

APPROVED Meeting Minutes
Transportation Commission
Tuesday, June 8, 2021 – 7:00 PM
Remote Participation Meeting

1. Call to Order

Transportation Commission Chair Ron Burke called remote participation meeting to order at 7:09 PM

Staff Liaison Jill Juliano the following statement into the record:

"The Village President has determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent due to the COVID-19 outbreak during the Governor's disaster proclamation. It is not feasible to have a person present at the regular meeting location due to public safety concerns related to the COVID-19 outbreak during the Governor's disaster proclamation."

Roll Call

Present: Camille Fink, Garth Katner, Meghan Moses, Ryan Peterson, Aaron Stigger, James Thompson, Ron Burke

Absent: None

It was noted that the Transportation Commission is now fully staffed with 7 members.

Staff: Parking Restrictions Coordinator (PRC) Cinthya Redkva, Transportation Engineer/Staff Liaison Jill Juliano, Village Engineer Bill McKenna, Development Customer Services Director Tammie Grossman

2. Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

3. Agenda Approval

Commissioner Stigger made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes – Stigger, Thompson, Fink, Katner, Moses, Peterson, Burke

Nays – None

The motion passed unanimously 7 to 0.

4. Approval of the Draft May 11, 2021 Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Stigger made a motion to approve the draft May 11, 2021 Transportation Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Fink seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes – Stigger, Fink, Katner, Moses, Thompson, Burke

Nays – None

Abstain – Peterson (was not at the meeting in question).

The motion passed 6 to 0.

5. PETITION FOR RESIDENT PARKING ONLY 10:00PM – 2:30AM ON THE 1150 BLOCK OF SOUTH HARVEY AVENUE

PRC Redkva gave a brief presentation with background information along with sharing maps and photographs regarding this item.

- On April 27, 2021 the Village received a parking petition to install resident permit parking
- Petition stemmed from activity at Mike's Place, which include: noise, trash and bar patrons parking on their block due to the restrictions on neighboring streets.
- On May 7, 2021, temporary signage was installed by the Village, which restricted parking from Friday through Sunday from 10:00pm–2:30am until Transportation Commission could review this petition. Oak Park Police Department requested placement of these temporary signs.
- Staff is recommending to install resident permit parking on the block from 10:00 pm–2:30 pm from the alley north of Roosevelt Road to Fillmore Ave.
- It was also noted that 1100 Ridgeland Ave had also requested petition papers so that could also be something else coming down the pike for Transportation Commission review.
- Based on Oak Park Parking Enforcement's car count, there was a decrease in parked cars after temporary signs were posted.

Below are the Commission's questions regarding this item:

- Has staff considered including Ridgeland Ave in the recommendation to the Village Board?
Can Village implement such changes without a petition?
- When were restrictions placed on the other two blocks?
- Are there were similar situations with other blocks near Roosevelt, North Ave, and Austin Blvd as a corridor since this seems to be a recurring issue? If so, should these restrictions be

placed across the board with the one caveat being Ridgeland Ave as Grossman suggested, but geared more to residential streets?

- How far would restrictions go? Possibly to 1000 block?
- Is parking really the solution?
- Might it be reasonable to look at other blocks as the cars might simply “move over.”

Staff responses:

- PRC Redkva stated including Ridgeland could be an option.
- Director Grossman stated that she would be hesitant to extend the restrictions to Ridgeland Ave without a petition as it is not totally residential.
- PRC Redkva would have to check when restrictions were put into place.
- Staff reminded the Commission that it was their recommendation for the petition and that she can entertain a petition for the 1100 South Block of Ridgeland if requested.
- Director Grossman informed the Commission that the Berwyn & Oak Park Police Departments are in direct communication with each other along with Mike’s Bar and that it might be hard to impose restrictions on a block that has not lodged a complaint. She also shared that restrictions have been in place since May with no reports from the Police or the residents of other blocks.

Chair Burke has a feel that the Commission is mostly supportive of the parking restrictions being put in place for Harvey Ave but opened the floor for further discussion or objections.

Commissioner Peterson posed no objections, but wondered what the process is for switching the streets over to a different classification? Is it resident driven or based on parking study?

