



VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 15, 2019 – 7:30 PM

A regular meeting of the River Forest Traffic and Safety Commission was held on Wednesday, May 15, 2019 at 7:30 P.M. The meeting was conducted in the Community Room at the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Ave. River Forest.

Roll Call and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 PM. Present at this meeting were Commissioner Buis, Commissioner Gillis, Commissioner Cleary and Commissioner Osga.

Old Business

Jeff Loster, Village Engineer requests for a motion to approve the minutes from November 14, 2018 and January 16, 2019 Traffic and Safety Commission Meetings. Commissioner Osga made the motion and Commissioner Cleary seconded the motion. All commissioners present voted to approve the minutes.

New Business – Request to install a 2-hr time limit parking zone on the east and west side of the 600 block of William Street.

Susan Kelty of 625 William Street recalls the last couple of years parking on the 600 block of William Street became an annoyance. Over the last nine months to a year it has turned from an annoyance to an issue. They have cars parked on both sides of the street. It has become a one-way street for a two-way street. Drivers need to anticipate who's coming or back up. For this reason, they are requesting a two-hour parking time limit for both sides of the street.

Devin Howe lives at 613 William Street; she agrees with what Ms. Kelty is testifying. Over the past year the situation is progressively getting worse. Individuals which do not reside on this block are parking on this block. Some parking from 6am through 7pm, the street is congested all day long. Vehicles are blocking the street from traffic, visitors and workers. Ms. Howe is concerned for her kids who ride bikes and cross the street. There is no visual for them, they need to step into the street to be able to see if a vehicle is coming. She clarifies, the people parking are mostly train commuters. Parking for the entire day to avoid paying for parking. Certain days of the week they get up to thirteen vehicles on their block. These are vehicles from the other side of town or from other Villages.

Joe Farruggia from 605 William, informs his block is the closest unrestricted street for commuters to park. If they approve this, a year from now the 700 block of William Street or the 600 block of Monroe Avenue will be asking for the same request. These commuters will just look elsewhere for parking to avoid paying to park in Oak Park.

Commissioner Osga informs it will just become a longer walk for them. He is just concerned with the residents, their purview tonight is the 600 block of William Street.

Commissioner Osga made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Cleary to implement a two-hour limit parking restriction on both sides of the 600 block of William Street.

The vote was 4 to 0 in favor of approving the request. **The motion to approve the request passed.**

New Business – Request by Commissioner Gillis to install dedicated motorcycle/scooter parking in proximity to the CTA/Metra stations at Harlem Avenue and Central Avenue.

Commissioner Gillis communicates there are two spots on Central Avenue, both presenting a 37-foot gap. Both located at the “T” intersection, one at Bonnie Brae Place and the other at Clinton Place. The spots would be approximately 4 feet wide since motorcycles and scooters back into a spot. They can get up to eight spots with a buffer, so vehicles don’t hit the last motorcycle. To prevent non-residents from using these spots he recommends making this a “Resident Parking Only”. This would require a current River Forest Motorcycle tag.

Jeff Loster, Village Engineer warns that the Bonnie Brae Place intersection becomes relatively congested during rush hour. As far as staff is concerned he trusts they will be more in favor of the Clinton Place option. It’s a slight further walk, but it is away from the congestion.

Commissioner Osga made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Buis to install dedicated scooter and motorcycle parking on the south side of Central Avenue at its intersection with Clinton Place and to install signage for “Resident Only” parking.

The vote was 4 to 0 in favor of approving the request. **The motion to approve the request passed.**

New Business – Request by Commissioner Buis to discuss the Metra expansion project as it relates to fatalities, foot traffic, noise abatement and vagrant activity during the summer months.

Jessica Hamon resides at 8117 Lake Street, at the time of moving in they understood they would live by a railroad. About two weeks after moving in, everything changed when the Metra expansion began. She is hoping the Village can help by working with Union Pacific with two things she has been dealing with for the past year. First, is the noise abatement. By the actions taken of cutting down trees and all the construction, there is more noise now. Second, is the path that the public can easily get access to the train tracks. Ms. Hamon has observed children, teens and grown adults on the tracks. This pathway needs to be closed due to it being a safety concern.

Megan Keskitalo lives at 8125 Lake Street. She distributes the fact sheet for the Union Pacific West Line Third Main Line Track Project. This is a hundred-million-dollar project to expand from Chicago through Geneva, IL, to increase from two tracks to three tracks. She believes they

will see an increase in train traffic which leads River Forest into a safety issue. Ms. Keskitalo knows a specific disaster plan of derailment is not in place, only a general disaster plan worked with the local community. This is a concern because they have a highly populated, low access area around the tracks. They are seeking for noise barriers that also prevent access to their area. Furthermore, the removal of the entry road created on the easement at the end of the project. She asks the Committee initiate conversation with the Village and Erik Varela from Union Pacific and communicate back to the neighborhood group.

Commissioner Osga likes her idea, however is not certain what they can do in regards to the established easements the railroad has had for a long time. Legally he is not aware of what the Village of River Forest can do next to the railroads easements.

Commissioner Buis reiterates that it's a hundred-million-dollar project of tax payer federal money. This track is one of the busiest in the nation, the statistics state fifty freight trains go by every day. Sixty Metra trains go up and down through the Village every day, with thirty thousand passengers. On the whole stretch from Geneva through the City the closest proximity to family dwellings is in River Forest. This is approximately twenty-five feet before getting to the property lines. In 2014, at the beginning of this phase in Geneva, IL Union Pacific had a public meeting with the residents to discuss the project. We have a stronger tax base and they still have yet to make a public presentation to the citizens of this Village. Commissioner Buis is looking to put pressure on Union Pacific. For them to know that the Village recognizes that our tax dollars enable us to get accountability from them. He would like to recommend a motion first, for a commitment from Union Pacific for a safety barrier that will simultaneously attenuate 44:15 noise and ground vibrations between Lake Streets west homes and the railway. Second, the access road constructed on the easements adjacent to Edgewood Place to be removed at the completion of the project. Third, put in place a rail disaster plan. If no plan exists that the Village creates a drafted plan with community input.

Commissioner Gillis states Commissioners Buis motions and concerns make sense. If some pressure from a Commissioner or the Village of River Forest can get Mr. Varela here to explain their project, they can assist. He would love to hear all that's going on and would be present at the meeting. Although, he doesn't believe legally they have the power to tell them what to do.

Commissioner Osga made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Gillis for the Traffic and Safety Commission request that staff work with the Village Board to request an onsite meeting with railroad staff to discuss the items on Commissioners Buis' handout.

The vote was 4 to 0 in favor of approving the request. **The motion to approve the request passed.**

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 P.M. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted:

Signature Line

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Loster", written over a dashed horizontal line.

Jeff Loster, Secretary

Signature Line

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Rees", written over a dashed horizontal line.

Doug Rees, Chairman
Traffic & Safety Commission

Date: 12/4/19