



VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 20, 2023 – 6:30 PM

A regular meeting of the River Forest Traffic and Safety Commission was held on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. Present at this meeting were Chairman Rees, Commissioner Chase (came in late), Commissioner Gillis, Commissioner Hoyt, & Commissioner Karrow.

Chairman Rees indicates that representatives from Thomas Engineering are here tonight and will be giving a presentation on the Village Wide Traffic Study.

MOTION to adopt minutes from last meeting. Commissioner Hoyt seconds.

VOTE TAKEN ON MINUTES

Chairman Rees – yes, Commissioner Gillis – yes. Motion passes.

Chairman Rees talks about agenda items tonight. A presentation by Thomas Engineering group for the work done regarding the Village Wide Traffic Study and talk about issues on Clinton and Bonnie Brae. This portion was excluded from this report as KLOA previously done a comprehensive study of that northeast quadrant. We will talk about the repercussions of that. We will see where to go from there in respect to Clinton and Bonnie Brae.

Jim, Senior Project Manager from Thomas Engineering, summarizes Traffic Study (see attached summary at the end of the minutes).

Chairman Rees indicates that the Study is listed on our website and labeled Draft. He asks Director Loster if it will remain a Draft or changed from Draft status?

Director Loster indicates that it will be changed but wanted to get it out to The Public for consumption as quickly as possible. There are some items that Staff has not edited yet due to text answers that will be buttoned up and posted on the website.

Chairman Rees asks Jim, Senior Project Manager from Thomas Engineering, if he can comment on the method that TEG used to do the counts, collect the speed data and what type of methodology they used to collect data.

Jim, with Thomas Engineering indicates that they used Miovision video traffic counting software with mounted pole cameras. Data is then annualized by a computer. This only captures volumes. Speed data is acquired utilizing high star pavement counters collection.

Chairman Rees asks Jim if data is obscure as motorists may not know then are being monitored?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering, responds yes as any data collection they do is obscure especially when it comes to the speed collection without influencing the speed of the driver.

Chairman Rees had a couple of questions related to the recommendations. Is there an opinion or philosophy due to the step approach? How do we contemplate considering implementing the recommendations as we would like to act on them promptly to give people notice for the affected area.

Director Loster indicates that part of the goal tonight was to get the general findings of this Study out there for consumption and consideration. Anything that The Commission would be considering pursuing when it becomes sites specific, is something that we would ask The Commission to discuss as a group and make known it is your intention to discuss the bump-outs at Lake and Park. We would notify accordingly for a future meeting so a more concise conversation can take place regarding that specific location. This is more of a broader picture to get it all out there and start to gather some feedback.

Chairman Rees asks if Jim or Director Loster can you identify some of these areas that we should prioritize if we were to decide to take a piece at a time. Do you think there are areas that we, as a Commission, should consider prioritizing above others?

Director Loster indicated that again that was part of the goal tonight to see from the Public to see what so we as a Commission to see where we would like to focus the conversation for future meetings. But at this point, nothing has been identified specifically as a priority.

Chairman Rees to ask a couple more questions and then turn it over to see if other Commissioners have questions. I noted at the beginning the northeast quadrant was excluded from this. On these 2 pages that I printed out are the prior KLOA Study. Jim, as part of your work, did you look at the KLOA Study?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering, indicated that they read through it but didn't focus on any excluded areas. We were somewhat aware of what was going on there regarding the changes of the right in right out and cul-de-sac locations.

Chairman Rees states that one reason that I am asking about that is KLOA collected similar data. I don't know if they collected data in the same manner. You mentioned that they may have used different manners to collect some of the data. We do have from KLOA speed data, crash data and volume data on the streets that are at issue. For example, Bonnie Brae, Clinton, William and Monroe. I looked at their data and plugged it into your point matrix. Do you have an opinion, or do you know if that would be a valid methodology for us going forward as we have KLOA data? This was data collected in March of 2022, included in a report prepared in June 2022 and which was discussed in a meeting of September of 2022. Using your point methodology, it looks like we can take data from the KLOA Study and assign points using your methodology to determine that on the KLOA Study see that speed was not seen as an issue with respect to Bonnie Brae. Under your study, that would be 0 to 5 points if the speed was within the appropriate range. They measured volume at 900 cars based on their period of collection and you guys put a certain

number of points based on that volume of 900 that would be 5 points. There is crash data that they collected. None of the intersections they looked had more than 3 crashes in a period and that would also get points under your methodology and doing that we would be able to identify that based on the KLOA data that Bonnie Brae, for example, or Clinton Place would qualify as either Level 1 or Level 2. Do we take your point methodology, we collect the data, we apply the data, measure and assign the points and based on points it identifies if that particular area of study qualifies for Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 type interventions?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering, indicates yes. This is not the purpose here but is something that The Village can continue using in the future once it is an accepted document it can be used by applying previous collected data from the KLOA Study or the next project that comes up next year that is collected and see where it falls. Each location is treated and scored by the same system. The higher the score, the more improvement it would be like closing off a road or whatever.

Director Loster indicates that the only clarifier I would add is this is part of the Traffic Calming Toolbox which is part of the Village Wide Study. The goal is to have that completed. This is a split off appendix this group can apply to any situation. Don't just think of it as the context of the Study is to be used for years in the future.

Commissioner Hoyt asks if this is TEG proprietary methodology or is it broader than that?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering, no, you can look around at other communities as there are a lot of similar things with the exact counter measure. We try to tailor the ones we listed as to the ones that were acceptable within The Village Wide Survey. We think this is the best option but there are other options that can effectively do the same thing. We did not develop this one specifically but is very similar.

Commissioner Hoyt asks if related to that, are we formally adopting us to approve this methodology to help us or The Village improving it in a way that we can use it or do we need to have an opinion on whether we should do that?

Matt Walsh, Village Administrator, indicates that yes, the intent for that would be formally adopted as it adds legitimacy to the process moving forward to help out The Commission and The Village Board to treating any petitions or requests or anything else that comes forward and direct it to that process. That is not the intent tonight as this is coming in as a huge document that Chairman Rees pointed out, but that is the goal.

