

# MEETING MINUTES

## WILLOW ROAD STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING (Meeting #10)

January 11, 2008

Attached are meeting minutes from the Steering Committee Team Meeting for the Willow Road Context-Sensitive Enhancement Plan held January 11, 2008 at the Village Hall in Northfield.

<b>Steering Committee Members</b>	<b><u>Absent</u></b>	<b><u>Present</u></b>
Ken Behles, Village of Winnetka	_____	<u>    X    </u>
John Birkinbine, Village of Northfield	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Peter Fischer, Village of Northfield	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Fred Gougler, Village of Northfield	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Becky Hurley, Village of Winnetka	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Mark Kurensky, Village of Winnetka	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Ian Sherman, Village of Winnetka	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Scott Turban, Village of Northfield	_____	<u>    X    </u>
<b>Alternates</b>		
Carolyn Kurtz, Village of Winnetka	<u>    X    </u>	_____
<b>Staff Liaisons</b>		
Stacy Sigman, Village of Northfield	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Steve Saunders, Village of Winnetka	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Doug Williams, Village of Winnetka	_____	<u>    X    </u>
<b>Consultants</b>		
Scott Freres, The Lakota Group	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Daniel Grove, The Lakota Group	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Kevin Clark, The Lakota Group	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Mike Kerr, Christopher Burke Engineering	_____	<u>    X    </u>
<b>Additional Participants</b>		
John Kemper, Resident, Village of Northfield	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Jeffery Liss, Resident, Village of Winnetka	_____	<u>    X    </u>
Ervin Hobson, Resident, Village of Northfield	_____	<u>    X    </u>
June O'Donoghue, Resident, Village of Northfield	_____	<u>    X    </u>

### **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

- Lakota distributed meeting minutes for Steering Committee meeting #9. Ken Behles motioned to adopt, Peter Fischer seconded the motion. Vote was taken and motion passed.

## **REVIEW/DISCUSSION OF NEXT STEPS**

- Scott Freres discussed the preparation of a draft report and noted it will contain information regarding the Context Sensitive Solutions process, public comments, and the previous Northfield study as a benchmark.
- Daniel Grove explained that today's meeting was the first in a series of up to five meetings focused on specific areas within the corridor for which the Committee will make recommendations.
- The Committee discussed the consultants' additional services proposal. This proposal addresses the additional meetings and process requested by the Committee at the previous meeting. John Birkinbine indicated he thought the Committee would not need five meetings. Becky Hurley asked if Lakota would provide a credit if not all five meetings were used; Scott Freres agreed he would.

## **DISCUSSION OF ROAD CORRIDOR FROM PROVIDENT TO HIBBARD**

- Scott Freres discussed the issues pertaining to Crow Island School, as derived from the workshops and a follow-up meeting with the Crow Island Traffic Committee, which consisted of the Principal, District 36 Business Manager, a parent liaison, and crossing guard. These included:
  - The current drop-off situation/configuration and potential changes
  - The possibility of signalizing the Glendale/Willow intersection
  - The National Historic status of the school and effects potential changes could have
  - The use of the green space in front of the drop-off area
  - The potential for a right turn lane for accessing Glendale Avenue/drop-off south of Willow Road
  - Relocating bus and staff parking to the west along Willow
- Steve Saunders added that they have discussed adding a pedestrian "bump-out" at the Glendale cross walk and also clarified that the road width would not change with the addition of a right turn lane.
- Scott Turban questioned how far the Committee needed to take its recommendations because the Crow Island property seemed somewhat out of the scope.
- Becky Hurley explained that, although some of the issues may be outside the study area and scope of this Willow Road study, they may still affect how Willow Road functions. The Committee should make recommendations on issues within the study area, such as the signalization of Glendale, and where appropriate, suggest further study of areas outside it, such as the access driveway within the Crow Island School property and whether it makes sense for that driveway to intersect with Willow at the crosswalk.
- Ian Sherman commented that having a signal at Glendale would be good during school pick-up/drop-off hours, but it would be a nuisance if the light was not green at other times. Steve Saunders responded that the light would be a fully actuated signal that was triggered by pedestrians or cars to allow efficient movement along Willow except during these times.

- Ken Behles added that relocating bus and staff parking to the west would be beneficial regardless of the addition of a right hand turn lane.
  - Mark Kurensky commented that the signal sounds like a good idea, but cautioned that changing the parking and drop-off configuration should be studied because there might be other issues created by a new system.
  - Ian Sherman expressed some concern about moving parking in front of the Woods, fearing it would change the ambience and feel of this area. He also wants to be careful with expanding sidewalks/bike paths because of existing trees and wetlands.
  - **The Committee summarized the recommendations for the area of Willow Road between Provident and Hibbard as follows:**
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- Relocate buses west of their current location
  - Move staff parking west along Willow in an equal increment to existing
  - Provide the potential for signaling the intersection at Glendale and Willow
  - Use existing bus parking in front of the school as a right hand turn lane eastbound on Willow for movements onto south bound Glendale Avenue
  - Recommend that Crow Island School conduct a further study for how the drop-off functions
  - Include countdown timers for pedestrian crossings
  - Add thermoplastic textured paving through the school zone on Willow Road
  - Create a multi-purpose widened pedestrian/bike trail on the south side of Willow from school to west end of Crow Island Woods.

