

MINUTES
VILLAGE OF LA GRANGE
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Village Hall Auditorium
53 South La Grange Road
La Grange, IL 60525

Tuesday, January 25, 2011
(immediately following the regular Village Board meeting)

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Board of Trustees of the Village of La Grange special meeting was called to order at 7:41 p.m. by President Asperger.

PRESENT: Trustees Holder, Horvath, Kuchler, Langan and Palermo with President Asperger presiding.

ABSENT: Clerk Milne and Trustee Livingston

OTHERS: Village Manager Robert Pilipiszyn
Village Attorney Mark Burkland
Assistant Village Manager Andrianna Peterson
Finance Director Lou Cipparrone
Community Development Director Patrick Benjamin
Police Chief Mike Holub
Fire Chief Bill Bryzgalski
KLOA Principal Eric Russell
KLOA Principal Luay Aboona

2. TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY WORKSHOP

President Asperger presented an overview of traffic and pedestrian safety as one of the Village Board's strategic priorities throughout the Village. Particular emphasis has been given to the 47th Street corridor for initial discussion and consideration with the Village Board, consultants and staff. President Asperger requested Village Manager Robert Pilipiszyn to provide a background summary.

Mr. Pilipiszyn introduced tonight's agenda on traffic and pedestrian safety and provided background information which consisted of how the 47th Street lane reduction proposal was conceived, and how observations made by KLOA during a speed study in 2009 indicated that the concept had some merit.

Mr. Pilipiszyn noted this evening's workshop would consist of presentations on several feasibility studies for the 47th Street corridor conducted by Koenig, Lindgren, O'Hara, Aboona, Inc. (KLOA) the consultants engaged by the Village to further evaluate traffic calming opportunities within the corridor. Mr. Pilipiszyn identified the studies to be presented as being a traffic engineering study to determine the feasibility to re-configure 47th Street from a four-lane cross-section to a three-lane cross-section; a traffic origination and destination study to ascertain the utilization characteristics of 47th Street as a regional transportation arterial, a local east-west arterial or combination of both; and a traffic engineering study to determine feasibility to signalize the intersection of 47th Street and East Avenue.

Mr. Pilipiszyn requested Public Works Director Ryan Gillingham to provide the framework for the presentation. Mr. Gillingham thanked the Board for the opportunity to present these studies and explained that after the presentation staff and consultant opinions and recommendations would be made for discussion and direction from the Board.

Mr. Gillingham introduced Mr. Eric Russell and Mr. Luay Aboona Principals of KLOA who would present their findings to enhance pedestrian safety and control traffic. Mr. Gillingham noted that any changes to the 47th Street corridor would need coordination with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

Mr. Russell proceeded with a power point presentation which detailed several methods used by the consultants to identify the primary users of 47th Street for the purpose of a possible redesign to narrow the roadway. Mr. Russell noted both advantages and disadvantages of lane reductions and preliminary cost estimates. In addition, several methods were utilized to observe speeds and volume of traffic along this corridor which were identified in the consultant's analysis.

Mr. Aboona continued with that portion of the presentation which provided the Board with a study to evaluate the feasibility of installing traffic signals at the intersection of 47th Street and East Avenue. Although it is assumed that the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE) has projected reconfiguring the area, Mr. Aboona explained that it is not foreseeable in the near future due to funding constraints.

At this point of the meeting, President Asperger opened discussion to the Board. The Board initiated numerous questions related to the presentation on the feasibility studies for the reconfiguration of the 47th Street corridor and traffic signalization at 47th Street and East Avenue. Mr. Gillingham and consultants from KLOA responded to their inquiries.

President Asperger requested thoughts from the Trustees on the recommendations to signalize the intersection of 47th Street and East Avenue. Considerable discussion and debate ensued among the Village Board including: concerns that more efficient traffic flow will increase traffic, thereby increase congestion, leading to cut-through traffic on adjacent side streets; the traffic signal will aid area residents making cross or turning movements

within the corridor by creating gaps in traffic; traffic congestion will still be a problem because of the railroad crossing; and the need to talk to neighboring communities. At the conclusion of the discussion, it was the consensus of the Village Board to continue to pursue the signalization of the intersection of 47th Street and East Avenue by providing copies of the KLOA study to IDOT and to neighboring communities as a first step in the process.

President Asperger requested Trustee thoughts on the proposal to re-configure 47th Street from 4-lanes to 3-lanes. Considerable discussion and debate ensued among the Village Board including: concerns with cut-through traffic on adjacent side streets; concerns with the estimated cost of the “demonstration” improvements; questions whether the re-configuration will improve pedestrian safety; questions whether the re-configuration will improve the quality of life for residents; and desire for increased traffic enforcement. At the conclusion of the discussion, it was the consensus of the Village Board to table additional discussion regarding the re-configuration of 47th Street, but continue to invite the public to provide input regarding the proposal.

Although the hour was late, President Asperger requested the Board’s indulgence in allowing the audience to voice their questions and concerns. Numerous residents inquired about the proposed traffic alterations and pedestrian safety measures presented and possible effects. Mr. Gillingham and the consultants responded to their inquiries.

Residents also inquired about pedestrian flashing red light signalization on 47th Street at 9th Avenue and were informed that federal and state standards would prohibit the use of a red flashing light at this location. Residents also identified the need for more stringent traffic enforcement.

This led to a discussion about the effectiveness of the pedestrian crossing at 47th Street and 9th Avenue. Some members of the Village Board expressed frustration with the conflict between federal traffic standards which prohibit flashing red beacons, yet a new state law which requires motorists to stop for pedestrians in a crosswalk. This led to a discussion that additional enhanced pedestrian crossings within the Village, such as at 47th Street and Waiola Avenue, may have an alerting effect, increase awareness and thus calm traffic; it is also viewed as a more cost-effective alternative to a re-configuration of 47th Street. Some Trustees were not as confident that additional enhanced pedestrian crossings would increase safety. They also expressed a desire to see more compliance / traffic enforcement at the crosswalk. It was the consensus of the Village Board to continue to pursue an enhanced pedestrian crossing at 47th Street and Waiola Avenue as well as at La Grange Road and 52nd Street, by inviting additional public input and discussing the project further in conjunction with the Capital Projects Workshop in February and the Budget Workshop in March.

President Asperger summarized the consensus direction provided to staff by the Village Board and indicated that the Board would table the two remaining items (proposal to conduct a stop sign study and policy governing the use of on-street pedestrian crossing signage) for further discussion at the Capital Projects Workshop to be conducted on February 7, 2011.

3. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:00 p.m. it was moved by Trustee Langan to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Kuchler.
Motion approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Benjamin

Executive Secretary

Approved: 02/14/11

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