

**MINUTES OF THE
TARA HILL AREA TRAFFIC CALMING TASK FORCE**

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Dublin Municipal Building – 5200 Emerald Parkway

Present:

Task Force Members

Randy Luikart	Dave Cecutti	Tina Wray
Tim Lecklider	Vince Blaeser	John Jung
Amy Salay	Deborah Frazier	Kimberly O'Brien (excused)
Amy Gerhart		

Staff Members:

Paul Hammersmith, Jeannie Willis, Ken Richardson

Consultants:

Joe Sullivan, R. D. Zande & Assoc.
Dave Samuelson, R.D. Zande & Assoc.
Tina Wawzkiewicz, R.D. Zande & Assoc.
Brian Hagerty, R. D. Zande & Assoc.

Call to Order:

Mr. Luikart, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Wray moved to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2005 Task Force meeting as approved. Mr. Blaeser seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 6-0, with 2 abstentions.

Traffic Calming Plan Concept 9

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that at the last Task Force meeting, the Task Force set a goal of establishing two parking spaces per driveway for the homes on Tara Hill Drive. The plan was modified to meet those criteria, and Concept 9 is now ready for review. Concept 9 averages 2.5 spaces per driveway along Tara Hill Drive.

Section 1 -- Muirfield to Wichita

One exception to the 2.5 ratio is the west segment of Tara Hill Drive, Muirfield to Wichita, which provides an average of 1.7 spaces per driveway, a total of 40 parking spaces overall. The median could be eliminated to achieve more spaces, but the consultants recommend retaining it. This segment of Tara Hill Drive, west of Wichita, is the highest speed section of Tara Hill Drive. It also contains the crosswalk for Scottish Corners Elementary School. This concept changes the median to a choker, shortens the other chokers, and shortens the median and chokers at Wichita.

Mr. Jung stated that these changes shouldn't be a problem. Except for one, there are side lots along Tara Hill Drive in that section.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that the diagram identifies the properties that would lose a parking space. At the last meeting, Mr. Hammersmith suggested that the Task Force might want to look at the potential construction impact on a per property basis.

Peter Murray, 6063 Tara Hill Drive, stated that he is a new resident on Tara Hill Drive. He inquired if re-grading the driveway implies replacement of the driveway.

Ms. Willis responded that, if necessary, the City would replace the driveway apron and do any re-grading necessary to meet ADA requirements. That would include re-grading of the front property between the curb line and the actual front line of the sidewalk, including sodding and replanting to restore the property to its previous condition or better.

Section 2: Wichita to Shady Nelms

Ms. Wawzkiewicz noted that the parking ratio in this segment is 3.2 spaces per driveway or a potential of 55 spaces.

Mr. Luikart noted that Concept 9 removes the median and curb bulb in the most eastern section of this segment. Does their removal impact the plan's conformance to the optimum spacing between traffic calming measures?

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that the space there would be nearly 500 feet, so it would remain within the recommended spacing of 300-600 feet between calming measures. Traveling eastward on Tara Hill, the next calming measure is a traffic circle, which is a significant traffic-calming device.

Mr. Luikart noted that his concern is due to the fact that this is a wider, more "open" area and it would be easy to escalate one's speed in this area. A speed deterrent here could be important.

Mr. Samuelson stated that the Task Force could implement a choker in that area.

Ms. Gerhart inquired if the intent was to ensure parking in front of every house. If so, the houses across from Raymond and Beery do not have parking in front of their homes.

Mr. Jung suggested that curb bulbs be added on the south side of Havington Ct. The lots face Havington rather than Tara Hill.

Mr. Samuelson noted that parking would be lost on the north side.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that those are 10-ft. bumpouts, so the travel lane is on the north side. She added that the width of the chokers could be reduced from 10 feet to 5 feet and they could be paired with a 5-foot bay. This would result in the loss of two parking spaces, rather than four.

Mr. Luikart stated that the Task Force intent was to provide a ratio of parking, rather than a specific space in front of each home – a ratio of two spaces per driveway. He is interested in

Mr. Jung's suggestion. Could 5-ft curb bulbs be used rather than 10-ft. bulbs? Would that allow for parking on the opposite side?

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that parking on the other side would not be recommended – it would narrow the road too much.

Discussion continued traffic-calming devices for this segment that would not negatively impact the parking spaces.

Mr. Luikart inquired which would be most effective in traffic calming in that area – curb bulbs or chokers?

Mr. Samuelson responded that the curb bulbs could be more effective, as they introduce more deflection for the travel path. They also require a shorter crosswalk. Aesthetically, the two measures are equal.

Ms. Gerhart inquired if it would appear that the curb bulb had been “tacked on” to the corner or if the road had originally been constructed so.

Ms. Willis responded that the City would reconstruct the curblines and gutter pans of the road to avoid the look of an after thought.

Mr. Jung inquired about the possibility of a traffic oval at that location.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that a traffic oval would not be recommended due to the conflict with the driveways.

