

APPROVED REVISED Meeting Minutes
Transportation Commission
Wednesday, May 10, 2017
Conference Room 229 – Public Works Center

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Jack Chalabian called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Present: Jack Chalabian, Kyle Eichenberger, Joel Schoenmeyer, Michael Stewart and James Thomas. Roya Basirirad came in shortly after meeting began.

Staff: Mike Koperniak, Jill Velan, Bill McKenna, Dorothy Benson-Baker, Dave Jacobson, Peter Pilafis

Excused Absence: Craig Chesney

CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRAFFIC CALMING TOOLBOX

Michael Koperniak gave a brief presentation on continued development of the traffic calming toolbox.

Chair Chalabian spoke about existing speed tables on Marion and Woodbine and what the negative impacts are.

Sergeant Jacobson explained that they are not major impacts for the Oak Park Police Department.

Deputy Fire Chief Pilafis expressed the issues are with humps. He explained there will be a slower response time for patient care in ambulances; emergency workers need to get to fires and patients as soon as possible. Next, he expressed that staff already has to deal with cul-de-sacs and one-way streets.

Chair Chalabian mentioned there are other communities with speed humps. He asked has anyone reached out to them.

DFC Pilafis explained that speed humps with axle gaps would work. He continued that the Village of Oak Park Fire Department tries to deal with them but does not want to set a precedent.

Bill McKenna spoke about how we tried the speed humps with axle gaps on East Avenue but did not see any positive impacts, so they were removed.

DFC Pilafis reiterated the Fire Department's views about the humps and how they slow response times.

Sgt. Jacobson commented how one or two speed humps in the Village does not affect their operations in cars. But if they proliferate, then it would start to cause problems. Perhaps we should cap the number of them in the Village.

Commissioner Eichenberger asked if the OP Police Dept. has run times and how they vary across the Village.

DFC Pilafis responded on behalf of the Fire Department that they do have data. But asked that we keep in mind that it only takes one time that it could have an impact. Fire currently works around the existing traffic calming measures. We have to get to an emergency scene as safe as possible in as short a time as possible.

Commissioner Schoenmeyer asked what the Toolbox should include and how many traffic calming measures have we done on adjacent streets.

Commissioner Stewart spoke on how we are trying to develop criteria so that we put them in only when they are needed. He added that staff often hears about speed situations and the lack of enforcement and there is a tradeoff between slowing traffic year-round versus the not common fire calls. We need to look at trade-off factors and should be able to use them if warranted.

Commissioner Thompson agreed with Commissioner Stewart. He added perhaps we should only put these traffic calming measures on residential streets and not on collectors or arterials.

Commissioner Stewart suggested these humps could be put mostly along streets near borders.

Bill McKenna added we need to look at the existing traffic calming measures on adjacent streets and how they affect.

There was a discussion about the locations of existing speed humps and tables.

Chair Chalabian asked Bill McKenna what are the Public Works challenges.

Bill McKenna explained most are minor impacts. There is only one major impact. Staff can clear streets, however, it adds challenges to leaf-pickup, snow removal and street cleaning.

Commissioner Basirirad questioned what distinguishes between minor or major impacts.

Bill McKenna explained that the Public Works Department looked at efficiencies of operations and how they are affected by the existing traffic calming measures.

Commissioner Basirirad continued questioning if there were a standard with an acceptable minimum number of speed humps.

Sgt. Jacobson stated that the expectation is that people will want them more and more speed bumps. This will start to affect operations. We have to balance response times versus if we should put a cap and move them around.

Dorothy Benson-Baker inputted that administration staff gets a volume of phone calls about speed bumps and if these are offered publicly, the residents will definitely ask for them more frequently.

Commissioner Thompson suggested we proceed incrementally and see what happens. We can always pull back when necessary.

Bill McKenna expounded further on how residents will be asking for them and how difficult it would be to limit their use.

Chair Chalabian spoke about the speed table policy and how it was implemented. He added we need to manage public expectations.

DFC Pilafis spoke on when staff worked at Linden and East, did we look along North Avenue to see how effective traffic calming measures have been or were we trying to push traffic to arterial streets.