Chairman Rees asks I don't know if this was a focus of your presentation, but you also have in here a cost matrix which is helpful as you identify at each level, Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, the different kinds of interventions or actions that might be taken. Then you have notes on implementation, not only what the cost is but what the desired outcome is as some things are better for speed. Can you comment on what you call the cost matrix, how to use that?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering, indicates commenting back to your earlier questions about starting a smaller improvement and stepping in, that is how we would do it or how we would recommend. You are at a high- level score. That is something that is more involved and is needed but is ok to go there. The intent of the cost matrix is to help guide this. We think these are

a couple options that we are considering where options A, B & C are going to give us a similar benefits. If A is half the cost and easier to implement and meets the needs of what we are trying to do, and this one is easier for speed, and that is what we are trying to address, that would be the appropriate amount of measure to start with.

Chairman Rees asks if you can comment on the use of speed humps or bumps verses the speed tables that people may or may not understand where one verses the other might be appropriate?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering, indicates that generally they are all the same and get bigger as you go. A speed bump is going to be a couple of inches raised off the pavement and guessing a foot or so wide. Whereas the speed hump is maybe 3 or 4 feet wide. A speed table gets even wider than that and at a raised intersection is essentially a speed table across the entire intersection.

Chairman Rees asks if a speed table could be in the intersection or it can be in the middle of the block?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering, indicates correct.

Commissioner Hoyt indicates that the pictures of the table were only in the intersection. When I think of table I think not in the intersection. Am I understanding it right?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering, sometimes you will see it at crosswalk or at a big cross walking where you will have that raised intersection, the difference between a speed hump and speed table is if it is wide enough to be considered a table? One of the advantages of the speed table or as a raised intersection speed table over a bump or hump location is you can actually have more control of the design of the ramp flow on all the approach sides of that. You can make it a shell or angled slope on a road where you don't want to lower the speed too much. For example, for a residential minor street, you maybe don't mind that the traffic doesn't have to slow down to 15 mph even though it is a 25 mph speed limit area. If you are on Thatcher, you probably don't want to slow down traffic down to 15 but you do want to slow down the speed limit and that is where a speed table would be designed at the raised intersection. This way a driver can comfortably progress over that intersection at 25 mph.

Chairman Rees indicates that he has seen in some study's that the term vertical deflection verses horizontal deflection. Are those terms you use? Are vertical deflections are like speed humps, bumps table things that are vertical verses horizontal deflections you were talking about with respect to Thatcher and Washington which is narrowing the street horizontally. Is that part of the terms you use?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering, indicates there are options. The verticals are the ones you mentioned. In addition to the horizontal there are options where you can curve them out alternating where the curve out on one side of the road at one of the blocks and at the other so you almost create a weaving pattern for the traffic. You visually change the roadway for them.

Chairman Rees indicates within your levels, 1,2,3,4 do you have any that include closing off the street which is one of the things we have been talking about on Bonnie Brae and Clinton or partial or full closures like cul-de-sacs or barriers like that. Would those be considered Level 4 or

what level would you consider something like a cul-de-sac or a barrier to stopping traffic from entering the street?

Jim, with Thoms Engineering, considers those a Level 4 on the magnitude of impact that they are going to have due to traffic. Putting in a speed bump, you are affecting all the traffic but you are not changing traffic pattern. Putting a sign up is pretty small. Changing the control at an intersection those are mainly like Level 3 taken from an all way stop to a signalized intersection. If you are blocking a road off completely with cul-de-sac or converting to right in right out or you are eliminating different turn movements available, that would be at Level 4 impact.

Chairman Rees asks if any other Commissioners or Staff have questions for Jim?

Commissioner Karrow asks when you mention bike lanes on Thatcher and I also think you suggested something on Washington, are those protected bike lanes? There is no curb between the street and the bike lane.

Jim, with Thomas Engineering indicates that their initial recommendation was a two-foot striped buffer offset from the lanes so you are not directly up against the travel lane but not a physical barrier. That is an alternative option that can be expanded onto what we are recommending. It could be addressed if the project moves forward.

Commissioner Karrow indicates that the intent with that is to address speed not volume?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering indicates yes, the intent to that is to address speed. When you have these wide- open roadways where you have two lanes on Washington and then you have these parking lanes which have low utilization rates mostly under 50%. Some blocks 0% parking. It has the feel of a faster road. By narrowing lanes and closing lanes in on traffic, it has the traffic calming effect which has the intent of reducing driver's speed. Obviously, traffic volume does need to be considered in this is that you do not want to eliminate lanes.

Commissioner Gillis indicates on Washington, we were talking about that. I like the idea in Chicago where you have parking and bike traffic going both ways. In Chicago where you see that green stripe, I understand what you mean by thinning it out. It does seem to work. I like that a lot. I was actually surprised by some of these numbers on Washington at 38? That is a big number. On Thatcher 41. Again, I know they speed, but that is fast. Jeff, on Thatcher, there was something that came through about a preliminary recommendation about a bike where they were going to reconfigure on a state road park, from North Avenue to Chicago. If I remember right, the traffic, traffic and two bike lanes on the residential side.

Director Loster indicates the Des Plaines River Trail is mostly North Avenue way up north. Several communities are involved in that project. The County is moving the bike path along the river out of the flood plain so it is more usable. River Forest, a couple years ago, worked our way into the project as originally Forest Park and River Forest were not part of it. That idea was to continue it down to the Transit Center in Forest Park. So yes, that is something that The Village is still involved with and still a project that is in the works. The consultant that is running that project last year secured funding to complete Phase 1 Engineering for River Forest portion of that path and later on this year The Village will need to make a local match payment to continue that going which is already budgeted. The general idea would be to put consensual plans together

for a two -lane bike path on the west side of the pavement so on the Forest Preserve side, but that would eat up one of the southbound lanes thus reducing it down to one lane. That is something that is running down a parallel track and continues to do so.

Commissioner Gillis asks if we can do that on a temporary basis if they recommend a bike lane in that area?

Director Loster indicates that would change things especially on a highly utilized road like that. It is also still under IDOT Jurisdiction so permitting for any of this is tricky or at least a lengthier process. Trying to do that twice over might not be prudent but if that is something that The Village were interested in striking something in the meantime but doing it on a more permanent basis down the line would be something The Village would seek permits from IDOT for.

