

**MINUTES OF THE TRANSPORTATION
AND SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING
May 18, 2021, 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present:

Chair Pete Kosanovich (present remotely)
Commissioner Amy Avakian (present remotely)
Commissioner John Brooks (present remotely)
Commissioner Thomas Kelly (present remotely)
Commissioner Erica Lord (present remotely)
Commissioner William Swanson (present remotely)
Commissioner Jose Venegas (present remotely)

Others Present:

Chief Brian Budds, LES
Deputy Chief Dan Albrecht, LES
Trustee Scott Lewis (present remotely)
Administrative Services Coordinator Susan Depner (present remotely)
Director of Engineering Jeff Koza (present remotely)
Director of Technology Pat Schramm (present remotely)

Public Present:

Emily Zimmerman (present remotely)
Brian Barnhart (present remotely)
Amanda Taglia (present remotely)
Melissa McDonald (present remotely)

Electronic Attendance:

This meeting was conducted via Zoom online platform in accordance with Illinois Governor Disaster Proclamation dated April 2, 2021 (Restore Illinois Plan), and Executive Order 2021-06 extending the Governor's prior Executive Orders relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and his implementation of the "Restore Illinois" Plan (COVID-19 E.O. No. 76), as amended.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 18, 2021.

2. Roll Call

Present remotely were Chair Pete Kosanovich, Commissioner Amy Avakian, Commissioner John Brooks, Commissioner Thomas Kelly, Commissioner Erica Lord,

Commissioner William Swanson, and Commissioner Jose Venegas. Also present remotely were Trustee Scott Lewis, Administrative Services Coordinator Susan Depner, Director of Engineering Jeff Koza, and Director of Technology Pat Schramm. Present in Village Hall were Chief Brian Budds, LES, and Deputy Chief Daniel Albrecht, LES.

3. Approval of Minutes – September 17, 2019

Commissioner Lord made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2019 meeting. Commissioner Avakian seconded the motion and the minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

4. Public Comment

Public comment was opened for Item 5 on the agenda.

5. Review and Consideration of Proposed Traffic Control Improvements – Intersection of 43rd Street and Franklin Ave

Chair Kosanovich reported that a Western Springs resident, Emily Zimmerman, requests that a two-way stop sign at the intersection of 43rd Street and Franklin Ave. be changed to a 4-way stop sign. Ms. Zimmerman spoke about the reasons for this request. The intersection has a lot of pedestrian traffic due to Field Park School, McClure Junior High, and First United Methodist Church, which hosts a LADSE program. A lot of the traffic crosses where there is no stop. Visibility is poor due to parked cars blocking sight lines. She referenced the traffic study done in 2018. Reasons cited for not adding a 4-way stop in 2018 included a lack of accidents. Ms. Zimmerman pointed out there was an accident in 2020. Ms. Zimmerman also pointed out that the community is in favor of this recommendation and many residents signed her change.org petition. She concluded that other options, such as crossing guards and reduced parking, are not as good an option as the 4-way stop.

Dr. Barnhart from School District 101 also spoke. He said this intersection is heavily trafficked by students and also heavily parked. He also pointed out that it is challenging to find crossing guards and concluded that he is concerned about this intersection.

Commissioner Kelly asked if the accident from 2020 was ticketed and what were the circumstances. Chief Budds answered that a citation was issued for a failure to yield, though there were no injuries. Commissioner Brooks asked what are the busiest times during the day involving students? Commissioner Avakian responded with her experience with her own children and Dr. Barnhart and Chief Budds said 3 to 4 p.m. was the busiest time for students and the 8 o'clock hour was the busiest in the morning for traffic.

Commissioner Avakian asked about measure taken in 2018 and stated that these actions don't seem to have been effective since residents are stating these measures

are not working. Chief Budds says a “no parking here to corner” sign was added and a tree was trimmed in 2018.

Chair Kosanovich then pointed out that in 2009 the Village adopted the Federal Highway Administration Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) to use to gauge possibilities when issues come up. He also pointed out that there are liabilities to the Village if we don’t adhere to certain requirements of the policy. However, he said that we can make a decision based on common sense. He also pointed out that there was only one accident in eight years and that the accident in 2020 was due to someone not obeying the stop sign that is currently there. He said the community support and the support of Dr. Barnhart adds value to the discussion.

Commissioner Lord asked if bicyclists are counted as pedestrians for purposes of counts. Director of Engineering Koza said that yes, they are counted as pedestrians.

Another resident, Amanda Taglia, commented that she walks this intersection with her children to school and that visibility is poor due to parked cars and that cars fly by.

Commissioner Swanson asked if a pedestrian crossing signal or other signs could work at that intersection? Director of Engineering Koza responded that adding additional signage would not improve the issue as there is already signage, and that such a traffic signal wouldn’t be appropriate at that location.

Ms. Zimmerman then spoke again, referencing the traffic standards. She said visibility and pedestrians should be taken into consideration and that she believes pedestrian traffic has increased since 2018. She also stated that the 2020 accident involved a driver who did stop and then drove on, not seeing the oncoming car, thus making it a visibility issue. Chairman Kosanovich replied that he agrees that it isn’t just traffic that needs to be taken under consideration and pointed out the parking signs and tree/shrub trimming that was done in 2018.

Commissioner Lord stated that the legal opinion we received when this issue was discussed in 2018 states if we put in a traffic sign or signal and then there is a violation, our ability to enforce this would be limited and subject to being overturned. She asked if the Vehicle Code give schools or parks special consideration in traffic issues. Director of Engineering Koza said there are school and park zones regarding speed, but he can’t speak to the legal issue. Chair Kosanovich said this is a question to ask our Village attorney. Commissioner Avakian said if you don’t follow the guidelines, the Village loses the ability to prosecute.

Chair Kosanovich brought to the attention of the Commission that in 2012, there was a 2-way stop that was changed to a 4-way stop at 42nd Street and Johnson, though it did not meet the MUTCD standards.

Resident Melissa McDonald then commented. She drives to music lessons through this intersection and said she believes the 2018 study is outdated because there are now more businesses and more traffic.

MOTION: Commissioner Avakian made a motion to propose changing the 2-way stop sign at the intersection of 43rd Street and Franklin Ave. to a 4-way stop sign. Commissioner Brooks seconded the motion. Chair Kosanovich called for a vote.

Chair Pete Kosanovich: abstained
Commissioner Amy Avakian: Yes
Commissioner John Brooks: Yes
Commissioner Thomas Kelly: No
Commissioner Erica Lord: Yes
Commissioner William Swanson: Yes
Commissioner Jose Venegas: Yes

The vote passed 5-1 in favor and will advance to the Public Health and Safety Committee at the next meeting in June.

6. Other Business

Chief Budds said that he anticipates a July meeting will be necessary and that there are a couple possible agenda items. These include a resident request for sign improvements at Hillgrove/Clausen and Burlington/Clausen by the pedestrian underpass, a resident sign request at the intersection of Oak and Central, and a parking request from Timber Trails.

7. Adjournment

Commissioner Avakian made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Kelly seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved by a unanimous vote and the meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Depner
Administrative Services Coordinator