There was a brief discussion about the Jackson and Kenilworth fire—the police and fire response times—and how it killed the Transportation Commission's recommendation at that time.

Chair Chalabian spoke about how the Commission does hear from the public about speeding and police response. But speed reduction is only temporary. Maybe we don't want to put in so many traffic calming measures that it affects operations, however, we need to balance the use of the traffic calming measures.

Bill McKenna responded that if the Transportation Commission wants to pursue not recommended measures, then staff will have to present its non-support when it goes to Village Board of Trustees.

Commissioner Eichenberger responded that in the end, the resident needs to know what their options are and they have to let the Trustees know.

Chair Chalabian explained that Transportation Commission is the Village Board of Trustee's sounding board. People want to live in area with a good quality of life. The Transportation Commission's role is to hear all residents' concerns but also has to consider staff's needs as well.

Sgt. Jacobson stated that fire trucks come from fixed locations, while police comes from random areas within the Village during emergency situations.

Bill McKenna explained that we can try to quantify minor negative impact effects to the Public Works Department. We can try to estimate numbers.

There was a brief discussion to review all the traffic calming measures.

For Level 1, it was noted, the Village uses all of these now.

Bill McKenna explained that Bott Dots are not used in cold climates due to snow plowing.

All traffic calming measures were reviewed.

There was a discussion about speed humps, bumps, tables and cushions.

Commissioner Eichenberger asked about the temporary speed cushions on East Ave.

Jill Juliano explained the history of them.

Commissioner Eichenberger inquired if there were temporary ones that could be moved around.

Bill McKenna explained our use and maintenance problems of temporary speed bumps.

There was a discussion about the use of speed trailers.

Mike Koperniak spoke about Level 3 and how the traffic calming measures should indicate which are not bike-friendly.

Then there was a discussion about not bike-friendly traffic calming measures and how to deal with them.

Bill McKenna expressed to the Commission the traffic calming measures that are not recommended by staff and the ones he thought the Transportation Commission should consider.

Chair Chalabian clarified that he supports speed bumps and tables. He mentioned that first responders should use arterials more. However, he agreed with DFC Pilafis that the existing North Avenue traffic calming measures can hinder first responders.

Next, there was a discussion about developing caps on level 3 and 4 traffic calming measures.

Chair Chalabian indicated that in 10 years of working on the Commission no cul-de-sac petitions have succeeded.

Commissioner Schoenmeyer spoke on how speed tables are used in other cities and towns. He was inquisitive about what is different about Oak Park. He wondered if there are objections to speed humps by officials in other localities.

Bill McKenna explained opinion most fire officials have is that there are problems with speed humps and tables.

The Commission continued discussing speed humps and tables and how to set limitations and guidelines of use of level 3 and 4 measures.

Bill McKenna spoke about how staff will work on streamlining the process.

The Commission indicated that it wants to keep speed humps and tables in the traffic calming toolbox but make them hard to get.

There was a discussion about each of these traffic calming measures: Neckdown/Bulbout, Center Island, Two Lane Choke, One Lane Choke, Round About, Chicane and Lateral Shift.

Now on to level 4. This discussion was about full and partial closures.

Bill McKenna gave staff's perspective and why the staff is against them. Also, it has a fiscal impact to residents. Roosevelt and Madison Districts were trying to keep them off of these streets. If original need goes away, the cul-de-sac still remains.

There was a short discussion why diverters are not recommended by staff. Bill McKenna explained for the same reasons as cul-de-sacs.

There was discussion about keeping the cul-de-sacs and diverters or removing them from the table. The Commission ultimately voted 4 to 2 to remove the full and partial street closure options from the traffic calming measures summary table. Commissioners Eichenberger, Basirirad, Schoenmeyer, and Thompson voted to remove them from the table. Commissioners Chalabian and Stewart voted to keep them in the table.

Then we discussed about the criteria table. The Commissioners voted unanimously to keep it as is.

Finally, there was a discussion about how and when to implement level 3 and 4 traffic calming measures.

Chair Chalabian asked for the last 10 petitions to score and review them.

Staff will look at revising the petition form and also update the Menu.

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

The voice vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Respectively submitted

Dorothy Benson-Baker
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Administrative Secretary