



CITY OF WAUWATOSA
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TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, November 30, 2004

PRESENT: Alds. Becker, Herzog, Krol, Maher McCarthy -5

ALSO W. Kappel, Dir. of Public Works; Capt. J. Reit, Police Dept.
PRESENT: Ald. J. Stepaniak, Dist. 5

Ald. Becker as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Request for a Four-Way Stop at N. 62nd and W. Clarke Streets

Mr. Kappel reported on the data collected by the speed monitoring trailer that was placed in the 2600 block of N. 62nd Street for a three-day period following the committee's earlier discussion. Previous studies over the past three years within one block of this area were also analyzed. He concluded that there is some excessive speeding on the street, but it does not stand out as being much worse than in other residential neighborhoods. Traffic volumes also do not support the requested four-way stop. Following the October 19th meeting, a 25 mph speed limit sign was posted on the west side of N. 62nd Street just south of W. Center Street.

Ald. Stepaniak said he has received some calls on this matter and believes there is a legitimate problem with an unusual number of speeders. He felt that the monitoring device apparently slows them down, making it difficult to accurately document speeds.

Summarizing the speed monitoring report, Mr. Kappel said that during a few hours on Tuesday, October 26, 376 vehicles were recorded; 84% were within the speed limit and 98.6% were within 5 mph over the speed limit. On Wednesday, October 27, when 787 vehicles were recorded between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., 80% were at 25 mph or less, 97.4% were at 30 mph or less, and 20 vehicles were traveling in excess of 30 mph. On Thursday, October 28, speeds were monitored most of the day up to about 4 p.m. With 666 vehicles counted, 79% were at 25 mph or less, 96.6% were at 30 mph or less, and 22 vehicles were in excess of 30 mph. There is a stop sign for east-west traffic on Clarke Street at 62nd Street. The criteria for a four-way stop per the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices would be an abnormal number of accidents or a volume of 300 cars per hour for an eight-hour period

Carl Jirik, 2613 N. 62nd Street, said 99% of the drivers slow down when they see the speed trailer. There are a lot of children in this area and more traffic than on adjacent streets as well as more foot traffic, some in connection with the nearby park. Drivers use the street as a short-cut, and there have been many near-misses.

Robert Marquis, 2654 N. 62nd Street, said he saw cars braking and slowing down when the speed trailer was in use. He said he appreciates the speed limit sign but would really like to see the street closed off to through traffic. If that can't be done, he felt that allowing parking on both sides of the street would tend to slow traffic.

Benjamin Carter, 2600 N. 62nd Street, conceded that traffic volumes do not warrant a four-way stop but said the street is not designed for the kind of traffic it gets, especially with parking on one side. Also, many cars park too close to the intersection, obstructing sight lines.

Mr. Kappel said that he examined the street width for the possibility of allowing parking on both sides. Parking is now prohibited on the west side from Wright Street north to the north city limits. With a width of only 24 feet, parking on both sides would provide for only 8 feet of clear travel, which does not allow for safe passage of larger emergency response vehicles. The commercial spillover from Center Street on this portion of 62nd Street makes it somewhat different from the blocks to the south where there is parking on both sides of the street.

Asked about barricading to prevent through traffic, Mr. Kappel said that the question of a cul de sac comes up frequently, but it would only push the problem elsewhere. He recalled it being tried in Milwaukee as a crime deterrent, but the barricades ultimately were removed when the measure was found to be unsuccessful.

Ald. Maher was concerned that a four-way stop could make the problem worse if drivers try to make up the time lost from having to stop. Mr. Kappel reiterated that stop signs should not be used to control speed exactly because of that adverse impact. He was uncertain whether a four-way stop would help decrease traffic volume on the street.

Ald. Krol said he formerly lived on 62nd Street and feels the street is not typical but has become something of an arterial. He suggested looking to staff and local alderpersons for a solution. He felt that the city needs to maintain standards for four-way stops.

Ald. McCarthy said it is clear that stop signs or a cul de sac are not going to be a solution. He recommended that the local alderpersons contact police for increased patrols or speed monitoring until a better solution is found.

Moved by Ald. McCarthy, seconded by Ald. Herzog to place the matter on file –

Ald. Maher clarified that he has not eliminated consideration of a four-way stop but questions to what extent it could impact traffic flow. It could be tried on a trial basis, he suggested. Ald. Krol questioned at which intersection a four-way stop would be effective. He would like to see if there are any other solutions.

Moved by Ald. Krol, seconded by Ald. Maher to place the matter on hold so that more information can be gathered from the residents by the alderpersons of the district –

The Chair suggested consideration of changing the two-way stop for traffic on Clarke Street to a two-way stop for 62nd Street traffic. Ald. McCarthy pointed out that, if placed on file, the matter could still be brought back at any time there is a better idea.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 3; Noes: 2 (Herzog, McCarthy)

Removal of Parking Restrictions on W. Clarke Street

Mr. Kappel reported that after repaving of W. Clarke Street, parking signs were replaced in accordance with the existing code of ordinances. A resident at 2578 N. 62nd Street complained, however, that restrictions had never been in place on the south side of Clarke Street adjacent to her home. Mr. Kappel noted that pavement width on Clarke Street can accommodate parking on both sides of the street and still allow for safe passage of emergency vehicles. The no parking sign has been removed, and Mr. Kappel recommended that the ordinance be changed to reflect existing conditions.

Moved by Ald. Maher, seconded by Ald. Krol to recommend to Council introduction of an ordinance removing no parking restrictions on the south side of W. Clarke Street east of N. 62nd Street. Ayes: 5

Milwaukee County Grounds Traffic Impact Stakeholders Meetings

Mr. Kappel reported that a Milwaukee County Grounds Traffic Impact Stakeholders group that has been meeting since late summer/early fall. Attendees include representatives of the State of Wisconsin, Milwaukee County, the City of Milwaukee, the Regional Medical Center, Mayfair, and the City of Wauwatosa, all of whom are interested in improving traffic flow in the county grounds/Research Park area bounded on the west by Mayfair Road and on the east by STH #181 (Wauwatosa Avenue/Glenview Avenue). A technical subcommittee was established consisting of traffic engineering or engineering representatives from the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and the City of Wauwatosa.

An initial review has been commissioned to identify data that must be collected and determine the cost of a formal traffic impact analysis. The State has allocated \$75,000 to the project and will pay for the first phase. City staff has set aside some CDBG funds in the 2005 budget, and the county has indicated that some funding will be available. The initial report should be completed by mid-March. Following review by the technical committee, it will be brought to the stakeholders. The end result of the full impact analysis should yield recommendations for dealing with traffic both on an interim basis in 2006 when GE opens and long-term when there is full build-out.

In response to questions, Mr. Kappel said that the study would identify improvements needed to city, county, or state roadways based on current and projected volumes and conditions. Existing data is available in many cases. It is anticipated that this study will lead to a wide range of suggestions relating to traffic on Watertown Plank Road and access to the freeway and ramps, the Research Park, and the county grounds. Mr. Kappel said that the study could have a far-reaching impact in determining highway improvement priorities in the Milwaukee area.

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

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