

APPROVED Meeting Minutes
Transportation Commission
Monday, September 11, 2017
Council Chambers – Village Hall

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Chalabian called the meeting to order at 6:58 PM.

Present: Jack Chalabian, Kyle Eichenberger, James Thompson, Michael Stewart

Excused: Roya Basirirad, Robert Taylor

Staff: Jill Juliano, Mike Koperniak, Mary Avinger

There was no non-agenda public testimony.

Approval of Tonight's Meeting Agenda

Commissioner Stewart motioned to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Eichenberger. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Approval of the Draft August 21, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Eichenberger motioned to approve the draft August 21, 2017, Transportation Commission meeting minutes as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Thompson. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

REVIEW PETITION TO UPGRADE TO ALL-WAY STOP SIGNS AT THE INTERSECTION OF EAST AVENUE AND DIVISION STREET

Transportation Engineer, Jill Juliano gave a presentation explaining the history and the reasons for the petition. The presentation included aerial maps of the intersection showing the proximity to St. Giles School and Taylor Park. Jill also presented information from the April 11, 2017 traffic volume count and speed study as well as information on crash reports for the intersection from September 2014 through August 2017. Jill stated staff recommends tabling the petition to upgrade for three to six months for additional crash history post-Chicago Ave resurfacing and bring the item back to the Commission for a final review and recommendation at that time.

Commissioner Eichenberger asked about process of upgrading stop signs and if the Village would have seen crashes increase on their own would that change. Jill stated she spoke to the Village Engineer, Bill McKenna about it and they didn't see a significant change. Commissioner Eichenberger has if temporary stop signs were ever

put in during construction and they stayed up? Mike Koperniak responded only situation he could think of was during the Barrie Park remediation.

Commissioner Thompson asked what crash rate constitutes putting up a stop sign and Jill responded and mentioned that 15 crashes occurred during Chicago Ave resurfacing project and now that it's complete they need to see if the crash rate goes back down. Commissioner Thompson asked how much additional time is needed for the study and Jill responded three to six months. Commissioner Thompson also asked how speed figures into crash rate and Jill responded.

Commissioner Stewart asked if Division was the detour route for the Chicago Ave construction and Jill responded yes. Commissioner Stewart asked if staff looked at enforcement rates and Jill responded no.

Commissioner Eichenberger asked if there were any other intersections with increased crashes and Jill responded staff did not look for any.

Commissioner Thompson asked if staff would be the ones monitoring for six months and Jill responded yes.

Commissioner Stewart stated he understands staff is not recommending stop signs at this time but asked if staff had any recommendations for reducing speed. Jill responded staff only studied for stop signs.

Chair Chalabian asked if speed on Division was reduced to 25mph and Jill responded yes but drivers still think its 30mph. Chair Chalabian spoke about Division as a collector street and asked why there are no stop signs on Division between Ridgeland and Oak Park Ave and Jill responded stop signs are not used for speed control. Chair Chalabian asked based on crash history if this intersection qualified for a traffic signal and Jill and Mike Koperniak responded traffic signal warrants were not looked at. Chair Chalabian spoke about the north/south legs of crosswalk at the intersection being non-existent and how the intersection is two blocks away from St. Giles and Taylor Park. Jill responded safe routes to school are for District 97 and the high school but do not cross Division. Chair Chalabian also asked why staff would wait six months as opposed to nine to twelve months and Jill responded.

The floor was opened to public testimony.

Kellie McGinnis of 838 N East Ave stated she's been a resident of Oak Park for 17 years and 14 of those years were on Ridgeland so she's used to traffic. Mrs. McGinnis spoke about speeding cars on East, increased traffic, and increased accidents which the last two travelled beyond the intersection and into a neighbor's yard and onto the sidewalk. Mrs. McGinnis stated she favors the four-way stop signs for the safety of OPRF and St. Giles students. She also thinks neighborhood should be studied including Thomas because she is concerned for the children and her neighbors.

Patti Atchison of 907 N East Ave asked about the traffic count study and stated she thinks the problem is the volume of traffic between 7am – 8:30am and 3:30pm – 5:00pm from Oak Park River Forest High School students. Ms. Atchison spoke about hearing lots of screeches from near miss accidents and questioned if that counted. She spoke about how East Ave is a route that young drivers use and asked if time of day mattered. Jill Juliano responded. Ms. Atchison stated that she's lived in Oak Park for five years and it seems accidents have increased each year.

Kathryn Kjarsgaard of 900 N East Ave stated she lives right at the intersection of East and Division and hears accidents all the time that are more serious than fender benders. Ms. Kjarsgaard also stated there are lots of kids in the area and she is concerned for their safety and spoke of details from recent accidents.

Libbey Paul of 822 N East Ave stated she has two teens at Oak Park River Forest High School and one is a new driver. Mrs. Paul spoke about how teens are a risk and may be part of the problem and spoke about speeding north and south of Division.

Michael Paul of 822 N East Ave spoke about data retrieved and agrees that staff should obtain more data. Mr. Paul suggested staff should question if the stop signs will increase traffic because while it is important to consider accidents increased traffic volumes may become a bigger issue.

Elizabeth Carstens of 901 Fair Oaks Ave stated she lives at Division and Fair Oaks and that she's seen an increase in traffic and doesn't feel its construction related. Ms. Carstens stated three accidents happened since construction stopped. She also spoke about a child on a bike almost getting hit going to school and has seen other kids almost getting hit crossing the street. Ms. Carstens spoke of concerns for her son having to get to the bus by crossing Division and spoke of damage done in accidents.

