

CITY OF NEWARK
Newark, Delaware

TRAFFIC COMMITTEE MEETING
June 16, 2009
5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Chief Paul Tiernan, Carol Houck, M/Cpl. Curtis Davis (for Lt. George Stanko), Rich Lapointe, Dave Gula, Tom Parkins

Absent: Marvin Howard

Guests: Jean White, Newark Resident

Prior to discussing the agenda, Chief Tiernan asked Rich Lapointe to provide the Traffic Committee with any updates from the Country Club Drive Traffic Calming Committee.

Rich Lapointe said the first meeting was very productive and that meeting minutes would soon be distributed. Rich Lapointe said the Traffic Calming Committee is proposing bump outs with a crosswalk and a directional island on Country Club Drive. The overall response from residents is that they are pleased with the proposed changes.

Dave Gula said to visually show progress he felt the next step should be taken to begin the striping of parking lanes and crosswalks. Rich Lapointe said he is apprehensive to paint the crosswalks with the concern some motorists are not stopping for the stop sign. Dave Gula said if a crosswalk is in place with a stop sign motorists will typically stop as opposed to having just a stop sign.

Rich Lapointe said the committee would be meeting again at the end of July.

1. REVIEW AND DISCUSS CROSSWALK SIGNAGE AT DELAWARE AVENUE/HAINES STREET, E. MAIN STREET/WASHINGTON STREET, CLEVELAND AVENUE/WILBUR STREET AND TWO LOCATIONS ON DELAWARE AVENUE AT "THE GREEN".

Chief Tiernan said a memo was received from Councilmember Markham in regard to removing the crosswalk located at E. Cleveland Avenue and Wilbur Street. Chief Tiernan said during last month's meeting Rich Lapointe indicated that he thought this item had previously been discussed. Upon researching prior meeting minutes, this item was discussed at a meeting held on May 16, 2006 at which time members voted unanimously that DeIDOT be contacted for the removal of this crosswalk.

Chief Tiernan said the above crosswalks are improperly signed and are concerned that this is a liability issue. The “Stop for Pedestrians” sign at the crosswalks creates confusion for both motorists and pedestrians. The law states that signs must say Yield to Pedestrians.

M/Cpl. Davis said the issue with the crosswalk located at Wilbur Street and Cleveland Avenue is that it goes into the middle of a driveway. M/Cpl. Davis said the location of the crosswalk is dangerous with the slight bend in the roadway and down grades. M/Cpl. Davis recommended that a crosswalk be installed on the west side of Kershaw Street and Cleveland Avenue. M/Cpl. Davis said pedestrians heading from Wilbur Street should be encouraged to cross at N. College Avenue. However, if pedestrians are heading toward Kershaw Street this will provide a relief in between N. College Avenue and Paper Mill Road.

Tom Parkins asked if an observation has ever been conducted of pedestrian volume at Wilbur Street and Cleveland Avenue. Chief Tiernan shared concerns received from Mr. Michael Horney, owner of the Bookateria located at 70 E. Cleveland Avenue. The concerns shared was the speed limit traveled on Cleveland Avenue is rarely observed by motorists, the crosswalk signage is a distance significantly removed from the crosswalk, and in stopping for the crosswalk, this presents a serious risk for rear-end accidents which he has witnessed a number of times.

MOTION BY CAROL HOUCK, SECONDED BY DAVE GULA TO SEND A LETTER TO DELDOT REQUESTING THE REMOVAL OF THE CROSSWALK AT WILBUR STREET AND CLEVELAND AVENUE AND THE INSTALLATION OF A CROSSWALK AT KERSHAW STREET AND CLEVELAND AVENUE.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 6 TO 0.

M/Cpl. Davis said the crosswalks are all considered to be mid-block crosswalks, having stop signs or signals on two streets coming into the intersection as opposed to intersection crosswalks that have stop signs or signals at all four streets coming into the intersection. M/Cpl. Davis said DeIDOT follows the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) on signage, pavement markings, etc. For mid-block crosswalks, the MUTCD recommends using non-vehicular signs (bright yellow sign with a pedestrian symbol) to alert motorists of a shared use of the roadway and when used at crossings non-vehicular signs shall be supplemented with a diagonal downward pointed arrow. All crosswalks are in compliance with a non-vehicular sign. M/Cpl. Davis said the triangle pavement markings (shark’s teeth) are placed 15-20’ from the crosswalk and are designed for motorists to yield at the pavement markings instead of at the crosswalk itself. M/Cpl. Davis said in regard to improper signage that exist at these crosswalk locations, the traffic unit recommends painting the triangle pavement markings, removing the “Stop for Pedestrians” and the installation of the “Yield to Pedestrians” as outlined in the MUTCD. Rich Lapointe said the new signs are on order and when they arrive the old signs will be removed and the new signs will be installed.

