

DRAFT SUMMARY NOTES

Traffic & Transportation Committee Meeting Village of Northfield

**Wednesday, December 16, 2009 – 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers – 1st Floor**

Present: Robert Hayward, Chair
Margaret Parcels, Member
J. Patrick Doherty, Member
Ted Greene, Member
Sean O'Grady, Member
Peter Fischer, Member
Donald Klein, Member
Barbara Moore, Member

ABSENT: Linda Garard, Member
Brian Kozminski, Trustee

Others Present: Stacy Sigman, Village Manager (Liaison)
President Fred Gougler
Trustee Fred Teichert
Patrick O'Donoghue
Dan deLoys
Sydney Clark
John Birkinbine
Peggy Kozminski

Approve Summary Notes of the October 28, 2009 Meeting

A motion was made by Member Parcels and seconded by Member Moore to approve the October 28, 2009 Summary Notes. By voice vote all approved.

Update on Willow Road

Mike Kerr of Christopher Burke & Associates Engineering attended the meeting to explain to the Traffic and Transportation Committee and the Community Advisory Group (CAG) members the design decisions behind the Three Lane Plan approved by IDOT. Mike walked through the plan starting in the late 1990s when he became involved. When Christopher Burke became involved in the project, IDOT had agreed to a three-lane concept. Christopher Burke was hired to design and facilitate the Phase I and Phase II process for a three lane plan. Mr. Burke clarified that he had not studied some of the other design alternatives because the decision had already been made with the State and the Village to pursue the three lane solution.

Mr. Kerr reported the main goals in the three lane plan were to improve mobility and safety. He indicated that detailed studies had been done on the traffic patterns, light signals and accidents. The most common accidents reported were rear collisions due primarily to left turn movements. Therefore, a focus of the design was to improve the ability to make left hand turns. The third lane was used to allow a safe area for people to get out of the flow of traffic to make left hand turns. The intersections were improved with left hand turn lanes. Mr. Kerr noted that in creating additional time for left turn movements at the lights, the level

of service was not improved. In fact, sometimes the level of service (LOS) went down at the intersections. Mr. Kerr indicated that Christopher Burke Engineering, the Village and IDOT worked closely trying to eliminate conflicts as well. A number of roadways were proposed to be closed and driveways relocated in order to allow safer movements throughout the corridor. Mr. Kerr indicated the thing not considered was capacity since they were retained to improve mobility and safety along the corridor.

There was a question regarding why there was no center or third lane in the “s” curve area.

Mike Kerr responded that it was not necessary because there were no left turns in that area and it had been taken out for safety reasons so that it would not be used as an extra driving lane.

Mike was questioned on the safety of emergency vehicles.

Mike responded that the roadway profile and shoulder were designed to accommodate emergency vehicles.

Former President John Birkinbine was asked to give the politics involved with regard to Willow Road as a three lane roadway.

Mr. Birkinbine indicated that IDOT had published a set of plans in the 1990s that showed improvements to the Willow Road corridor from the Eden’s Expressway west to Route 53. There had been no local comment or input into that plan. When the plan was published, all the communities along the corridor were concerned with the design of the roadway. It showed four lanes through Northfield and additional lanes up to eight lanes west of Northfield. All of the towns began to meet and discuss various options and it was decided among the communities that each would work directly with IDOT to design a roadway that worked for them within their community. Northfield reached out to its local officials and was successful in getting the Governor to agree that what was preferable in Northfield was a three lane solution. Representative Beth Coulson and Senator Kathleen Parker assisted in that effort and the Governor directed IDOT to develop a plan that would accommodate increased safety and increased mobility but that it did not need to include capacity. It was at this point that Christopher Burke Engineering was retained and the three lane solution that IDOT approved through the Phase I and Phase II process was developed. President Birkinbine noted that there was a lot of compromise with various meetings to meet IDOT’s needs as well as the Village’s needs. He further indicated it is important to note that the three lane plan provides for a four lane solution. The solution the Governor agreed to was that a three lane plan could be installed and moved ahead but it would be reevaluated at the end of five years. If it was not sufficient to meet the needs of the region, it could be expanded and restudied then. So when Christopher Burke designed the roadway all of the major infrastructure (utilities, bridges, etc.) were designed to accommodate a future expansion. About 75% of all the improvements that would be installed with the three lane plan would also stay in place and would not need to be modified as part of a four lane plan.

Updated Schedule for 2010

Chairman Hayward asked everyone to note the dates of the 2010 T&T meetings on their calendars. He noted some flexibility would be needed since they do not have IDOT’s schedule for the CAG meetings over the next year. He noted that he wanted to be sure all T&T and CAG members are educated and updated on any Willow Road topics prior to IDOT meetings and noted he might have to request that some of the T&T meetings dates be adjusted for that reason

Campaign Funding Update

Manager Sigman indicated that she had received final word of funding from both the School District and the Park District. The Park District committed \$10,000 and the School District committed \$50,000. The NSAG Group is working on a campaign and will be moving forward with that in the next month or two.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, at 8:30 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

*The next Traffic and Transportation Committee meeting will be held **January 27, 2010** at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers on the first floor.*