Commissioner Gillis asks Jeff with some of these options regarding the Toolbox, is there a way that we could get some sort of cost associated with these rough numbers? If you are putting in a bump out or curve extension, there is in some cases, heavy engineering for the future. I know Chicago does less expensive bump outs where they keep that gap between the original curve as a new bump out so they don't have to reengineer the water flow or everything. Correct? The speed cameras that we love with the flashing lights at 15 to 20 grand a pop, we can't throw those up everywhere. Just being realistic about costs.

Director Loster indicates that the radar things are not quite that expensive so to put that out there. The cost matrix does run 0 to 6, 6 to 15, kind of provide the high medium low- cost thing. A lot of that stuff is going to be site specific if you are talking about physical infrastructure at a particular location. If The Commission is considering bump outs at Washington and Ashland, this is completely hypothetical. If that is information that The Commission would like a little more kind of honed on as far as the cost of that, that is something Staff could put together for rough costs on a case -by -case basis.

Chairman Rees asks if there any more questions.

Commissioner Hoyt asks if the cul-de-sac, or the dead end that we're considering, is not even on here as one of the options? Is there a reason why?

Jim, with Thomas Engineering indicates that I do not think that it was intentionally excluded as not to be considered. This document was recently provided to Village Staff so we have not had a full time chance vet it, we can definitely incorporate additional improvements into the Toolbox or eliminate some that aren't desired.

Commissioner Hoyt asks when we adopt the Toolbox is to make sure it included everything we would you would ever consider.

Chairman Rees indicates if The Village is looking for some kind of motion, I propose the motion that we approve the use of the Thomas Engineering Group scoring matrix and the up and coming Toolbox as tools to use along with Commissioner Hoyt's former suggestion when this draft is finalized to ask TEG to include the use of either cul-de-sac or barriers to be placed at the appropriate level where you think you would recommend placing that. It sounds like it was a

Level 4 type intervention if that is your recommendation that you put it in the final. That's my motion.

Commissioner Hoyt seconds the motion.

Chairman Rees asks if there is there any discussion before we vote on that motion?

Commissioner Karrow asks if you can restate the motion that we are adopting?

Chairman Rees indicates that it is a pretty modest motion that I am proposing that we adopt use of the Scoring Matrix and Calming Toolbox as articulated in this draft plan and to ask when Thomas Engineering Group finalizes this that they include the discussion to add to the level the cul-de-sac or barriers at the appropriate level they see fit.

Any discussion on that motion? I think we can vote on that.

VOTE TAKEN

Chairman Rees – yes, Commissioner Gillis – yes, Commissioner Hoyt – yes, Commissioner Karrow – yes. Motion passes.

Chairman Rees thanks Jim and Kyle with Thomas Engineering for their great work and excuses them from the meeting.

Chairman Rees states that we will not open up public questions to TEG with regards to the Village Wide Traffic Study. The public comments will be to address Clinton and Bonnie Brae.

Chairman Rees talks about another agenda item which is a broadly worded statement discussion about Clinton and North Avenue, Bonnie Brae and North Avenue regarding cul-de-sacs, the temporary barriers that exist. I missed the last meeting but is my understanding that this Commission recommended after discussion was some of it heated. The removal of the barrier at Clinton Place that went to The Village Board and they rejected that recommendation in large part that they wanted to make sure that the recommendation was considered in conjunction with Bonnie Brae. This was put back on the agenda for that reason. What is difficult, for better or worse, no use debating it, the section that The Village addresses this corner of Bonnie Brae and Clinton is excluded from this particular study. We do have the KLOA study which I do not know if it is still available on the website. We do have data from KLOA which was collected last March. Just to recap, there were several neighbors that expressed concern about pass through traffic that KLOA study included the volumes on Bonnie Brae, Clinton Place, William and Monroe, were within the respected volumes of approximately 900 cars. The speeds on Bonnie Brae and Clinton were also in the expected ranges and there was evidence of access speeding particularly on William and Monroe. The accidents at the intersections in that area were studied. If you accept that data, that put the streets at Bonnie Brae and Clinton at Level 1 may be hard to get to Level 2.

This is available and you should be aware that either this Commission or The Village Board adopt a recommendation that goes beyond what is recommended within these guidelines. The reason for having The Village spend more money and collect this information is to see if we can try to be more uninformed and try to have a more evidence-based approach to what we are recommending. I think it is fair to say that this is a divisive issue where we have people in the

community that lived there that have stronger opinions both ways, both for and against keeping the barriers in place. KLOA, at the time, did recognize that cut-through traffic was an issue during their counts as there was a greater number of southbound cars that were turning left on Greenfield and Le Moyne. Even with that cut-through traffic, they were within the expected volumes which have been generally seen in The Village. I would like to get a count as to how many people are here from Bonnie Brae –How many people out of that 9 would like to support keeping the barrier at Bonnie Brae? (There was a show of hands - 8)

How many people are here from Clinton? There was 11. How many of you support keeping the barrier at Clinton? (There was a show of hands)

From the support of numbers, people on Bonnie Brae are generally happy with the barrier and the people on Clinton are generally unhappy with the barriers.

Discussion breaks out regarding barriers on certain blocks of Clinton.

Chairman Rees states that I think to me, the room is going to remain divided. We can take these things one at a time to decide if we are going to doing anything on this tonight. Are there people here who want to address something with respect to Bonnie Brae and Clinton? The topic on the agenda is the cul-de-sacs and barriers. I would like to keep the agenda limited to that topic. When you go back to the KLOA Study, there were other methods that were recommended along the lines of what we just heard here tonight with respect to an incremental approach that were not used. For example, adding parking on the west side on both of those streets to reduce, to basically constrict the width of the street and add two-hour parking on the west sides of Clinton and Bonnie Brae, at least on that first block between North Avenue and Le Moyne. That would have the effect of slowing down cut-through traffic. Is it already done on the west side now? By adding parking, this is one of those things in the Toolbox that is at Level 2 for street parking by impeding traffic through that kind of a method. It is one of the things in the Toolbox that can be used as an incremental approach. We would like to move on from this topic and come up with a recommendation that The Village can decide what it wants to do.