Chair Burke answered that it is mainly resident driven but doesn’t preclude staff from making these recommendations on their own.

Chair Burke asked the Commission if it is in support of extending these restrictions to other streets, further east or west and include the 1000 blocks of Harvey, Cuyler and Highland or 1100 Ridgeland. Though there are no complaints are being heard according to staff.

Commissioner Thompson agreed with Grossman that Ridgeland should be treated differently. He doesn’t think it’s warranted for the 1000 blocks and thinks Harvey should be the only block for the restrictions.

Commissioner Moses is fine with the staff recommendation. Commissioner Fink agrees with Commissioner Moses.

Commissioner Peterson would like to see parking restrictions on one side of Ridgeland Ave entirely as it is a transit route and deemed as a bike friendly street. He sees it as a benefit.

Director Grossman suggested to not act on Ridgeland until further research could be done and consider it on the next meeting's agenda.

Chair Burke doesn't believe that a full staff analysis is warranted and inquired if Ridgeland Ave currently has overnight parking.

PRC Redkva responded that currently there is not.

Chair Burke agreed with staff recommendations with the idea of addressing Ridgeland Ave as necessary.

Commissioner Katner is fine with the staff recommendation and cautioned against trying to solve a problem before it is presented.

Commissioner Katner made a motion to approve staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Peterson.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes – Katner, Peterson, Fink, Moses, Stigger, Thompson, Burke

Nays – None

The motion passed 7 to 0.

6. REMOVAL OF FENWICK ON-STREET PERMIT PARKING (WITH THE COMPLETION OF THE FENWICK PARKING GARAGE

PRC Redkva gave a presentation along with parking restriction maps. Fenwick's garage was completed last summer with 350 spaces. Fenwick usually purchases 265 student permits yearly. A meeting was held to inform Fenwick of the Village's intent to remove all student permit parking. Fenwick posed no objections. Staff is recommending the termination of daytime restrictions adjacent to student permit parking. Permit parking will remain on South Blvd in the SB4 and SB5 lots to accommodate 80 additional student permit parking spaces if needed. Currently, there is student parking on Pleasant St, Randolph St, Washington Blvd and Adams St.

PRC Redkva then explained the changes in parking restrictions in the area, block by block.

Director Grossman added that an alternative to the recommendation that PRC Redkva is presenting is to remove the student permit parking and keep the restrictions in place while monitoring the area.

The Commission raised the following questions and concerns. Staff responses to the Commission's questions are included.

- Is Fenwick offering student parking in this garage? Director Grossman confirmed that not only are they offering student parking and are counting on it and are asking the Village to cease the sale of student permits, unless Fenwick informs the Village that they are sold out.
- What do the numbers translate to in discontinuing student parking? PRC Redkva answered that it translates into the removal of 123 spaces.
- What is the cost for students in the new garage? Director Grossman responded estimates about \$900 for the school year which is about \$125 more than the Village charged per year.
- Once student parking is removed will any restrictions remain? PRC Redkva answered that there would be 2-hour parking from 9am-5pm Monday through Friday and no parking 8am-10am near the student parking areas.
- If Fenwick sold out parking spaces in the garage does the Village have to agree to sell on-street parking spaces to the students? Director Grossman said that Fenwick was informed that the Village would not sell on-street parking, but parking would be available in SB4 and SB5 lots on South Blvd.
- Village subsidizing parking for a private religious organization.
- Village encouraging driving by offering the parking permits.
- Removal of restrictions would encourage students to park in those areas for free.
- Can restrictions follow the existing Pilot Program of 3-hour parking from 8am-6 pm to make things more standardized? It shouldn't be unrestricted.
- Can staff provide a timeline in implementing Village-wide changes and not just within the pilot area? Director Grossman stated that staff would first share with the Commission the draft survey to be sent to residents in the pilot area to get the Commission's feedback. Then issue the survey to residents in the fall and present to the Village Board in January or February of 2022 the recommendation on how to move forward Village-wide.
- Is there a preference on what restrictions are best suited to replace the student permit parking areas?
- Staff confirmed that student areas would eventually be converted to "Red" zones.
- Staff shared with the Transportation Commission the new proposed residential daytime parking restrictions on Washington Blvd.
- The Transportation Commission proposed to the staff, instead of completely removing student permit parking on selected areas, to replace the student permits with restrictions adjacent to the blocks.

