



CITY OF WAUWATOSA

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TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday, June 9, 2009

PRESENT: Alds. Jay, McBride, Meaux, Stepaniak - 4

ALSO W. Kappel, Dir. of Public Works; A. Kesner, City Atty.; K. Rusch, Admin. Intern;
PRESENT: J. Archambo, City Admin.; Ald. Birschel

Ald. Meaux in the Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Ordinance – No Parking in Roosevelt School Drop-Off Lane on N. 74th Street

The committee reviewed a proposed ordinance amending Section 11.32.080 of the Code prohibiting parking between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. in the Roosevelt School drop-off lane on N. 74th Street north of W. Wright Street. Mr. Kappel reported that he has consulted with the Roosevelt principal, who requests that this trial change be made permanent.

Moved by Ald. Stepaniak, seconded by Ald. McBride to recommend to
Council adoption of the ordinance. Ayes: 4

Ordinance – No Left Turn/No U-Turn on N. 124th Street

The committee reviewed a proposed ordinance amending Sections 11.36.190 and 11.36.0200 of the Code prohibiting left turns and U-turns on N. 124th Street at the first median opening north of W. North Avenue. Mr. Kappel reiterated his previous report that this change has facilitated traffic movement, especially during afternoon rush hours.

Moved by Ald. Jay, seconded by Ald. McBride to recommend to
Council adoption of the ordinance. Ayes: 4

Amended 90-Day Trial – 115th Street South of W. Center Street

Mr. Kappel reported that the Police Department has reported that the trial changes recently made on the west side of N. 115th Street south of W. Center Street are still not working out for mail delivery. Ald. Birschel, who originally forwarded the matter, has suggested no parking from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on school days on the mailbox side and a two-hour restriction on the opposite side on both 115th and 114th Streets. This should alleviate issues with student parking, which typically is more of a problem in spring.

Ald. Birschel noted that current signage on both 115th and 114th Streets should be reversed. Mr. Kappel clarified that the signage now posted on 114th Street does not comply with the intent of existing ordinance language. There should be no parking on the east (mailbox) side, and two-hour parking should be added on the west side. On 115th Street, school day no parking is recommended on the west side and two-hour parking

on the east side. There were no restrictions on 115th Street prior to the trial, which will continue to the end of November. Asked if the change would push the problem farther down the street, Mr. Kappel said that if students are willing to walk farther, it might be pushed to 116th Street, which is slightly wider and can accommodate parking on one side with less problems.

Moved by Ald. McBride, seconded by Ald. Stepaniak to amend the existing 90-day trial by installing school day no parking signage on the west side of N. 115th Street south of W. Center Street and two-hour parking on the east side; also to move school day no parking signage to the east side of 114th Street and add two-hour parking on the west side. Ayes: 4

Report on Trial of In-Street Pedestrian Signs on W. North Avenue

Mr. Kappel reported that in-street pedestrian crossing markers have been tested on North Avenue at 72nd and 69th Streets since last October. The trial was extended through the winter to see how the signs held up. They did not last through the snow season. They were replaced this spring and additional signs were installed at Lefeber Avenue and at 61st Street. Those signs are already showing signs of wear and tear.

Each two-sided sign costs about \$253, so the four installations have used up the \$1,000 set aside for the program in 2009. If the program continues, Mr. Kappel recommended installing the signs in the spring and removing them in the fall, similar to the practice in Milwaukee. The federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) as well as state statutes now allow for these types as installations.

Similar installations have been requested at State and Underwood, 91st and North, Swan Boulevard and Meinecke, Swan Boulevard and Clarke, and each North Avenue intersection between 60th Street and Wauwatosa Avenue. Mr. Kappel recommended adhering to MUTCD guidelines; i.e., limit use to major arterials where there is significant pedestrian activity. Installations would be at the discretion and prioritization of the department as funding becomes available. A funding line in the traffic control budget would be needed for an ongoing program. Neighborhood donations for signs would be considered.

Ald. Stepaniak reported receiving overwhelmingly positive comments from residents of the 5th and 1st districts. Residents quite clearly appreciate the signs and believe they are effective. He feels that they have slowed traffic somewhat. He supported the process suggested by Mr. Kappel and asked for more specifics on “major” arterials.

Mr. Kappel said that at some of the requested intersections, pedestrian activity is actually school children crossing with a school crossing guard. He questioned whether it would be efficient to install signs at locations such as Swan and Meinecke or Swan and Clarke. North Avenue at 86th Street would be a more viable location where the signs might slow down traffic and improve safety for pedestrians crossing to Sendik’s or Wisconsin Garden and Pet. State Street near the pedestrian bridge might also be considered. Portable signs were used there in the past with somewhat limited success. They were heavy and were destroyed in the winter. The trial locations on North Avenue as well as possibly other intersections there would continue to be warranted.

