



CITY OF WAUWATOSA

7725 WEST NORTH AVENUE
WAUWATOSA, WI 53213
Telephone: (414) 479-8917
Fax: (414) 479-8989
<http://www.wauwatosa.net>

TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday, October 14, 2008

PRESENT: Alds. Jay, Maher, McBride, Meaux, Stepaniak -5

ALSO

PRESENT: W. Wehrley, City Eng.; J. Archambo, City Admin.; Ald. Nikcevich

Ald. Meaux as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Completion of 90-Day Trial of Handicapped Parking Zone at 2506 Wauwatosa Avenue

The committee reviewed a memo from the Director of Public Works regarding completion of the 90-day trial of one handicapped parking space in front of St. Pius X Congregation at 2506 Wauwatosa Avenue. Having received no complaints, he recommended an amendment to the parking ordinance. Ald. Stepaniak noted that the trial was initiated at his request and he has observed the parking space being used as anticipated.

Moved by Ald. Stepaniak, seconded by Ald. McBride to recommend to Council introduction of an ordinance to establish an on-street handicapped parking zone at 2506 Wauwatosa Avenue. Ayes: 5

Extension of 90-Day Trial of Pedestrian Crossing Signs on W. North Avenue

Mr. Wehrley reported that two portable pedestrian crossing signs have been in place for approximately the past 90 days in the centerline of W. North Avenue at N. 69th and N. 72nd Streets. Although it was originally anticipated that the signs would be put out in the spring and removed in the fall, staff proposes extending the trial for an additional 90 days to see how the installations would fare during winter operations such as plowing and salting. The signs are bolted to the pavement but are removable.

Ald. Nikcevich reported that every North Avenue group with which she has had contact loves the signs. There is some concern, however, with that the placement of the 72nd Street sign requires pedestrians to cross four lanes of traffic. This becomes dangerous when a car stops for the pedestrian but another car doesn't see the pedestrian and tries to go around the stopped car on the right. Placement more in line with the curb bump-outs where there are only two lanes of traffic would help address that situation. Also, people east of 68th Street would like to see the program extended there.

Ald. Stepaniak noted that he asked that the program be initiated in response to several requests from constituents. He reported receiving numerous messages with positive reactions to the trial. Many have observed a change in behavior allowing pedestrians to cross, but others found that some drivers are ignoring the signs, which he has also personally observed. He supported extending the trial and suggested giving a little additional leeway for perhaps another sign or change in location of the existing signs.

The Chair noted several e-mails in favor of the signs that are being added to the file.

Moved by Ald. Stepaniak, seconded by Ald. Maher to approve a new 90-day trial of pedestrian crossing signs on W. North Avenue at N. 69th and N. 72nd Streets with relocation of the signs and one additional sign at a location between N. 60th and N. 76th Streets at the discretion of staff –

In response to questions from Ald. Maher, Mr. Wehrley clarified that this type of signage is not now listed in the federal government's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, but it is anticipated that it will be included in the next revision, with its use being discretionary. He was not aware of any feedback the Director of Public Works might have received from the Village Business Improvement District on use of pedestrian signage there.

Ald. Jay was concerned about snow piling up around the signs and asked if there is any information on winter results elsewhere. Mr. Wehrley said he is not aware of any survey or other comments, which is why staff is proposing the extension through February. Plows going around the obstruction would leave a small furrow of snow. The trial should reveal whether passing traffic would take care of that furrow or another piece of equipment would need to clear it. In response to Ald. Jay's concern about liability if someone runs over a sign, Mr. Wehrley said that the signs are very flexible and actually look like they have been run over numerous times already. The signs can easily be removed and reinstalled. Ald. Jay indicated that she would support the trial but would not support additional signs at this point. She asked that the motion be divided.

The motion was restated:

Moved by Ald. Stepaniak, seconded by Ald. Maher to approve a new 90-day trial of pedestrian crossing signs on W. North Avenue at N. 69th and N. 72nd Streets with relocation of the signs at the discretion of staff. Ayes: 5

Moved by Ald. Stepaniak, seconded by Ald. Maher to approve a 90-day trial of one additional pedestrian crossing sign at a location between N. 60th and N. 76th Streets at the discretion of staff. Ayes: 4; Noes: 1 (Jay)

Amendment of 90-Day Trial to Create Four-Way Stop at N. 70th Street and Maple Terrace

Mr. Wehrley reported on a recommendation of the Director of Public Works to amend the 90-day trial of a stop sign on northbound N. 70th Street at Maple Terrace by creating a four-way stop for the remainder of the trial period.

