

CITY OF NEWARK
Newark, Delaware

Traffic Committee Meeting
April 18, 2017
3:30 p.m.

Members Present: DC Mark Farrall, Andrew Haines, Tom Coleman, Lt. Dennis Aniunas, Marvin Howard, Tom Parkins, Dave Gula

Guests: Mir Wahed, Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson
Brad Herb, Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson
Bryan Behrens, Delaware Department of Transportation
Sgt. Curtis Davis, Newark Police Department
Ethan Robinson, Public Works & Wastewater Department

DC Farrall said he would agenda item #5 would be moved to agenda item #1.

1. Discussion regarding proposed modifications on Elkton Road between Casho Mill Road and the Maryland line. (ie: widening, resurfacing and multi-use path)

Mr. Coleman said the Delaware Department of Transportation requested to attend the meeting to discuss the proposal. Mr. Behrens introduced himself to the committee. Mr. Behrens said the reason for coming before the Traffic Committee was to provide an update of the Elkton Road project and recent changes.

Mr. Behrens said a planning study was provided in 2005 and was presented to the Traffic Committee in 2006. The preferred alternative is what is being presented today and includes three lanes in either direction on Elkton Road from Otts Chapel Road to SR 4. Mr. Behrens said they compared 2004 traffic count volumes to 2014 traffic count volumes performed an analysis which indicated the traffic volume has decreased. Mr. Herb said due to the decrease in volume they reviewed options to change the design. The improvements are as follows:

- A shared use path from Maryland to Gravenor Lane that includes two pedestrian bridges for improved connectivity.
- A signal with a fourth leg will be added at the Dunkin Donuts. It will be one way in and will be able to make a left entering and exiting.
- Maintaining the crosswalk at Dunkin Donuts
- Add a crosswalk at WAWA
- Add pedestrian walkways on both sides of road

- Bike lanes widened from 5' to 6' and reduced right turn lanes from 12' to 11'

DC Farrall inquired as to what contributed to the 10-20% decrease in volume. Mr. Wahed said in 2003-2004 the volume and projection was high. Mr. Wahed said when they performed a recount in 2014 they noticed the volume didn't increase from 2003 and the volume is being reduced. Mr. Wahed said the original volume projection was performed when Chrysler was in business.

DC Farrall asked if there will be two left hand turn lanes heading into Newark Charter School. Mr. Behrens confirmed that is an option.

Mr. Haines asked if the queue length heading south turning left into Interchange Boulevard will be extended. Mr. Behrens confirmed they would increase the queue length.

Mr. Wahed said although the geometry is based on 2014 volume predictions, provisions have been made for the future if widening the road is necessary.

Mr. Howard inquired as to the timeframe for this project. Mr. Behrens said they are planning for advanced utility relocations in the Fall of 2018 and for construction to begin in the Spring of 2019.

Mr. Herb said if the proposal is approved by the Traffic Committee, JMT will be issuing semi-final design plans and will move forward with the tentative schedule as outlined by DelDOT. Mr. Behrens said a virtual workshop will be posted on the website for the public to view.

DC Farrall asked if there has been any discussion of adding a traffic signal at the Newark Charter primary school. Mr. Wahed said the traffic signals would be too close to the intersections creating traffic backups at the intersections and for this reason would not be a viable option from an engineering standpoint. DC Farrall asked if the school was made aware that this wouldn't be an option. Mr. Herb said he doesn't believe the school is aware of this. DC Farrall asked if DelDOT could contact the school to make sure they are aware the traffic light at this location wouldn't be a viable option.

Mr. Haines said we should make sure the community is aware when the virtual workshop is put on the website for city staff to promote.

Mr. Coleman asked if there is a stream that would prohibit the entrances to the business park and the school from being combined. Mr. Herb said he is unable to recall any conversations regarding this idea to date.

Motion by Mr. Parkins, seconded by Mr. Coleman, for the Traffic Committee endorses the DelDOT plan for Elkton Road.

Motion passed: Unanimous

Vote: 7 to 0

2. Discussion regarding the request for a crosswalk at McIntyre Drive and Edwards Drive.

Mr. Coleman said a representative from Newark Charter School requested this item. Mr. Coleman said the school requested the item due to students crossing at this location. It was discovered only one student attending the Newark Charter School resides in this neighborhood. Mr. Gula said there is a crossing guard at this location. Mr. Coleman said he is apprehensive to add a crosswalk in a location with no current stop control.