Moved by Ald. Stepaniak, seconded by Ald. McBride to recommend the following criteria for use and installation of in-street pedestrian crossing signs: 1) locations adhere to MUTCD guidelines; 2) signs may be installed in May and removed in October; 3) signs would be installed only on major arterials with significant pedestrian activity; 4) installation would be at the discretion and prioritization of the

Director of Public Works and as funding becomes available with any donations utilized without additional Common Council approval other than acceptance of the donation; and 5) creation of a new line item in the 2010 budget --

Mr. Kappel felt there might be a conflict with also using in-street signage at marked school crossings and will look into that question. Ald. McBride cited North Avenue between Ludington and Swan as well as State Street at 72nd Street as areas for future consideration. He advocated continuing the program.

Ald. Jay expressed some concerns about cost and the life of the signs. We don't know if it will be successful in the long run, she said. Mr. Kappel said that we will find out about durability this year. He noted that he has not recommended a particular funding level, just that there would need to be a specific line item if the program continues. The Budget Committee would ultimately decide on funding.

City Administrator Archambo noted that school crossings serve as many as 400 and as few as 6 students and wondered if the signs might substitute for a guard in some locations. Mr. Kappel was reluctant to recommend that type of use.

Ald. Meaux commented that this is something that residents are seeking and it makes sense to move forward. He would leave it up to the department to seek a reasonable budget. If quantifiable data is available at some point, that would be helpful.

Discussion of ways to cut costs ensued. Mr. Kappel said that if using a significant volume, he would seek quotes from various suppliers. If Milwaukee is producing their own signs, he would also explore the possibility of a connection there.

Vote on the motion, Ayes: 4

Zoo Interchange Project Update: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The committee reviewed excerpts from the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Zoo Interchange, which the City received last week. The EIS in its entirety is an extremely large document, Mr. Kappel noted, so he provided information most relevant to Wauwatosa. Following an upcoming series of public meetings, comments on the EIS or the City's preferred alternative are due back to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) by July 13, 2009. The DOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will then jointly decide on an alternative. They are favoring the M1 modernization solution. Planned as eight lanes per 2035 projections, they may choose to build six lanes to start with a wide divider to provide for the additional lanes. Mr. Kappel displayed maps of the N1, N2, and N3 alternatives.

There was committee consensus that the bridge over Hwy. 45 as shown on N1 is a better option than Texas U-turns. Mr. Kappel noted that both the Research Park and Regional Medical Center are on board with that plan, which should help alleviate traffic on Watertown Plank Road. They still desire a southwest entrance and exit, but would prefer alternative N1 to N3.

Committee members concurred that it is very important to maintain Regional Medical Center access for drivers coming from eastbound and westbound I-94. Ald. Stepaniak said that is the biggest omission that still exists and will mean a huge problem at Watertown Plank. Ald. Jay felt that DOT should be requested to do whatever they can to provide that access, even if it means acquiring extra land. Ald. McBride cited the need for an alternative to Watertown Plank Road and commented that his constituents would be concerned about increased reliance on surface streets like Glenview Avenue.

It seems likely that North Avenue will be a full interchange design. DOT is recommending a double loop since there is sufficient right of way and it would have less impact on property than a full diamond interchange. A double loop would provide sufficient stacking and safety. Mr. Kappel felt that the City should weigh in specifically on the off ramp for Mayfair Road. With plans to seek I-45 designation, the FHWA would look hard at closing it off, but it provides a traffic control device for Mayfair Road traffic we can't afford to lose. Committee members concurred that City input on that issue is essential. Ald. McBride felt that an argument should be made for grandfathering it.

Mr. Kappel noted that there would be greater acquisition of right-of way on the county grounds for the favored solution, which might push a UW-M access road farther to the east with ingress and egress from Swan Boulevard and Watertown Plank. Traffic planning for this area of county land would be addressed more specifically as part of the TIA and development issues. Mr. Kappel said that he has been working with the forestry center and has advocated creation of a four-point controlled intersection.

Ald. Herzog questioned potential access to Swan Boulevard mentioned by Mr. Kappel, recalling a statement by either the City or the consultant that there would be no northerly exit for that development parcel. Mr. Kappel will check into that question.

The Chair asked about adding southerly egress from the Research Park. Mr. Kappel said that the bridge and a frontage road would provide both north and south access to Hwy. 45 but not access to I-94. The volume of cars expected to use that route would provide some relief to Watertown Plank Road.

At the direction of the committee, Mr. Kappel will prepare a draft of official comments for review at the next meeting that would be forwarded to the Common Council and submitted to the DOT prior to the July 13 deadline.

Mr. Kappel announced that public hearings on the draft Environmental Impact Study document are scheduled for Tuesday, June 23, from 2 to 7 p.m. and Wednesday, June 24, from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Tommy Thompson Youth Center, State Fair Park Gate #5, 640 S. 84th Street, West Allis.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

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