

VILLAGE OF ELM GROVE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, April 12, 2018

Present: Chair Trustee Katy Cornell, Village President Neil Palmer, Trustee John Domaszek, Committee Members, Ms. Barbara Decker and Mr. DJ Richlen.

Members Excused: Mr. Moulas and Mr. Vrakas.

Also Present: Police Chief Jim Gage.

1. Call the meeting to order
The meeting was called to order, at 6:01 pm, by Trustee Cornell.

2. Review and approve minutes from November 9, 2017.
Trustee Cornell entertained a motion for approval. President Palmer made a motion for approval of the minutes, from November 9, 2017, with Trustee Domaszek 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 introduction of the request. 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 the request asks for stop signs to be in place for north and southbound traffic on Fairhaven Blvd. President Palmer commented that stop signs, in general, are not seen as an effective control measure for speeding vehicles and that statistically, the placement of stop signs actually can cause the rates of speed to increase in between the signs, as a driver attempts to make up for the perceived loss of time (a process known as jack rabbiting). President Palmer went on to say that, historically, it has been the position of the Village to avoid placing stop signs at every controlled intersection, barring an identifiable safety concern, in order to reduce sign clutter and avoid the urban feel of having to stop every block.

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

Nick Fuchs - 2000 Fairhaven Blvd.
Michael Heerey - 12800 Wrayburn Road
Rome Siefert - 1945 Fairhaven
Michael Gaffrey - 1805 Fairhaven
Mary Inden - 14745 Watertown Plank Road

All citizens who spoke to the topic had concerns about the speed of vehicles, the safety of children in the area, and the split roadway orientation of the intersection. Mr. Fuchs indicated that he and other family members have routinely witnessed "near miss" accidents and that, given the roadway design and speed of vehicles through the area, it's only a matter of time that a bad accident occurs.

Chief Gage reported that there have been three accidents at that intersection since 2008. It was the general consensus of the Committee that they felt that this was a high rate of accidents for a residential area.

Mr. Richlen asked why it was decided to place stop signs for east and westbound Wrayburn Road at Hollyhock, instead of north and southbound Hollyhock, since it seems to lack consistency with the decision to stop north and southbound Fairhaven Blvd. at Wrayburn? Chief Gage indicated that he was not involved in the decision for that intersection, but speculated it was due to the exaggerated offset orientation of the intersection for Wrayburn Road, combined with the blind approach and curve of Hollyhock for southbound Hollyhock traffic.

Mr. Gaffrey added that he felt that the given the long stretch of roadway for northbound Fairhaven Blvd., vehicles turning north from eastbound Gremoor Drive tend to accelerate rapidly as they travel towards North Ave. Chief Gage indicated that he would like to obtain a traffic survey in the area to accurately assess the number and speeds of vehicles in that area, before any placement of new stop signs. Chief Gage indicated that he would use the survey results to provide directed enforcement in that area, if warranted.

President Palmer commented that the upcoming North Ave. construction will have an effect on traffic flow in the area. Chief Gage agreed, commenting that there will probably be a noticeable increase for east and west bound Wrayburn Road, as people use that area as an alternate route to avoid construction. It was the general consensus of the Committee that there may be a need to review this topic again, in terms of creating a four way stop at the intersection to help control traffic flow. Ms. Inden commented that Watertown Plank Road went through a similar history, after the Bluemound Road reconstruction, where Watertown Plank Road and Sunny Slope Road were temporarily converted to a four way stop intersection. Due to the increased traffic flow and discovery by drivers of a secondary route, the signs became permanent after the construction was concluded.

As a result of the discussion, President Palmer made a motion to install stops signs for both north and southbound traffic on Fairhaven Blvd., after the police department conducts a traffic and speed survey in the area. The motion was seconded by Trustee Domaszek. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Review request for a "Children at Play" sign on Marquette Ave.
Ms. Maryann C. Fricker, of 13335 Marquette Avenue, appeared in person, to request that the Committee review placement of signage in the area similar to "Slow Down Children at Play". Fricker indicates that the neighborhood has recently seen a turnover to younger families, with small children. She fears that increased traffic to Marquette Ave., experienced since the elimination of a driveway access from the St. Mary's parking lot across from Nicolet Ave., has caused more traffic to divert to Marquette Ave. This increased traffic, she feels, is unsafe to the children in the area. Dr. Susan Retzack, of 13405 Marquette Ave. also addressed the Committee, supporting Ms. Fricker's comments.

Ms. Fricker asked that the sign be placed on the existing street sign, at the corner of Church Street & Marquette Ave., and angle the sign so that drivers see the sign more easily, while turning west onto Marquette Ave. Chief Gage indicated that due to signage standards, it is not appropriate to place advisory signs on existing street signs, nor is it acceptable to angle signs on a pole, outside the normal posting standards. Chief Gage suggested that the sign be placed on Church Street, for northbound traffic exiting St. Mary's, in order to gain more visual exposure for all drivers leaving St. Mary's and travelling north into the residential area. By doing this, you are not only advising the driver's that would turn west on to Marquette Ave, but also drivers that continue north to Elmhurst

or other streets. This led to a larger conversation about the increased traffic and speed of vehicles in the area during church services. Ms. Decker asked for police patrols in that area to help assess traffic patterns and curtail bad driving practices. President Palmer asked for correspondence to be mailed to St. Mary's Church and School in order to advise them of the concerns of neighbors in the area. Chief Gage mentioned that he has done this in the past and that St. Mary's has been receptive to helping us get the word out to drivers by placing special messages in church service bulletins. Chief Gage also suggested that the advisory sign idea should probably be expanded to other streets leading into the residential areas north of St. Mary's, as a reminder to drivers to slow down. He indicated that he could survey the area and report to the Committee at a future meeting with suggested sign placement locations.

It was the general consensus of the Committee to have the police chief send correspondence advising of the traffic concerns to both St. Mary's School and Church, and to have the chief survey the area and report to the Committee on potential sign placement for a final decision by the Committee at the May meeting.

5. Other Business.

Chief Gage reported that contractors have reached our permit number of thirty deer. All deer were taken by netting. Sixteen turkeys were taken by sharpshooting, but there has been no more turkey traffic at the shoot site. Both permits close on April 15. Chief Gage commented that this was the first time that we met our permit numbers on a deer harvest.

Ms. Inden addressed the Committee to consider a safety alternation to the clatter bridge on the village playground equipment. She indicated that she had previously approached the Park and Recreation Committee to inform them of an incident where her grandson fell from the bridge due to what she feels was inadequate safety rails. She explained that the rail system was the standard for the time that the equipment was installed, however, there have been recent upgrades that correct the wide gaps along the bridge. President Palmer felt that alterations to the original design may be a liability concern. He further mentioned that this matter had been reviewed by the Park and Recreation Committee and that they felt the existing design was adequate. Ms. Inden recognized that the Park and Recreation Committee had rejected her proposal to make any change, but she felt that it was enough of a safety concern that the matter should be reviewed by the Public Safety Committee. Chief Gage indicated that the matter would need to be placed on the agenda for any future discussion or recommendation by the Committee. Trustee Domaszek indicated that he understands that we would need to schedule the matter for an upcoming meeting, however, states that he feels there is no need for any changes to the equipment and that the existing rail and ground level padding make the clatter bridge safe. The matter will be placed on the May meeting agenda for further discussion and possible action.

President Palmer left the meeting at 7:00PM.

6. Adjournment.

Trustee Cornell entertained a motion for adjournment, at 7:08PM. Trustee Domaszek made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Richlen, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

James P Gage, Chief of Police