Henrik Aratyn of 851 N East Ave stated he lives on the corner of the intersection and spoke about speeding cars on Division and accidents. Mr. Aratyn stated he thinks adding stop signs will increase traffic on East Ave and increase accidents and if not accidents, that they will increase speed on East Ave. He thinks traffic calming devices should be considered for East Ave and also spoke about how making the intersection a four-way stop would increase noise and air pollution.

Michel McGinnis of 838 N East Ave spoke about the numbers and research and stated that it's not about the numbers but about the distracted drivers, speeding cars, and kids crossing street. Mr. McGinnis spoke about speeding and showed the Commission a picture of a car from an accident that ended up in his yard. Mr. McGinnis stated he doesn't believe traffic was from the construction and questioned if the human element is more important than numbers.

Public testimony was closed out.

Commissioner Eichenberger stated he thinks the study is backwards and favors stop signs being installed without the additional study. Commissioner Eichenberger thinks staff should do study after stop signs are in and spoke about cars travelling over 45mph on Division.

Commissioner Thompson stated residents made compelling arguments but he's not sure if stop signs are the answer. Commissioner Thompson thinks traffic calming devices should be considered on East Ave and on Division.

Commissioner Stewart stated he was glad to see people speaking and spoke about previously living in area and his experience and his agreement with Commissioner Thompson. Commissioner Stewart stated he doesn't want anyone to get hurt but has witnessed rolling stops and believes stop signs do not affect speed. He thinks the intersection is a good one to look at for a traffic light and spoke about the Scoville/Chicago Ave intersection and how maybe putting the same measures in on Division and waiting to finish study would work. Commissioner Stewart also spoke about liking the in-street pedestrian crossing signs that state drivers must stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk.

Chair Chalabian stated he's never seen so many crashes at one intersection in his ten years and is concerned about waiting. Chair Chalabian spoke about the history of intersection, near Mann School and installing stop signs. Chair Chalabian thinks upgrading the crosswalks would be good but won't solve the problem due to a half mile of no east/west speed control. He spoke about East Ave as a collector street and how possibly adding a choker in addition to upgrading the stop signs would help. Chair Chalabian stated he thinks people use East Ave because Ridgeland and Oak Park Ave are oversaturated with traffic and talked about problem spilling over to Chicago Ave. He also spoke about enforcement, how crosswalks should be upgraded on north and south sides of intersection, that stop signs should go in now, and chokers should go in north and south of Division on East Ave to significantly reduce crashes.

Commissioner Stewart motioned 1. Add continental striping across Division at East Ave and Division, 2. Add in-pavement pedestrian stop crossing sign, 3. Do extra three month study, and 4. Increase police enforcement. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

The voice vote was as follows:

Ayes: Thompson, Stewart

Nays: Chalabian, Eichenberger

The motion failed two to two.

A discussion about: how much to include in the motion, speeding cars, effectiveness of in-street pedestrian signs, helping pedestrians, stop signs and speeding, stepped approach versus all at once, and rolling stops occurred.

Commissioner Thompson motioned 1. Upgrade stop signs to all-way stop, 2. Add continental crosswalks across Division at East Ave and Division, 3. Complete a six month follow up study, and 4. Increase police enforcement. Commissioner Eichenberger seconded the motion and added he feels this motion gives residents the opportunity to come back later and add additional measures.

The voice vote was as follows:

Ayes: Thompson, Chalabian, Eichenberger

Nays: Stewart

The motion passed three to one.

REVIEW PETITION TO UPGRADE TO ALL-WAY STOP SIGNS AT THE INTERSECTION OF HARVEY AVENUE AND LEMOYNE PARKWAY

Transportation Engineer, Mike Koperniak gave a presentation explaining the history and the reasons for the petition. The presentation included pictures from each direction of the intersection, an aerial map of the traffic calming devices in the area, and a map of the safe to school walking routes in the area.

Chair Chalabian asked how to get to Hatch School from LeMoyne and Mike Koperniak responded. Chair Chalabian asked about entrances to Mann School and spoke about school walking routes not working. Chair Chalabian also asked about pedestrian counts and Mike responded they were done on May 31, 2017 from 7am-9am and from 2pm-4pm. Chair Chalabian stated he thinks there's possibly a speeding issue on Lemoyne.

Mike Koperniak continued the presentation speaking about speed and volume data as well as crash history information. Mike stated it is staff's recommendation to deny the petition based on low vehicle volume, speeding not being an issue, and no correctible vehicle crashes.

Chair Chalabian asked if LeMoyne a residential street and Mike responded yes, both LeMoyne and Harvey are residential streets.

Chair Chalabian spoke about no one showing up to the meeting and went over the petition to see who was for and against the stop signs. Chair Chalabian also went through draft Traffic Calming Toolbox example and thinks this may be a bus stop corner which is generating pedestrian traffic. Chair Chalabian stated after ten years of being on the Commission this is the first time no residents showed up to a meeting for a stop sign.

A discussion about whether to table or deny the petition, what motion to make, using the Traffic Calming Toolbox as a tool, and lack of resident participation took place.

Commissioner Thompson motioned to table the petition and Commissioner Stewart seconded the motion.

A brief discussion about what happens when people ask about the petition, letters mailed to residents and when occurred.

The voice vote was as follows:

Ayes: Thompson, Chalabian, Eichenberger, Stewart

Nays: None

The motion passed four to zero.

Commissioner Eichenberger motioned to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Stewart.

The voice vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectively submitted

Mary Avinger

Mary Avinger,
Administrative Secretary