Sgt. Davis said the Traffic Division placed the traffic classifier on McIntyre for the period of ten days. Sgt. Davis said a total of 13,000 vehicles and the majority of the vehicles were traveling 30 mph or below. Of those vehicles only 286 were traveling 35 mph or over.

Motion by Mr. Gula, seconded by Mr. Coleman, to deny the request for a crosswalk at McIntyre Drive and Edwards Drive.

Motion passed: Unanimous

Vote: 7 to 0

3. Review the speed study results for Sunset Road regarding the request for a stop sign at Townsend Road and Sunset Road.

DC Farrall said this request was received from Councilwoman Hadden.

Sgt. Davis said the traffic classifier was placed on Sunset Road from March 27th through April 10th and included the University of Delaware spring break.

Sgt. Davis said the 85th percentile was 26.8% with a total of 2,900 vehicles. The maximum speed was 42 mph and the median speed was within the 22 mph range. Sgt. Davis said there were 9 vehicles traveling over 35 mph. The analysis of the virtual count concluded the highest per hour count is between the hours of 5-6 p.m. The highest volume count was 29 vehicles on Wednesdays between 5-6 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Coleman, seconded by Mr. Howard, to deny the request for stop sign at Townsend Road and Sunset Road.

Motion passed: Unanimous

Vote: 7 to 0

4. Discuss the request to remove the special residential parking on the outside radius of Thompson Circle.

Public Works and Wastewater Department requested this item be tabled to the next Traffic Committee meeting.

5. Discussion regarding safe routes to school plans for Casho Mill Road.

Mr. Coleman said Public Works reviewed Casho Mill Road from Barksdale to 273 and made a series of recommendations. Some recommendations were as follows:

- Adding buffers on the bike lanes by narrowing travel lanes from 12' to 10'
- Adding a 3' buffer and adding a 9' bike lane
- Adding a raised central refuge island at the existing crosswalks

Mr. Coleman said the goal is to eventually reduce the speed limit to 25 mph. DC Farrall asked if the buffer would be painted the entire length. Mr. Coleman confirmed it would be painted.

Mr. Coleman said the project would be funded through federal money. Mr. Coleman said \$125,000 would cover very little of the improvements. Mr. Coleman said the funding should cover the cost of the paint and possibly one crosswalk. DC Farrall asked if the project would be done using city labor. Mr. Coleman said the work would be performed by the state.

Mr. Coleman said to his knowledge a roundabout hasn't been proposed on Church Road. One proposal was to add curb extensions to square off the crosswalks at the intersection of Casho Mill Road and Church Road. Sgt. Davis said they have received numerous complaints due to motorists running the stop signs at this intersection. Sgt. Davis said in the past DelDOT moved the stop bars closer to the intersection, however he feels they need to be moved more forward to create a natural stopping point. Mr. Gula agreed they should reconfigure the intersection. Mr. Coleman said they would bring this to DelDOT's attention.

DC Farrall asked Sgt. Davis for feedback on the proposal from a traffic perspective. Sgt. Davis said if the goal is to slow traffic down he feels the narrow travel lanes and buffers are a good idea.

DC Farrall asked if a landscaped center median was discussed to help lower the speeds. Mr. Coleman said he has thought of the center median as well and agreed it would help to lower the speed.

Mr. Coleman said between Pheasant Run to the crosswalk at Lafayette Road they are proposing to use tape to create a buffer. From Pheasant Run through Rahway Drive barrels will be used to create a semi-protected bike lane and from Rahway Drive to Bent Lane there will be a buffered lane. DC Farrall asked if they are narrowing the width of the road. Mr. Coleman said for the mockup they would not be narrowing the width of the road, however for the final design the lane width will be narrowed. DC Farrall asked how wide it is from the white line to the curb. Mr. Coleman said it is 10' shoulder.

Mr. Coleman said the temporary mockup will be in place for Bike to School Week beginning on Monday, May 8th. The students will be asked to ride through the buffer and provide feedback via the survey.

DC Farrall asked if education will be provided to the students. Mr. Coleman said he believes the bike train is providing education on the morning routes.

Lt. Aniunas said he is concerned about the barrels and feels it will create a problem in the future. DC Farrall asked if that was the plan and they love the barrels would the committee push for bollards. Mr. Coleman said he mentioned that he wouldn't support the bollards. Lt. Aniunas asked if it would be possible to support the proposal and not support the barrels or bollards.

Motion by Mr. Parkins and seconded by Mr. Howard to support the proposal but deny the installation of barrels and bollards.

Motion passed: Unanimous

Vote: 7 to 0

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



Mark Farrall, Chairman

Any supporting documents pertaining to this meeting will be held on file at the police department.