have some impact on the violence that has also been flagged. There are limits to what the Commission can do in that regard.

Commissioner Katner expressed his frustration for the neighbors who came to the Commission looking for solutions after going to the Board. The Commission is only advisory and can only ask the Board to do things and they often don't take our advice or grant our requests. He stated that he is upset with the Board for forcing this issue on the Commission when they don't have the tools to deal with the shootings and the violence. He also agreed that the Commission should make a recommendation for this petition with the toolbox that they have regarding traffic calming. He suggested that the Commissioners add their voices to the neighbors' and demand that the Board consider a more comprehensive approach to the periphery of Oak Park or where major drags bisect Oak Park.

The Commissioners discussed the following topics:

- Diverting traffic away from these neighborhood streets back onto Chicago Ave, which is designed for heavier traffic volumes
- Looking at how speeds can be slowed on the 500 and 600 blocks of N Taylor Ave
- How the traffic concerns mentioned in this petition echo those of many across the Village and if a more comprehensive approach should ultimately be considered
- Potentially eliminating the curb-cut from the BP gas station onto N Taylor Ave
- Whether a temporary speed radar trailer will sufficiently slow traffic or just provide a short-term solution
- Whether a traffic solution will address the gun violence and other safety concerns and if this petition merits jumping the backlog of petitions since the primary concern is one that cannot be solved by the Transportation Commission

The Commissioners determined that it would be best to have two separate motions; one for this specific item (Part A recommendation) and one for their more general request to the Village Board (Part B recommendation).

Part A:

Commissioner Straw made a motion 1) to add to staff's recommendation of deploying portable speed wagons as well as speed radar signs that can be installed onto light poles on an intermittent basis to bring down the speeds along those blocks; 2) to eliminate the N Taylor Ave driveway into the BP gas station and; 3) install a rumble strip across N Taylor

Ave in the section between Chicago Ave and the east-west alley north of Chicago Ave. It was seconded by Commissioner Katner.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: Straw, Katner, Fink, Burke

Nays: None

The motion passed unanimously 4 to 0.

Part B:

Commissioner Straw made a motion that this petition reflects resident concerns the Transportation Commission has seen from across Oak Park and we recommend the Village Board direct staff to generate a systematic approach to slowing traffic and improving safety in the Village. It was seconded by Commissioner Fink.

Commissioner Katner made a motion to amend Commissioner Straw's motion to be prefaced by "Given recent concerns over traffic safety and public safety, especially around the periphery of Oak Park and along its busy arterial and collector lanes..." The motion was seconded by Commissioner Straw.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: Katner, Straw, Fink, Burke

Nays: None

The motion to amend passed unanimously 4 to 0.

Part B, as amended:

Given recent concerns over traffic safety and public safety, especially around the periphery of Oak Park and along its busy arterial and collector lanes; this petition reflects resident concerns the Transportation Commission has seen from across Oak Park and we recommend the Village Board direct staff to generate a systematic approach to slowing traffic and improving safety in the Village.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: Straw, Fink, Katner, Burke

Nays: None

The motion passed unanimously 4 to 0.

Chair Burke asked for input from staff about whether the agenda should be amended due to the time. Staff recommended that agenda item 6a be discussed next as that item is scheduled to be discussed at the Board meeting on July 25, 2022. The Commissioners agreed.

6. Old Business

6a) REVIEW OF RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO THE EXISTING OVERNIGHT ON-STREET PERMIT ZONES

Parking Mobility Services Manager Keane introduced Takeshi Thompson, the new Parking Restrictions Coordinator (PRC), to the Commissioners. PRC Thompson read the two written public testimony aloud. The comments, in their entirety, are attached to these minutes.

Parking Mobility Services Manager Keane presented background information on the item, including some of the considerations taken by staff when deciding which zones to amend. He explained how the various maps included in the agenda packet show the changes reflected in the context of the entire Village, as was previously requested by the Commission, as well as in each individual zone. He also reiterated that staff is not recommending increasing the capacity of the zones, but rather just the street frontages where those permit holders could park. Staff's recommendation is to get a consensus from the Commissioners regarding the recommended changes so that notifications can be sent to affected residents, allowing for public testimony at the July Commission meeting. From there, the recommendation would tentatively go to the Village Board at their meeting on July 25, 2022.

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

Q: The blue is the old zone boundary, the orange is the new zone boundary, and the blue lines are where parking is proposed? A: Correct, it is a little confusing on the combined map, but I think it's a little clearer on the individual zone maps. Looking at Y5 for example, in this instance we are recommending eliminating some streets from the zone, with the idea that we'd be adding on-street parking to every street within that zone. The yellow hatched area indicates what the boundaries of the zone would be.

Q: Is there any indication on this map of what the new parking specifically is? A: We don't have a comparison of what's been added, but the blue shaded areas represent the areas that we're eliminating from the zones.

Q: In Y5 for example, there is a permit holder in the blue shaded area and not in the yellow shaded area. What happens to that permit holder? A: It's important to point out that we're not recommending eliminating any street frontages that are currently permit parking, so