Why don't I stop here and ask if any of the Commissioners have any questions on this issue.

Commissioner Hoyt refers to the KLOA Study that was done in March of 2022.

Chairman Rees states that the data was collected then.

Commissioner Hoyt restates that the KLOA Study was collected in March of 2022 and that changes were made to the area on Harlem since that data was collected. Should we consider using that data and apply it to the Toolbox or would we be better advised to redo the numbers as I don't want to delay this further?

Commissioner Karrow indicates that he thinks that the changes we have would reduce the traffic, counts and speeds if anything. We can still use the numbers, even if they were wrong in the direction that we were too conservative to over- estimate the traffic there. That would be my thoughts.

Chairman Rees indicates that one of his observations is that if we accept the KLOA data I think that Bonnie Brae and Clinton would be Level 1. I think that William was identified by KLOA which happens to be increased in speed and there would be some things that could be considered with respect to speed present on William and Monroe. At least it is my view that if these barriers

fall into the category of being sort of extraordinary measures that may be determined to be in the best interest of The Village, even if they don't meet the criteria under the Study. The challenge I have is whether this is something this Commission would want to weigh in or make a recommendation or let The Village Board make that decision. My question to The Commission is that are we prepared tonight to recommend any changes with respect to Bonnie Brae and Clinton Place with respect to the cul-de-sacs or the barriers. Or do we think there needs to be additional information which needs to be collected?

Commissioner Gillis indicates I think that what you had mentioned earlier to take a look at the data that we do have and agree that it is probably Level 1. I think overwhelmingly most people on Bonnie Brae appreciate that barrier there. We have not heard from either business for the last eight months. I think in this case that is fine to keep that barrier there. With the Clinton one, I think you are right we could remove that as we recommended. Let's look at some of the other options that we have in our new Toolbox. Likewise, need to go down into William Street which is another speeding problem and increased traffic. Let's go back and review our Toolbox to see what we can do there.

Chairman Rees asks if other Commissioners have any comments.

Commissioner Karrow indicates that he has one comment. If we leave the barriers, what are we leaving them for. Are we leaving them and anticipating making them permanent or what else are we going to do there? I think that the barriers are overkill for the problem, expensive to put up and more than we need. Do we leave the barriers up as a temporary measure until we find a permanent solution that is more scaled to the size of the problem, or do we take the barriers down now while we look for a scaled solution or implement a scaled solution?

Chairman Rees indicates regarding your question what is the problem that we are trying to solve? If we are only trying to solve cut-through traffic, regardless as we don't want any cut-through traffic, then obviously barriers work. If the problem is speed, this Thomas Engineering study shows there are different ways to address speed.

Commissioner Karrow indicates that I think most of the comments and letters have mentioned volume but all of them have mentioned speed. Slow moving voluminous traffic would be better than any real fast traffic.

Chairman Rees points out that with respect to the volume at 900 which was the volume measured by KLOA, that puts it in the lower threshold volume.

So, when they measure using their scoring matrix, if it is under 750 it is 0 points on their scale. If the volume is 751 to 1,350, it is 5 points. If it is over 1,351 it is 10 points. Over 1,951 it is 15 points. Even at 900 points, if you say that it was undercounting by over 100, 200 or even 300, it would still only be at the 5- point threshold. With limited crash history, limited speeding, with volume being around 900 cars, then there are other areas on this matrix that would generate points. We would be looking at whether there is a school, park, library, church, station or other things like that in the area, there is high community interest somewhat divided even you say it is supported by a petition that would get another 10 points. Bottom line is that I do not think that we are going to get to another result where it can be above 1. People have commented that in the

northwest corner in the suburb for 30-40 years, whatever, we have streets that are closed and people seem to like that and they have adjusted. This was done before any of our time, but we can assume that people like it and adjusted. At the end of the day, we make a recommendation and this is a hard one. Our decision needs to be made and everyone is not going to be happy with it. I am troubled because my opinion is that we have jumped the gun. We installed barriers, in my opinion, on a temporary basis. Installed them trying to do something that we think was for the best. Should we keep trying some other things to prevent like add parking or if speed is an issue or do we go back and do another set of counts using some of the tools that Thomas Engineering done. In my opinion, this is going to get us in the same place that we are tonight.

Commissioner Karrow indicates that speed is an issue. I do not love the KLOA measurement technique. I also think if you look at the responses from the survey here that 75% of the respondents said that speed is an issue in general on any street that they were asked about and I do not think that barricades are the right solution.

Chairman Rees indicates right and in respect to speed, KLOA did recommend some of the things that happen to be in this Thomas Engineering for Level 1. For example, signage and other things about flashing signs and other measures that can be used to try and address speed before you get to more radical things that are vertical that don't need to be justified. There were some things that were recommended and they were not done. Part of my concern is that we jumped to the barriers without adding on street parking on those two blocks.

Discussion breaks out regarding street parking.

Chairman Rees indicates that what I am telling you is there are other methods that can be used and recommended that we didn't use. If you are going to push me, then I am going to suggest that we remove the barriers and that we go back to putting in incremental changes that would include signage and on street parking on the west side of the street to reduce speeding down the street. The question that I am struggling with is that I am trying to be respectful to everybody and everybody's views here. At the end of the day, what we are trying to figure out is what is the most appropriate way to go forward with all the information that we collected and with all the different viewpoints we collected. At least, the direction from The Village Board, I'm not saying it doesn't have to be the same, but the conclusion is that we keep Bonnie Brae and alter Clinton. There are effects on doing that and one of the effects identified by KLOA and by Thomas Engineering is that of course, when you restrict one you have potential knock on effects to another and we have to accept that reality. The issue is if we are going to have public comment, I want it to be respectful and limited. We will limit public- comment no more than a minute each and I would like people to say if you are in support of keeping the barrier to say that and limit your comment. At this point, I am going to open it up for public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dan Wasiolek, 1400 Bonnie Brae Place – Supports barriers. Northeast side needs it more than northwest corner due to many driveways, Fenwick practice fields, and popular school route.

Pat Berg, 1415 Clinton Place – For getting rid of the barricades. Also is representing Dr. Nucifora who is in Italy she is for removing the barricades.