Commissioner Moses would be willing to go along with Chair Burke's suggestion of more uniformity between the zones, but she is also not against staff recommendations if there is a good reason for it.

Chair Burke asked for objections to the recommendation or other thoughts.

Commissioner Katner also supports uniformity or consistency across the board and sees this as a good opportunity to implement it. He would also support staff if there is a good enough reason to do so.

Commissioner Thompson feels the “Green” is more restrictive than the “Red” and is wondering if all three areas can’t be “Red.”

Chair Burke inquired of the Village strategy when trying to impose restrictions to discourage parking for train riders.

Grossman answered the no parking 8am-10am is the strategy used by the Village.

Chair Burke inquired as to why the “Green” restrictions existed on Pleasant St. Was this resident generated? Also, why would the “Green” be a more effective strategy than the “Red” when it comes to discouraging student parking? When the “Red” dominated streets are closer to Fenwick?

PRC Redkva believed they were put in place due to the student parking.

Director Grossman interjected by saying that staff could come back with more information in July to share with the Commission.

Commissioner Peterson would like to see more uniformity in addition to a resolution before the school year starts to cut down on confusion and minimize enforcement in the area.

Chair Burke expressed concern over the item may not be on the Board Meeting agenda in time for the new school year.

Director Grossman assured the Commission as there is a scheduled Village Board meeting on the first Monday in August.

Chair Burke asked for a vote on the final recommendations to be carried over to the July meeting.

The Commission is agreeable to making a final decision at the July meeting granted there is enough time to go before the Board and be implemented before Fenwick starts classes for the new school year with the understanding that staff could furnish more information on the history of the existing restrictions and come up with a more uniform recommendation.

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to table the item until the July 13th Transportation Commission meeting.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Peterson.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes – Thompson, Peterson, Fink, Katner, Moses, Stigger, Burke

Nays – None

The motion passed 6 to 0

7. REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EXISTING CITIZEN PETITION PROCESS/SYSTEM FOR IMPLEMENTING TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES AND THEN MODIFYING OR REPLACING THEM IF WARRANTED (CONTINUATION FROM THE FEBRUARY 8, 2021 & MAY 11, 2021 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETINGS).

Chair Burke reminded the Commission on prior discussions regarding this item, which included: staff prescreen traffic calming petitions due to existing backlog; make petition process easier for multi-unit housing residents; utilize a marketing approach or call for proposals. Consideration was also given to testing out this prescreen on current backlog of petitions along with staff coming up with ideas on how to achieve these goals.

Village Engineer McKenna responded that staff has begun conversations with Oak Park Police Department and the Traffic Unit to get its observations and accident data to create a GIS Map combining existing traffic and accident data to serve as a prescreening tool. Staff is still in conversations with the Police Department and awaiting a conversation with the Village Manager's Office for final recommendations on screening options. Staff currently has no numbers to ascribe to a prescreening method to establish a threshold. Staff expressed apprehensions about using a prescreen method on existing petitions, as they were submitted under the current guidelines.

Chair Burke inquired about the current language or guidelines which guarantees a petition will be heard. He sees this as a good opportunity to apply the prescreen approach to get through the existing back log of petitions.

Village Engineer McKenna replied there is a Board adopted rule for the Commission along with a traffic calming toolbox and scoring system for evaluating applications to determine if they will go forward to recommendation by the Transportation Commission. All of which is published on the Village's website.

Chair Burke opened the floor for questions/comments. The Commission had the following questions/concerns:

Commissioner Peterson asked if traffic calming measures first go through the petition process to be considered or implemented? Can they be done at the request of the Village or can a resident initiate pointing out an unsafe area and be remedied by additional infrastructure measures?