### **DISCUSSION OF ROAD CORRIDOR FROM FORESTWAY TO HIBBARD**

- Steve Saunders presented a plan at Hibbard, which showed Willow Road tapering to three lanes west of the Hibbard intersection. This included:
  - A left hand turn lane from **Willow to Hibbard in both directions** and a travel lane for each direction of travel
  - Consistent lane alignments on all streets
  - Eliminating the split phase signal
  - The potential for pedestrian cross walks in all four directions
- Mike Kerr noted that the Phase I engineering would calculate the taper distance, and added that it generally is a better situation to have a taper before an intersection than after it, which is the current configuration.
- Scott Turban indicated that the taper at Hibbard make sense.
- Steve Saunders discussed the issues at the **Forestway Intersection**, including the following:
  - The potential signalization of the intersection
  - Possibly aligning Forestway and the Public Works rear access drive
  - The need for right and left hand turn lanes on Forestway
- Doug Williams commented that signalization at Forestway Drive made sense, but needs to be thought about because this might make for cut-through traffic to Green Bay Road or Sheridan more appealing for vehicles exiting southbound off Edens expressway at Tower Road.
- Ian Sherman noted that the south side of Willow bike/pedestrian path needs to be widened because this trail is frequently used by bikers and is very close to the road. A north trail would not really make the connections bikers need.

- Scott Turban noted that the Committee should recommend a light at Forestway.
- Ian Sherman expressed a dislike for the concrete barrier on the west side of Forestway and believes it should be removed as part of intersection improvements.
- The Committee discussed the possibility of aligning Forestway with the Public Works rear access drive. The Committee decided not to recommend this realignment due to the existing reservoir on the northeast corner of the intersection, the multiple ownerships of property, the limited amount of traffic likely coming from Forest Way into the Public Works building through the rear access drive rather than to the front through the main access drive.
- **The Committee summarized the recommendations for the area of Willow Road between Hibbard and Forestway as follows:**


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  - Eliminate split phase signal at Hibbard
  - Three lane cross section at Hibbard, including left hand turn lanes in both directions, with consistent lane alignments
  - Extend taper to the west side of the Hibbard intersection as the road transitions from 4 lanes to 3 and on the east side of Hibbard from 3 lanes to 2
  - Enhanced parkway expansion in front of church with realignment of Willow on northeast corner of Hibbard and Willow
  - Add crosswalks for all four directions of the Hibbard/Willow intersection
  - Provide a new signal at Forestway
  - Provide left and right hand turn lanes on Forestway

#### **DISCUSSION OF CORRIDOR FROM EDENS RAMP TO FORESTWAY**

- Daniel Grove summarized the issues around the Edens off ramp and the previous concept for a consolidated ramp on the north side of Willow Road, a signalized intersection, and two left hand turn lanes and two right hand turn lanes. He also noted how this would eliminate the ramp from the south, providing an opportunity for a multi-purpose path in this area.
- Mark Kurensky commented that maybe a left hand turn lane should be provide/further studied for Lagoon, LaTrobe, Lockwood, and Linder Avenues, on the south side of Willow Road.
- Mike Kerr questioned whether or not these streets needed full access or if they could be right-in/right-out only on some.
- Stacy Sigman commented about the possibility of tapering from four to three lanes in front of the businesses on the south to gain more room for bike/pedestrian paths in this area.
- Scott Turban did not feel the Committee had enough information to make a decision about the access for Lagoon, LaTrobe, Lockwood and Linder Avenues because there was not representation from the residents that live in this neighborhood at the workshops.
- Mike Kerr indicated traffic counts supported four lanes in this area. The Committee agreed that **four lanes should be maintained**.
- Mark Kurensky also noted that, as an alternative to a consolidated Edens off ramp, the current ramp on the south can be realigned to form a more perpendicular

intersection to Willow, making it safer for pedestrians and bikers. Length of ramp and deceleration would need further study.

- **The Committee summarized the recommendations for the area of Willow Road between Forestway and the Edens as follows:**

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- Locating all bike access to the south side of the road
- Improvement to the Edens overpass bridge, including narrowing lane widths/center island width, adding pedestrian space on south side of bridge, and separating the pedestrian space with a decorative railing or barrier
- Further study of consolidated Edens off ramp concept by engineers on an overall basis
- Removal of/or improvement to the slip ramp on the south (east bound Edens ramp) to improve pedestrian/bike safety
- Improving the frontage along the south edge of Willow in front of the businesses to allow for more space and better pedestrian/bike access and connections
- West of the Forestway/Willow intersection, realign south pedestrian/bike path away from road as appropriate and as possible with Cook County Forest Preserve District approval, potentially with a completely separate bridge crossing on Forest Preserve property

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Ervin Hobson of Northfield noted that it would be very beneficial to have a public sidewalk on the north side of Willow, west of Hibbard for people who use the park parking lot to attend the adjacent Methodist Church.
- John Kemper commented that adding stop lights for the Edens ramp would be “going backwards” because it creates traffic back ups.
- Jeffrey Liss of Winnetka recommended an alternate solution on the west side of the Willow/Hibbard intersection, where four lanes are preserved, with one west bound lane, one dedicated left turn lane (east to north), one east bound through lane and one dedicated right turn lane (east to south). He further stated it is important to avoid creating an “hourglass bottleneck” at the Hibbard intersection.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- The Committee discussed that the next meeting would be a similar format and will be a continuation of discussions of the corridor further west.

#### **NEW ITEMS/COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

- No new items.