Ald. McBride reported that there have been constant requests for a four-way stop at this intersection both before and since he became an alderperson. There were existing stop signs for Maple Terrace traffic, and the committee decided on a trial of a three-way rather than a four-way stop based on concerns about southbound 70th Street vehicles having to stop on a hill. The intersection is adjacent to Jefferson Elementary School, and there is a perception that the three-way stop has created a dangerous situation.

Moved by Ald. McBride, seconded by Ald. Stepaniak to amend the current 90-day trial by adding a fourth stop sign for southbound

N. 70th Street traffic –

Mr. Wehrley confirmed that this would be consistent with the policy of four-way stops around schools. He noted that stop signs are implicitly not to be used to control speeds.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 5

Sidewalks/Bicycle Paths along Mayfair Road/STH 100

Mr. Wehrley reported that the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) plans to repave N. Mayfair Road/Hwy. 100 from Watertown Plank Road to W. Silver Spring Drive in 2011 and would like to know if the city is interested in adding sidewalks or bicycle paths at that time where they are now lacking. They will also be repaving Capitol Drive and Blue Mound Road into Waukesha County in 2011 and will include bicycle lanes on those routes.

Creating a bicycle lane on Hwy. 100 would eliminate a through-traffic lane since traffic runs curb-to-curb without a shoulder. Mr. Wehrley displayed a color-coded map showing the sections of the road where sidewalks exist and where there are none. He noted that it is possible to go from the north to the south city limits on a pedestrian friendly route, but it would entail crossing the highway at several locations. Mayfair Mall, Bluemound Country Club, Currie Park, Pinelawn Cemetery, and—on the east side to the north—numerous residences abut the roadway. If the committee wishes to look into this further, Mr. Wehrley recommended considering inviting abutting property owners to a meeting to discuss the various issues connected with placing sidewalks along their properties.

Ald. Maher noted that he represents the bulk of the area without sidewalks and would strongly encourage adding them. He has found that running or biking on Hwy. 100 is incredibly dangerous. Also, it is a public safety issue that there are stretches where middle and high school students cannot walk and must be transported to school by car. This is the only area of the city where students cannot walk to school. The Chair added that he has seen people with strollers trying to navigate on the roadway or grass in order to get to the bus stop on the east side of Hwy. 100 at Burleigh due to the lack of a sidewalk there.

Ald. Stepaniak felt that it makes sense from a public policy perspective to add sidewalks/bicycle paths, preferably something that could be used as both. It is also very consistent with the draft Comprehensive Plan. While drafting that plan, there was considerable discussion about making portions of the city more bicycle and pedestrian friendly with specific mention of Hwy. 100.

Mr. Wehrley reported that the DOT wanted a clear direction from the city before going through the channels and determining if they would be able to add the improvements. He was hopeful that we would be able to get some state or federal participation in the cost. He could develop some preliminary cost estimates if that is what the committee desires.

Ald. McBride commented that making the street more pedestrian friendly would benefit Mayfair Mall, especially as businesses are added along the roadway, and it would not be detrimental to use county parkland along Currie Park. Concerns might arise in the residential stretch, but the public benefit would outweigh any detriment, he felt, and it would be more cost effective to do this now than any other time.

Moved by Ald. Stepaniak, seconded by Ald. Maher to notify abutting property owners and invite them to attend a future committee meeting to discuss the issues with the understanding that fiscal information would be completed by that time. Ayes: 5

Updates on Zoo Interchange Project and West Suburban Traffic Impact Analysis

Mr. Wehrley reported public information meetings on the Zoo Interchange project will be held on October 27 and 30. The Department of Transportation (DOT) would be willing to address this committee on October 28 regarding the remaining options for the project. This would also get the word out to the public through televising the meeting on local cable channel 25.

The West Suburban Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) report has been completed, and staff will attend a meeting the week of November 3 to assess the impacts of some of the Zoo Interchange/Hwy. 45 modernization options. A public information meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 4 at the Zoofari Center to present the TIA results.

Moved by Ald. Maher, seconded by Ald. McBride to request a presentation by DOT representatives at the October 28 meeting –

Mr. Wehrley noted that the TIA is based on the no-improvements option for the Zoo Interchange and Hwy. 45; i.e., the recommendations are based on what would be needed without any improvements to the interchange or highway. Then, the impact of the preferred modernization improvement can be weighed against those recommendations. He also explained that once the plan is refined down to the preferred alternative, the impact of construction on local traffic will be addressed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

es