

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, June 14, 2018

Present: Chair Trustee Katy Cornell, Village President Neil Palmer, Trustee John Domaszek (arriving at 6:05PM), Committee Members, Ms. Barbara Decker, Mr. Andy Vrakas and Mr. DJ Richlen.

Members Excused: Mr. Moulas.

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 May 10, 2018.

Trustee Cornell entertained a motion for approval. President Palmer made a motion for approval of the minutes, from May 10, 2018, with Mr. Vrakas seconding. Motioned passed unanimously.

3. Review citizen request for stop sign placement for north and south Fairhaven Blvd. at Wrayburn Road.

Trustee Cornell asked Chief Gage to give a brief review of the topic. Chief Gage outlined the concerns of area residents related to the speeds of vehicles and the lack of clear right of way, given the design of the intersection tapering from a divided roadway to a two way non-divided road for Wrayburn. Chief Gage explained that his recollection, of the April 12, 2018 meeting, was that the signs were approved mostly due to the odd configuration of the intersection and the fact that three accidents had occurred at that location, since 2008, along with the numerous citizen accounts of “near miss” accidents at that location. Gage went on to say, that he wanted to obtain traffic speed data before the signs were installed to see if there were any speed issues in the area. When the speed data was obtained and discussed at the May 10, 2018 meeting, the Committee decided to revisit this topic with consideration to the low speed totals at that intersection. Trustee Domaszek mentioned that he felt that the speed was always a part of the decision process, but never thought the numbers would be as low as they were, sparking a need to take another look at the situation. Mr. Vrakas mentioned that he thought this was the first time, since he is been on the Committee, that a stop sign was approved. He indicated that speed has never been a consideration as he understands that stop signs are a well-studied and documented poor solution to speed issues. President Palmer mentioned that the Committee is not held to any

strict list of criteria and can approve or reject signs on a case-by-case basis. He recalled that the signs were primarily approved do to the road configuration, accident data and public comment, not necessarily speed of vehicles. Mr. Vrakas commented that the accidents at that location were all angle accidents, striking north and south bound Fairhaven vehicles.

Members of the community that were present and spoke to the topic were;

Nick Fuchs
2000 Fairhaven Blvd.

Micheal Heerey
12800 Wrayburn Road

Joseph Coffey
12805 Dunwoody

Both Fuchs and Heerey mentioned that, while they understood that the perception of speeding vehicles may be higher than reality, cited the safety of children in the area, and the split roadway orientation of the intersection, and the witnessed near-miss accidents and asked that the Committee install some type of traffic control to help determine right-of way at the intersection. Mr. Coffey also mentioned that current stop signs at Dunwoody and Fairhaven have helped abate many near misses, which he had seen prior to installation of the signs, due to visual obstructions in that area.

President Palmer and members of the Committee then discussed several other methods of speed and traffic control ranging from painted roadway sharrows to speed humps/bumps and yield signs. After discussing the accident data of cars failing to yield from Wrayburn Road, along with understanding that there was not an excessive speed issue on Fairhaven Blvd, the Committee decided to post stop signs for east and west bound Wrayburn Road and not post signs for north and south Fairhaven Blvd.

As a result, President Palmer made a motion to rescind the decision to post north and south bound stop signs on Fairhaven Blvd. at Wrayburn Road, and to install stop signs for east and west bound Wrayburn Road at Fairhaven Blvd. The motion spurred some additional discussions about utilizing yield signs instead of stop signs, but the Committee ultimately decided to keep the traffic control type consistent in the area with the use of stop signs. Ms. Decker then seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Other Business.

Chief Gage gave the Committee an update that the Playing Children signs approved at the May 10, 2018, may trigger a liability issue for the Village. Staff is currently reviewing the

issue, but the trend around the country has been to remove such unenforceable/advisory type signs from public roadways. President Palmer suggested that the Village Attorney review the matter.

Spencer Mayhew of 855 Grandview addressed the Committee over concerns of pedestrian safety and traffic flow at Tonawanda School. He understood that the matter was not on the agenda, but wanted to voice his concern, especially over the crosswalk area and cars blocking traffic, during pickup and drop off times. Trustee Domaszek indicated that he is the Village liaison to the school district. Chief Gage also mentioned that staff has been engaged with school facility staff in suggesting improved traffic flows and better use of the parking lot and playground areas for bus staging and parent pickup. Mr. Mayhew mentioned that he had seen the drone survey that the Village was conducting and was happy to see that we are attempting to influence improvements.

5. Adjournment.

Trustee Cornell entertained a motion for adjournment, at 7:12PM. Mr. Vrakas made a motion to adjourn, seconded by President Palmer, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

James P Gage

Chief of Police