Sari Enschede, 1518 Bonnie Brae Place – Supports barriers. Make a huge difference for kids and walking the dog. Does not think parking will slow down traffic.

Mary Stamatakos, 1507 Clinton Place – Support barriers. Would stop sign back as it is unsafe due to speeding. Parking on both sides of the street will cause more problems.

Marta Kozbur, 1235 Monroe Avenue – Against barriers. Traffic has increased 300% and safety is a concern as cars race down Monroe.

Georgia Politis, 1224 Ashland Avenue – Against barriers. Her husband Dr. Politis has a Dental practice on North Avenue. Destroyed ability to access dental practices.

Cathy O'Rourke, 1511 Bonnie Brae Place – Support barriers.

Betsy O'Rourke, 1511 Bonnie Brae Place – Supports barriers. Cars speed down their street during rush hour and is very dangerous.

Constatine Politis, 7327 North Avenue – Against barriers. Thank you for putting up stop signs back up at corner Clinton and Le Moyne and at alley ways. Wants the barricade at Clinton to be removed.

Tanju Sofu, 1407 Clinton Place – Against barriers. Does traffic modeling for his job, barriers are always the last resort there is a very strong public safety argument against them and there are other calming measure to that would address concern our neighbors of other streets.

Karen Neal, 1407 Clinton Place – Against barriers.

Jess Hwang, 1526 Clinton Place – Supports barriers.

Kate Byrne, 1411 Clinton Place – Against barriers. They are extreme.

Rene Hermes, 1446 Bonnie Brae Place – Supports barriers. Would like more data from study.

Greg Abcarian, 1226 William Street – Against barriers. Would like them all removed.

Kelly Abcarian, 1226 William Street – Against barriers. Would like the meeting minutes to be accurate. Would like the script the engineer read posted. Would like to know when you use barriers in a Level 4. Data should tell you how to make decisions.

Jill McMahon, 7329 W. North Avenue – Against barriers.

Darshana Novick, 7351 W. North Avenue – Against barriers.

Dennis McMurray, 1429 Jackson Avenue – Against all barriers. All you are doing is shifting traffic. No proof for cut-through traffic.

Forrest Stampley, 1534 Bonnie Brae Place – Against barriers. I am located by an alley in which all traffic from Bonnie Brae has shifted to go down the alley which is dangerous.

Christopher Cook, 1510 Bonnie Brae Place – Supports keeping barriers on Bonnie Brae and on Clinton. Has seen dramatic difference for public safety as well.

Rob Armalas, Le Moyne and Bonnie Brae – Supports barriers. Wants the commission to expanding protection all the way down the North Avenue corridor.

Colin Hanes, 1506 Clinton Place – Supports barriers. Especially for keeping cars entering from North Avenue.

Chairman Rees thanks everybody and makes a motion to remove both barriers, to enlist Thomas Engineering Group to collect additional data for the streets that were excluded from their report and allow us to consider other incremental approaches to address the issue. Whether it be cut-through traffic or speed in that area. That is my motion. I will ask if there is a second.

Commissioner Karrow seconds the motion.

Chairman Rees asks if there is any discussion?

Commissioner Hoyt asks if we are recommending remove the barriers for the purpose of gathering data?

Chairman Rees indicates that his motion suggests, I don't know at this meeting or at another meeting, that there were questions raised about the methodology used by KLOA by some Commissioners and by the public. Data was collected in March of 2022, which is not that old, but it was collected during the pandemic and with other methods that I think are not the same methods used by Thomas Engineering Group. There are some residents who question the methods. I think through the passage of time, we don't need to spend any more money on this project, but I think with the strong feelings and the meanings for us to have accurate data it is my suggestion to return to this to the status quo without the barriers, collect data without the barriers and then based on that data, we can assess using the Toolbox. We can then address speeding on William and Monroe and maybe these other streets. It will be interesting to see what the volume setting is at the 900 level and see if the volume is different.

My recommendation is to remove the barriers, collect new data without the barriers and then determine what appropriate actions to take based on that additional data that is collected.

Commissioner Hoyt would like to be sure that we are in agreement that something needs to be done. By removing the barriers, can sound like just remove them and move on. That is not what I want to recommend. I think for certain we need to know that this is a speed issue. If it is a speed issue, or volume issue, then Level 1 and Level 2 according to the new Toolbox our the methodologies we should be trying first. But to say that we are going to remove them and not have the study done for 18 months, that I am less comfortable with unless we are all - or we should have a discussion based on that. Is this something that is short term or long term?

Director Loster indicates that I don't think that it is that long term. Obviously, we don't know what Thoms Engineering schedule is but within a couple few months I would imagine the general timeframe they would operate on would not be 18 months.

Chairman Rees indicates that he would defer to them to what extent to use the KLOA data that it is at a point because that data is there but I am interested to know if they accept the data then maybe there is a way they could.

Commissioner Hoyt indicates that maybe there is another option to remove the barriers and do X at the same time so we don't have a period of months or a year having nothing. But if the data can be done quickly, then we believe that the data gathered by the Engineering Group is going to be more accurate for using the tool kit. My personal opinion would be to remove them and get data quickly.

Chairman Rees indicates that it sounds like what we heard tonight and the comments there would be some opposition at least to keep the one KLOA recommendation as it is consistent which is to add on street parking. I know this is a strategy under Level 2 under the Thomas Engineering Group, but we also heard objections to that. Consistent with KLOA are things like signage, flashing signs and it seems to me that it would be inconsistent to at least add some of those measures if the idea is to collect data primarily for volume and to also assess speed and then determine based on that additional collection whether additional actions need to be taken. At least that is where I am leaning towards.

Commissioner Chase indicates to Chairman Rees that we received a lot of emailed letters from the residents who could not be here this evening. Every email that was received is for keeping the barriers.

Chairman Rees indicates that he told John Osga that I would report that he couldn't be here tonight and not in a place where he does not have access to the internet. He did say that he is in favor of keeping the barriers. Considering speed mitigation on William if I am accurately recording this. Dave or Rick do you have any comments on the motion?