Rich Lapointe said he feels DeIDOT should be responsible for painting the triangle pavement markings at the crosswalks. M/Cpl. Davis said he believes the Memorandum of Understanding that exists between DeIDOT and the City of Newark states that DeIDOT is responsible from curb to curb and the city is responsible for areas beyond the curb. Carol Houck said in the letter to DeIDOT it would be important to mention that the city will handle the signage. M/Cpl. Davis said he would contact Jay Pearson of DeIDOT that is responsible for the painting.

Tom Parkins asked if a Yield to Pedestrians sign would be installed on the Haines Street stop sign. Dave Gula said a Yield to Pedestrian sign could be placed on the near side of the intersection, the concern is placing a Yield to Pedestrian sign on the far side of the intersection could cause a safety concern as pedestrians may be overlooked. Carol Houck made a recommendation to remove the second crosswalk on Haines Street to alleviate any safety hazard from motorists turning right onto Delaware Avenue as pedestrians are crossing from the left. M/Cpl. Davis said the Main Street and Chapel Street intersection has a crosswalk on the traffic side and two crosswalks on Chapel Street with no crosswalk on the far side of the intersection. Dave Gula said as the committee has previously discussed the pedestrian safety concern of exiting Newark Shopping Center onto Main Street as motorists are looking for traffic to clear to the left as pedestrians are walking from the right. Carol Houck inquired as to whether the first crosswalk could be removed on Haines Street. M/Cpl. Davis said theoretically the first crosswalk could be removed and the triangle pavement markings could be installed with a Yield to Pedestrian sign. Dave Gula recommended installing triangle pavement markings on the approach to the first crosswalk as well as signing both crosswalks to provide more warning in advance of the intersection.

Tom Parkins said during a previous meeting the committee made a decision to send a letter to DeIDOT to request a "square dance" cycle at the intersections of N. College Avenue at Cleveland Avenue and Delaware Avenue at S. College Avenue. Carol Houck asked for a follow-up in regard to this item.

Mrs. Jean White said she does not have a problem with the triangle pavement markings, however she just wanted to be sure the piano bars were not going to be removed. M/Cpl. Davis confirmed that the piano bars exist at all crosswalk locations and they would not be removed.

Mrs. White said with the heavy pedestrian volume at the crosswalks on Delaware Avenue, particularly during class changes, it would be helpful if the University of Delaware would station someone at the crosswalks to regularly stop traffic to help with traffic flow. Chief Tiernan said the University of Delaware was not able to do this last year due to a lack of manpower. Chief Tiernan said the police department would put in a request again this year. M/Cpl. Davis said a viable solution would be for the University of Delaware to designate one centralized crossing point with a light to be synchronized with S. College Avenue and Delaware Avenue.

MOTION BY CAROL HOUCK, SECONDED BY RICH LAPOINTE TO SEND A LETTER TO DELDOT TO REQUEST THE STRIPING OF TRIANGLE PAVEMENT MARKINGS AT CROSSWALKS LOCATED ON DELAWARE AVENUE/HAINES STREET, E. MAIN STREET/WASHINGTON STREET AND TWO LOCATIONS ON DELAWARE AVENUE AT "THE GREEN".

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 6 TO 0.

Old Business:

Tom Parkins inquired as to the status of the new signs for the South College Avenue pedestrian bridge. Rich Lapointe said the new signs have been ordered.

New Business:

Tom Parkins at Wyoming Road and Marrows Road crosswalk the pedestrian lights have been bagged over and there has been no sign of work for months and would like to know when lights will be activated. Tom Parkins said also on Marrows Road the lights are not favorably timed nor are they censored. Chief Tiernan asked M/Cpl. Davis to follow up on the status of these items.

There being no further business, Chief Tiernan called for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION BY DAVE GULA, SECONDED BY RICH LAPOINTE, TO ADJOURN.

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 6 TO 0.

Paul M. Tiernan, Chairman