Village Engineer McKenna answered yes to all the questions, a resident can approach the Board with a public comment or email, leading to implementation without going to the Commission. There has also been Board involvement post-Commission recommendations. Staff looks at traffic daily for safety issues around intersection treatments like stop signs, line of sight and minor traffic calming things, like 'Keep Kids Alive, Drive 25' program and speed radar sign monitoring.

Commissioner Peterson followed up by saying that a more individualized petition process would be more powerful than having one person go out and collect signatures. With limited staff capacity, if we have this amount of resources to deal with this amount of projects in 2022; then have a call for projects in late 2021 and leaning on quantitative analysis to determine which projects are most practical, which are most immediate and which could pose an immediate danger to the roadway users.

Chair Burke summed things up this way: staff needs more time to come back with a more rounded out recommendation. Staff also has concerns with the Commission's idea of prioritizing the backlogged 18 petitions and putting the Tier 2 petitions off to the side.

Commissioner Thompson added that petitions of the same concern can be grouped and looked at collectively.

Village Engineer McKenna stated that the Village does try to bundle petitions for the Commission and sometimes reach out to multiple blocks dealing with the same issue. He affirmed that some of the 18 petitions will be bundled before reaching the Commission. Regarding public outreach, what is the Commission's vision?

Burke reiterated the prescreening process which would help pare down petitions with no plans for a large call for petitions considering staff's inability to manage many petitions.

Village Engineer McKenna stated that a prescreen tool is realistic option moving forward. Largely geared toward multifamily population which is hard to reach. Is the Commission looking at web-based outreach or mail outreach?

Chair Burke thought the Commission's next agenda item might address staff's question on how outreach will be done. While the Commission could try to come up with a recommendation, they would largely rely on staff resources and paring down of petitions to process. If there is not a prescreening process in place then we wouldn't do a call for proposals because staff doesn't have the capacity to do it. The Commission is looking for staff to share with us a way to streamline and prioritize this process to allow to process a larger number of petitions coming in the door.

Village Engineer McKenna suggested that the goals should be tackled first such as confirming process for petitions, so they aren't creating a process not in line with the Commission's goals, then using existing staff tools for outreach efforts.

Chair Burke thinks even to set/reach goals public input is needed and currently tools for doing so don't exist. He is recommending for next meeting staff recommendations on how to get through backlog of petitions. Streamline data crunching. Additional information on how prescreen should go, hopefully with information from Village Board included. How do we get through these petitions in a more streamlined way than we normally do it? Also, he would like to hear from staff how the prescreening approach could go.

Village Engineer McKenna thought this was doable, because staff is looking at hiring consultants to do work in other areas where they are short staffed, so this might be an option in this situation.

Commissioner Katner agreed with Chair Burke's recommendation as well as emphasizing transparency.

Commissioner Peterson motioned to adopt that approach for the next Commission meeting which includes strategy to get through prescreening, get through backlog while being transparent.

Commissioner Moses wanted to confirm work to determine prescreen criteria, centered around high crash areas. Her concern is making sure to not just weed out petitions that don't make the cut but making a difference when possible. Particularly when it comes to addressing Oak Park's high crash rate. Otherwise she also agrees with the recommendation.

Village Engineer McKenna confirmed that crash data would be a key component and whether it would be coupled with staff observations, specifically the Police Department's Traffic Unit. He also stated that a motion wouldn't be needed for these recommendations.

8. RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE BOARD REVISED PRINCIPLES AND GOALS FOR THE VILLAGE'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM NETWORK (2021 WORK PLAN ITEM)

Chair Burke gave a summary of previous discussions on this item. He suggested two options: 1) the Commission don't wait for the Village Board and move ahead on their own in coming up with goals. 2) Put the item on back burner for the time being and wait to see what new Village Board comes up with in terms of outreach and piggyback on those goals. He then opened it up to the Commission on suggestions for what should be the transportation goals be for the Village.

Commissioner Moses wondered if the Village Board was working on its own goal-setting process.

Village Engineer McKenna confirmed that the Village Board had begun this process in May and didn't know if they were finalized. McKenna also advised that the Commission review the comprehensive plan from 2014 for this item, before discussing it again. It identified goals, objectives and metrics for the transportation network and is the most relevant Board-approved planning document to date.