Commissioner Karrow agrees about the idea of removing the barriers and collecting new data so we can compare apples to apples. I do feel that whatever decision that we make, if we are going to be making it with data, we should be making it with the best data we can find. I think that is a couple of bumps that's agreeable.

Commissioner Gilles indicates that if we remove the barriers and you talk about some of the signage, I think the KLOA signage there were issues with that and would affect businesses that there is no right turn on those streets, etc. I think if we leave everything the way it was and remove the barriers and do new counts, it would be very interesting to see what happens. Likewise with William, William is going to go down. We know that and Clinton is going to go back up and Bonnie Brae will probably go back up as far as traffic. That is what we need to find out.

Chairman Rees indicates so that the suggestions that KLOA made with respect to signage, and again I do not know if it would affect the counts or that we care, but one was installing yellow bordered speed limit signs on southbound to get more visibility to the signs and also to utilize

portable or permanent speed awareness to systems that are on some street. Obviously if you put those in, especially the portable one, might potentially affect numbers that you are trying to get an accurate count on speed. You might not want to do that yet to try and get an accurate sense of what the speed is. Those are two of the suggestions that they made. Rick is right, they weren't recommending it but I think what in part led to the barriers, they did recognize that one option would to install no right turn signs on North Avenue between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. That is another alternative that would be short of barriers - I think there was a concern as those types of signs are honored in the breach, but that remains an option to try and add limited signs to North Avenue and try to add enforcement on that issue.

So those are some of the recommendations that are in the KLOA Study and they recognized in noting that at least we would need to consider the potential knock on effects there is potential diversion to Monroe and William and other streets. Any other comments or suggestions by The Commission? I agree Commissioner Hoyt that the goal here is to do something and make sure we are addressing the right problem. If the problem is volume - I know one individual I think it is was Dennis. The evidence that I saw with cut-through traffic besides what people observed and said they seen is that the counts then by KLOA did show a substantially higher number of southbound traffic cars were then turning left on Le Moyne or on Greenfield which suggests that is evidence of cut-through traffic. The question is, is the amount of volume within a level that should be tolerated or is the issue then speed and is there a different way that speed and is there a better way to address speed. We are trying to figure out if this volume issue is a speed issue or both and what is the best way to address that problem.

Commissioner Chase apologizes for being late and indicates that she encountered numerous speed bumps on her way here and two roundabouts. I slowed down for absolutely every one of them. The first one I didn't see. The sign was hidden behind a tree so I couldn't see it. The speedbumps got higher. I do not know if that's normal. Normally they are kind of a little bit flattened where you need to slow down but were humps and two roundabouts where you had to slow down. My street had a stop sign and the other side of the cross traffic did not have a stop sign so I had to actually stop and make sure nobody was coming. They work.

Chairman Rees indicates that obviously those are the Toolbox and are the mitigations to be considered as appropriate. I know that folks have there hands up I am really kind of loathed to reopening to the public comment. I just don't want to open it up to everybody.

Chairman Rees makes a comment indicating that suggestion of that section was excluded because the Village paid money and had KLOA did the detailed study that they did. At least the recommendation that is in the motion is that we remove the barriers for now, collect new data and then come back and based on that data address the issue. I don't want to reopen this up.

Chairman Rees indicates that he understands the point. This is not nothing that discussed today that will affect the diverted turning traffic on Harlem from Le Moyne and Greenfield.

Chairman Rees indicates that they will certainly defer to the engineers that The Village is to determine if our proposal is even adopted. First of all we haven't voted to accept it here at The Commission level and what we would recommend is non-binding and will be up to The Village Board to decide whether they are going to accept what we recommend. Any other comments from The Commissioners?

Chairman Rees indicates that it was not a question I don't think. It was a comment if I am accurately stating it in asking that we use care in sequencing if that decision is made to remove the barrier and collect more data, that is done in a smart way and a limited way to limit any impact to the change. It can also suggest in the meantime if speed is seen as an issue to put in a speed bump that is not part of the recommendation because anything like that is going to depend on the data that is collected. I think that is close enough I hope. Any other comments from The Commissioners?

Commissioner Hoyt indicates that she realizes that we're – as I said before that I am worried about being taken down for too long. In my view we have two choices to either follow the recommendation or we can take down the barriers and at the same time put something else up if we are concerned about speed and safety. I don't know how long that would agree to your recommendation but timing is very important to me. Normally, we take down the barriers and do X or take them down and do nothing. As long as the count is going to be quick. Also, we can act quickly on results of those counts.

Chairman Rees indicates that he don't know if we can change the motion or maybe we could ask The Village to what you are suggesting is to keep the barriers in place and to remove them as needed when it is time to take the count and defer to Thomas Engineering as to how long they should be removed to get an accurate count. The goal is to get accurate data.

Commissioner Hoyt responds upon receiving the data we will have at least a Level 1 solution to ensure we don't wait 6 more months for a recommended solution.

VOTE TAKEN ON THE MOTION

Chairman Rees – yes, Commissioner Chase – no, Commissioner Gillis – yes, Commissioner Hoyt – yes, Commission Karrow – yes, the vote is 4-1.

Chairman Rees states the motion carries and will go to the Village Board. The Village Board may or may not approve the motion. The public is welcome to attend the Village Board Meeting to express their view. We are trying to move as quickly as we can. The Village Board may vote to keep the barriers in place and that is their prerogative. Chairman Rees would like to hear from the other Commissioners about TEG recommendation to the Village Wide Traffic Study.

Commissioner Rees states the commission has been hearing about Washington for a long time. That is something we need to look at.

Chairman Rees states we could put Washington on the next agenda and decide if there are other issues to discuss.

Commissioner Hoyt asks if it is the responsibility of the Commission to decide what is the most important or does the Village make recommendations.

Chairman Rees states it could be either. We have heard of the areas for a while. We could pick any the areas as it was brought up by the survey. The Village would probably want the commission to prioritize areas.

Village Administrator Matt Walsh states the Commission would prioritize areas with input from TEG.

Chairman Rees is recommending taking up Washington at the next meeting.

Commissioner Hoyt would abstain from the vote as she has not gone through the report in detail.

Chairman Rees states Village staff with TEG could prioritize the areas.

