

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, September 13, 2018

Present: Chair Trustee Katy Cornell, Village President Neil Palmer, Trustee John Domaszek (arriving at 6:25PM), Committee Members, Ms. Barbara Decker, Mr. Gus Moulas.

Members Excused: Mr. Vrakas and Mr. D.J Richlen.

Also Present: Police Chief Jim Gage.

1. Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order, at 6:00 pm, by Trustee Cornell.

2. Review and approve minutes from June 14, 2018.

Trustee Cornell entertained a motion for approval. President Palmer made a motion for approval of the minutes, from June 14, 2018, with Ms. Decker seconding and Mr. Moulas abstaining. Motioned passed.

3. Discuss citizen request for Gremoor pathway.

Trustee Cornell provided an overview of pathway projects currently under consideration by the Village Board, indicating the following;

- The Watertown Plank Road path from Highland Drive to Pilgrim Parkway is slated for completion in 2019.
- The Hollyhock pathway has been approved in concept to be completed with the scheduled North Ave. reconstruction beginning in 2021. However, this project has not been funded, nor has there been any engineering studies on the project.
- The Gebhardt pathway is also slated for 2021 and is not funded and there have not been any engineering studies.

President Palmer gave a brief historical background on the pathway progression, indicating the Public Safety Committee had reviewed and ranked requests, bringing us to the timeline outlined by Trustee Cornell. Palmer mentioned that even though the Public Safety Committee may recommend a pathway that does not mean that a pathway will be built, since ultimately the project needs to be approved by the Village Board and funded.

Ms. Sarah W. Smith, of 13380 Gremoor Drive, provided the Committee with a petition to build a pathway on Gremoor Drive and informed the Committee of her perception of speeding vehicles and high traffic volumes necessitating the pathway.

Chief Gage informed the Committee that the entire stretch of Gremoor Drive experienced eleven accidents, since 2006, with six of those accidents occurring at Gremoor and 124th Streets. Additionally, there were no pedestrian or bicycle accidents reported during this timeframe.

Ms. Rita Larsen, 1850 Hollyhock Lanes, asked about the cost of the pathway project. President Palmer indicated that costs are based on things like engineering and asphalt costs and reiterated that Hollyhock is not funded currently. He additionally stated that it can take a number of years to approve and fund projects on this type.

Ms. Mary Inden, of 14745 Watertown Plank Road, expressed her approval for pathways, citing her experience in utilizing the Watertown Plank Road path across from her home. She further suggested that the Village set up a general pathway fund in the budget, so that funds are being accumulated in preparation for the approval of some or all of the recommended pathways.

There was some general discussion about pathway timelines and funding options, along with various complaints about speeding vehicles on Watertown Plank Road. As a result, Ms. Inden was in favor of having the village purchase additional electronic speed advisory signs. Chief Gage indicated that there are currently two more signs on order.

President Palmer made a motion that the Public Safety Committee recommend to the Finance Committee to establish a method and schedule to fund general pathways requests. Palmer gave an example by stating maybe over a ten year period. The motion was seconded by Ms. Decker and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Discuss Tonawanda School on street parking and traffic flow.

Chief Gage gave an overview of the progress made, working with the school staff, to establish the following;

- As a temporary action, recommending that the north side of Bobby Lane and west side of Hollyhock Lane be posted no parking.
- Install a no left turn sign, except busses, for the west parking lot entrance.
- Send correspondence, through the school, to the parents advising a right turn only into the west parking lot entrance, along with discouraging on-street parking.

Long term changes include;

- Repaint the parking lot spaces to allow for a west to east only flow through the parking lot.
- Eliminate the parking row closest to the building to allow for queuing more parent pickup cars in the parking lot.
- Reconstruct the playground area to allow for a roadway/parking area to the south of the building with Legion Drive access.

Mr. Spencer Mayhew of 855 Grandview, commented that he serves on the Tonawanda Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) and that they are in agreement with the changes and will help to get the word out to the parents. He indicated that the PTO will be helping craft an advisory notice to parents and asked that any changes occur early next week.

Discussion also revealed that the area should be repainted to better define the crosswalk.

President Palmer made a motion to authorize the Chief of Police to make temporary traffic sign changes, as deemed necessary, to accommodate safer and more efficient traffic flow in the area. Seconded by Ms. Decker and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Discuss proposed cul-du-sac for Underwood Parkway.

Chief Gage briefly discussed the memos associated with this agenda item, indicating that department heads had no issues with the concept of cul-du-sacing Underwood Parkway. President Palmer indicated that any cul-du-sac construction would coincide with the North Ave reconstruction project. He went on to mention that due to the designed elevation of the roadway after construction, it was recommended that the road be terminated at North Ave.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Azpell of 2030 Mt. Kisco Drive, mentioned that they heard the request was driven by the home owners on Underwood Parkway. Additionally, they were concerned about increase traffic on Mt. Kisco Drive, since the access to North Ave. will be closed off to those homes on Underwood Parkway. They indicate that making a left turn onto North Ave., from Mt. Kisco, is very difficult now and fear that the additional traffic will make it worse.

Trustee Domaszek also thought that the change was initiated by the North Ave. construction project and not area residents, citing that with the new widened roadway, engineers are looking for opportunities to limit intersections along the roadway.

Much of the discussion centered on traffic flow and volume, along with some discussion regarding creek flooding that could close off access to homes. It was the consensus of the Committee that the Department of Public Works had conducted traffic volume studies in that area recently. They directed staff to confirm whether traffic counts had been done. They further indicated that if they were not done, to conduct counts on Underwood Parkway, Mt. Kisco Drive and Marcella Ave and report back to the Committee.

6. Other Business.

There was no other business.

7. Adjournment.

Trustee Cornell entertained a motion for adjournment, at 7:35PM. Trustee Domaszek made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Moulas, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

James P Gage

Chief of Police