Commissioner Moses thinks there may be a third option because the Village Board is developing goals. Out of this Board process, there may be a transportation related goal that gets handed to the Commission.

Commissioner Peterson agreed on waiting and see to what the Board comes up with.

Commissioner Thompson thinks that anything that comes from the Board will be very general and not useful to the Commission in its deliberations. He recommends the Commission coming up with its own vision and acting on that vision and when things go before the Board, the Board will say whether they agree with the Commission's vision.

Commissioner Peterson offered that the Commission could wait for an agreed upon time to get direction from the Board, but if it didn't happen within the timeframe, the Commission could move ahead establishing its own process.

Commissioner Katner agreed with Commissioner Thompson in thinking the Commission would only get the most general of guidelines from the Board and then fill in the details. He also thought the Commission should be careful when approaching the Board without the benefit of meeting wholly, as it might give the idea of coordination behind the scenes. He suggested the Commission move forward on its own and see where negotiations need to happen based on what the Board finally says.

Chair Burke rebutted that although they serve on the Commission, they are still residents allowed to speak with the Board and that his conversations were not as a directive to the Board, but the Commission's interest in creating mechanisms through which public outreach can happen in Oak Park better; and sharing those with the Board.

Commissioner Katner added with not knowing the entire sense of the Village Board, the Commission should operate very carefully especially with having conversations with a couple of Trustees..

Commissioner Fink wondered how waiting for the Board would affect the upcoming survey process?

Village Engineer McKenna thought these would be separate.

McKenna asked for clarification on the intent of the Work Plan item. Is it about not establishing goals for itself and mainly establishing them through a more robust public input process; more of a grass roots item? Or is the Commission creating its own goals for the transportation network?

Chair Burke affirmed the latter. Transportation goals for the Village that would be approved by the Village Board. The Commission would then say, those goals would inform what we do.

Commissioner Fink asked why can't the Commission be proactive and come up with recommendations as a Board. How did it evolve into a public outreach process? She thought the outreach was more in terms of the parking pilot.

Chair Burke feared criticism if there were not public input.

Commissioner Fink agreed with public input in the way of feedback for established goals.

Chair Burke stated that struggle has always been the Commission needs proper tools and resources to capture the public input, whether meetings, survey, etc. He also stated that he had the same conversation with two trustees that said the Board was working on establishing tools, resources and processes to do that.

Commissioner Katner asked who the trustees were. Chair Burke did not disclose. Commissioner Katner questioned the transparency of the Commission as discussed earlier as being a caveat to the Commission's goal.

Commissioner Fink offered creating goals with current tools, that may help expose gaps in the tools in what they need and who they need to hear from.

Commissioner Thompson stated that parking is this single biggest issue to transportation/parking. The parking pilot was an attempt to make policy around parking. In essence the Commission is going to be making recommendations to the Village Board on the single biggest transportation issue in the Village in the context of the parking pilot program. Why do they need to reframe it around some major goal setting exercise? The Commission is actually making policy in the process of making decisions around issues. I'm not sure we need reframe it around some high level goal setting process; we're doing it as we go.

Chair Burke stated that the goal was to have the Village government on record with goals and priorities for transportation to help form decisions the Commission makes, and the Village Board makes.

Chair Burke ask the Commission to vote on these points: 1) wait until July for new guidance, resources, tools from the Village Board and make decision; or 2) start at the July Commission meeting the process to create goals with public input with tools currently available to the Commission.

Commissioner Fink suggested since both options are due next month, why can't they both be done and see what happens with the Village Board? If there is no new guidance, get started.

Commissioner Thompson agreed with Commissioner Fink's proposal

Commissioner Katner concurred. Commissioner Moses also agreed. Commissioner Peterson had no input.

Chair Burke stated the Commissioner will work with staff starting in July on developing a manageable process

9. Adjourn

There being no further business, Commissioner Fink made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Moses seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes – Fink, Moses, Katner, Peterson, Thompson, Burke

Nays – None

The motion passed unanimously 6 to 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:34 PM.

Submitted by:

Shawnya Williams

Public Works Customer Service Representative