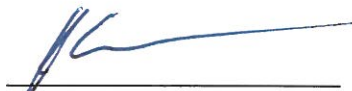
Commission Karrow indicates that at Division and Lathrop there is not as much to discuss as they made a recommendation.

The Commission states they would like to keep the meeting start time at 7:30 pm.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 P.M. All Commissioners voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed.

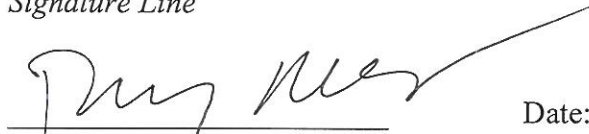
Respectfully Submitted:

Signature Line



Bill Koclanis, Secretary

Signature Line



Doug Rees, Chairman
Traffic & Safety Commission

Date: _____

11-15-23

Introduction

Good evening and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present tonight. My name is Jim Yuratovac, and I hold the position of Senior Project Manager at Thomas Engineering Group. I am a licensed Professional Engineer, certified as a Professional Traffic Operations Engineer (PTOE) and Road Safety Professional (RSP). I'm here to share the findings of our Village-wide Traffic Study. This study is not just a collection of data; it's a roadmap that aims to guide us toward a safer and more efficient transportation environment for the community. Our goal is to provide actionable insights that will serve as a foundation for future planning and infrastructure improvements.

Objectives and Methodology

The primary objective of this Study was to offer a comprehensive analysis of the current traffic conditions in the Village. Our overarching aim was to identify high-risk locations, assess the efficiency of existing traffic controls, and offer actionable recommendations for both immediate and long-term improvements.

All roadways in the Village were categorized into three distinct types: Arterial, Primary, and Local. Local streets are predominantly minor residential roads, whereas Primary streets are engineered to accommodate higher traffic volumes. Arterial routes are marked state routes with higher speeds. We did not review these locations in order to focus our effort on internal Village roads.

We performed traffic counts at 17 primary intersections, and supplemented those with counts at 6 additional intersections and multiple speed data collection locations.

By combining data-driven insights with practical solutions and community input, we aim to improve road safety, optimize traffic flow, and enhance the overall quality of life for Village residents.

Resident Feedback and Community Engagement

Community engagement played a pivotal role in shaping the objectives and outcomes of our Study. Early in the project, we issued a Survey Monkey survey to gather resident feedback on various traffic and safety topics. The survey served multiple purposes: it helped us identify focus areas and provided valuable insights into residents' concerns.

The survey results revealed a strong community interest in specific traffic calming measures, speed control, and pedestrian safety. This feedback was instrumental in refining our recommendations for improvements. Additionally, the survey provided valuable insights into the community's acceptance of various countermeasures, ensuring that our proposed solutions are not only effective but also closely aligned with the needs and preferences of Village residents.

In summary, the resident feedback gathered through the survey has been a cornerstone in our study. It has enabled us to create a more community-centric approach, ensuring that our recommendations are both data-driven and aligned with the values and concerns of the community. This dual focus ensures that our study's outcomes are not just technically sound but also socially acceptable, thereby increasing the likelihood of successful implementation.

Traffic Calming Toolbox

One of the standout components of our Village-wide Traffic Study is the development of a Traffic Calming Toolbox or TCT. This toolbox is a compilation of proven strategies and interventions designed to address a variety of traffic and safety concerns within the Village. It serves as a practical guide, offering solutions that range from simple signage adjustments to more complex engineering measures.

The toolbox was developed with a focus on flexibility and adaptability, allowing the Village to tailor solutions to specific issues or locations. Moreover, the TCT is not just a static document; it's designed to evolve. As the Village's needs evolve or new traffic management methods emerge, the toolbox can be adapted to incorporate these updated strategies. This ensures that the Village has a living, adaptable resource for addressing both current and future traffic and safety challenges.

The creation of this toolbox was guided by both data-driven insights from our comprehensive traffic and crash analyses, as well as community input gathered through our resident survey. By combining these elements, we've created a toolbox that is not only effective but also aligned with the needs and concerns of Village residents.

To utilize the TCT, a location is scored based on speeds, crash data, road characteristics and resident petitions. The toolbox provides four levels of improvements based upon the score. The more a countermeasure impacts the roadway the higher the level. For example, a level 1 improvement may be a sign installation, whereas a level 4 improvement might be a forced turn island.

The Traffic Calming Toolbox serves as a cornerstone for the Village's traffic management strategy, providing a robust set of tools for improving road safety, optimizing traffic flow, and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents.

Capacity Analysis

Another major component of our effort was to develop a comprehensive traffic model for the Village. The model's strength lies in its ability to simulate how intersections interact with each other, providing a holistic view of the Village's traffic system.

The model allows us to assess both the Level of Service (LOS) and delay, thereby identifying bottlenecks and areas of concern. For example, the all-way stop (AWS) intersection at Lathrop Ave and Division St, exhibited a failing LOS of E during the AM peak hour and LOS of D during the PM peak hour. Our simulations showed that converting this AWS to a signalized intersection could improve the LOS to a B. On the positive side, most intersections in the Village were found to be operating smoothly, although some individual movements were failing, particularly at minor leg stop locations or those with high numbers of left turns.

One of the key advantages of a Village-wide model is the ability to foresee how changes at one intersection can impact the broader network. This enables the Village to implement more effective countermeasures and avoid unintended consequences, like pushing traffic toward routes already operating near capacity.

Our capacity analysis serves as a dynamic tool for both immediate interventions and long-term planning. It allows the Village to identify traffic issues proactively and offers a data-driven foundation for future traffic management and infrastructure improvements.

Crash Analysis

Our crash analysis was conducted using 2016-2021 crash data from IDOT and encompassed every intersection and segment within the Village. Utilizing a proprietary in-house crash processing program, we categorized crashes based on various factors such as type, year, and injury severity.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the traffic safety landscape, we employed different peer groups in our analysis. For intersections, these included signalized, all-way stops, minor stop 3-leg, and minor stop 4-leg. For segments, we divided them into three categories: local, primary, and arterial, as previously mentioned. The peer groups allowed us to capture a representative cross-section of both intersection and segment types in the Village.

We then used a weighted scoring system, based on frequency and severity, to assign a score for every location. We identified 22 locations (or roughly the top 10%)—comprised of 9 segments and 13 intersections—for a more detailed analysis.

I won't go into all the crash details here, but many of the segments were found to be satisfactory and only 2 had recommended action. One is at Thatcher from Augusta to Division, which is covered separately and the other is at Division from Monroe to Bonnie Brae for which we are recommending a Speed Study.

4 of the intersections were also found to be satisfactory and 5 were on Thatcher or Washington which I will get to shortly. For Chicago & William we recommended a speed study. For the remaining 3 we are recommending a speed study in addition to: traffic count at Ashland & Lake to determine if a change in traffic control is appropriate. upgrading the crosswalk striping associated with the nearby school for Chicago & Jackson, and lastly for Lathrop & Division we are recommending the installation of a traffic signal.

Two-Block Span Analysis

There are numerous uncontrolled two-block spans in the Village that have concerns related to speeding and cut-through traffic. We focused on Ashland Ave between Madison St and Washington Blvd due to its high crash rate and resident complaints about speeding. The study aims to determine if changes are needed to make these spans less appealing for speeders and cut-through traffic.

We collected speed and volume data over a 24-hour period on all four legs of the intersection of Ashland Ave and Vine St. Analyzing the traffic volumes, we found directional split between NB and SB to be fairly even. The volumes are well within the range of what a residential road is capable of handling and no cause of concern for potential cut-through traffic. The 85th percentile speed was 22mph for northbound and 25mph for southbound, which are at/below the speed limit. Digging in a little deeper, we found there to be several hours of the day with speeding in the southbound direction. In particular, the afternoon hours had a cluster of speeding with 85th percentile values around 30mph. The crash analysis found a relatively low number of crashes within the corridor related to Ashland Ave. The crashes were all isolated events with no patterns or recurring issues.

We recommend a stepped approach starting with Level 1 improvements, such as a Speed Feedback sign and targeted speed enforcement. These measures are anticipated to address the limited speeding in the corridor. We anticipate that these conditions apply to other two-block span locations.

Washington Blvd

Washington Blvd, a major collector road in River Forest, has been a focal point for community concerns about speeding and underutilized parking. To address this, we conducted a focused study on the Washington corridor that included traffic volume and speed data collection, crash data analysis, and incorporated the resident survey. The road features one lane in each direction with on-street parking. There is a variety of traffic control including AWS, minor stop and signalized intersections. The surrounding area is primarily residential along with three nearby parks. Our study aims to identify an appropriate roadway cross-section, provide traffic calming measures, and improve safety and traffic flow.

We analyzed peak-hour traffic volumes at Thatcher Ave, Franklin Ave and Lathrop Ave. Washington Blvd is one of a limited number of bridges crossing the DesPlaines River and serves as an alternative to busier routes like North Ave and Madison Ave. Speed data showed that the 85th percentile speed was 38 mph, significantly above the 25 mph speed limit. This indicates a severe disparity between driver perception of the road and its intended design.

Our detailed crash analysis for the corridor found there were 101 crashes with Angle by far the most prominent type. Notably, Thatcher, Gale, Keystone, Ashland and Lathrop all had elevated crash rates. The crash analysis revealed varying patterns across different intersections. The frequency of angle crashes at AWS and signalized intersections raises significant concern regarding speeding and adherence to the traffic control. Overall, the analysis suggests a need for diverse safety measures, to address the unique challenges at each intersection.

We then incorporated the survey responses related to Washington. The majority of residents are open to eliminating some parking in order to provide traffic calming improvements. Speeding and disobeying stop signs were identified by most respondents as issues along the road.

Based on the analysis, we propose two new roadway cross-sections for Washington Blvd, with a transition point at Park Ave. The western cross section maintains parking along the north side of Washington Blvd, narrows the lanes to 11' in each direction, and

provides a 3' bike lane with 2' buffer on the north and south side of the street. The eastern cross section will keep the current lane configuration from Park Ave to Lathrop Ave, but lanes will be reduced to 11' widths with a 2-foot striped median and off-street multi-use paths. In addition, we recommend taking steps to mitigate speeding along this route by implementing some form of traffic calming. Our preference is to install raised intersections at Thatcher, Keystone, Franklin, and Lathrop. These physical obstacles force drivers to slow down and create more awareness at the intersection. Curb bump outs are also recommended at various intersections throughout the corridor and should be designed to not impact bike facilities.

Thatcher Ave

Thatcher Ave is a three-lane perimeter road in the Village. There are two southbound lanes and one northbound lane with parking along the east side of the road. Based on survey responses and crash rates we selected the northern portion of Thatcher Ave, between Division St and Augusta St, for in depth study as a representative sample for the corridor.

Both termini intersections were counted as part of our initial data gathering process and speed data was collected as part of this focus. Our study revealed that the 85th percentile speed was 41 mph, significantly higher than the posted speed limit of 25 mph. This discrepancy is particularly alarming as it indicates that a majority of drivers are comfortable driving at speeds well above the limit, posing safety risks for other road users.

The study also highlighted that the speed issue are more pronounced in the southbound lanes, with the 85th percentile speed reaching up to 44 mph. This could be attributed to the road's imbalanced lane configuration and the absence of features that naturally calm traffic.

To address these issues, we recommend several countermeasures. These include reducing southbound traffic to one through-lane, installing a bike lane as per the 2019 Comprehensive Plan, and introducing periodic raised intersections through the corridor. These measures aim to change the road's character, thereby encouraging drivers to adhere to the speed limit. We also considered the addition of a southbound auxiliary left turn lane to allow drivers to turn left at intersections or into their driveways without disrupting through traffic.

Our review determined Thatcher Ave will need a more focused corridor study to verify these issues continue through the corridor. Crash patterns at intersections along Thatcher Ave beyond the studied area are indicative of speeding issues remaining consistent through the corridor.

Conclusion

In summary, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of the traffic conditions and traffic safety in the Village. Outside of a few problem locations, most roads and intersections operate well and do not have existing safety concerns. Speeding definitely seems to be an issue at several locations and heavily influences many of our recommendations. Our recommendations aim to improve road safety and traffic flow, benefiting both residents and visitors to River Forest.