Task Force consensus was to use 5-ft. curb bulbs rather than 10-ft. curb bulbs.

Mr. Lecklider stated that there are no parking spaces for the homes across from Raymond. Is there a possible resolution?

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that the setbacks could be reduced to 5 ft and paired with a 5-ft. bay added on the other side. If the travel lane is centered, the travel lane on the north side would not occur, and the parking on that side of the street would not be lost.

Mr. Jung inquired if a raised crosswalk would eliminate the need for curb bulbs.

Mr. Lecklider noted that would be a vertical measure.

Mr. Jung responded that whatever is used at Wichita could be used to draw attention to the crosswalk.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that the curb bulbs at Wichita would be 5-foot with pressed asphalt or pavers to connect the two bays.

Mr. Lecklider requested a resolution that would not eliminate all the parking in front of 5870 and 5862 Tara Hill Drive, which are across from Raymond Drive.

Ms. Wray noted that 5841 Tara Hill, which is directly across from Newbridge Drive, has no on-street parking.

Ms. Willis noted that 5841 is located at an intersection. The City would not seek to provide on-street parking at an intersection.

Mr. Hagerty inquired if the Task Force would agree to a general rule that all 10-ft. curb bulbs would be replaced with 5-ft. curb bulbs in the interest of maintaining on-street parking.

Mr. Luikart stated that the Task Force is interested in improving the parking for these specific homes but would prefer to retain the other 10-ft curb bulbs.

Ms. Salay inquired about the possibility of striping the parking spaces, similar to Norn Street.

Ms. Willis stated that Council would need to decide whether they want that character for the street.

Ms. Frazier noted that any residents with whom she discussed the issue had indicated that they did not want painting on the street.

Mr. Luikart summarized the Task Force recommendations for: (1) Raymond Drive – Add the curb bulbs and bay, and (2) Havington Ct. – Add curb bulbs.

Section 3: Shady Nelms to 2 Lots East of Literary Lane

Mr. Luikart referred to the traffic circle at Shady Nelms -- was the deflection removed?

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that to retain parking spaces, the deflection was removed in Concept 9. Concept 9 reflects Option 8C on which this neighborhood expressed consensus. She stated that the parking ratio in this section is 3.2 for a total of 51 spaces.

Mr. Luikart inquired if the curb bulb next to #6911 was sufficiently shortened.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that it could be reduced more, but the attempt was to accommodate the crossing at Conquistador.

Peter Murray, 6063 Tara Hill Drive, inquired if the intent of the Task Force plan was to eliminate the stop signs on Tara Hill Drive.

Mr. Luikart responded that the Task Force has discussed the issue and the consensus was that, initially, the signs would remain. At a later date, the City could decide otherwise if the traffic calming has proven to be effective.

Ms. Willis added that the stop signs do not meet warrants. If the volume of traffic on Tara Hill should be reduced sufficiently to prove the signs unnecessary, the City would likely remove them.

Section 4: East of Literary to Downpatrick

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that the parking ratio in this section under Concept 9 is 3.2 for a total of 54 potential spaces. There are many driveways in this section. In placing the chokers, the plan attempts to work with the positions and restrictions already in place by the fire hydrants.

Ms. Frazier inquired the length of a choker.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that they are approximately 20 feet – the length of a car.

Ms. Frazier inquired about the possibility of a traffic circle at Carric Ct.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that it would be a problem for the driveways at that location.

Ms. Frazier stated that she is concerned that vehicles could pick up speed in this area, as the chokers would be easy to navigate at some speed.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that the parking space ratio is low in this section. To add a more significant traffic-calming device could mean that this section would not meet the Task Force parking space criteria.

Mr. Luikart stated that in front of #5597, at Earnestway, there are two chokers. Could the chokers be replaced with a median?

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that a 20-ft median would fit at that location. The chokers become more effective with the addition of a median.

Mr. Jung stated that there is already a stop sign at that location, which will stop traffic. The choker would be more appropriate a little further down.

Ms. Frazier stated that if the long-term goal is removal of the stop signs, the choker should still remain there.

Mr. Luikart stated that since the median was removed in front of #6910, there would be a straight line for traffic flow. Speeds may increase in that area.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that traffic coming from the west would encounter one choker, then a median, then return to a center path. She added that a median takes five parking spaces. There are 24 driveways. That would result in a parking space ratio of 2.0.

Mr. Hagerty noted that it would be important to get the residents' "buy-in." This is a similar situation to the Kuntz driveway issue -- they did not want a median there due to the proximity to their driveway.

Mr. Lecklider inquired if there are other 20-ft. medians. Are they effective?

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that it will be effective to have something in the middle of the road, but 20-ft is all that would be possible at this location.

Ms. Gerhart inquired if landscaping is possible on a 20-ft median.

Mr. Hagerty stated that it would be possible.

Mr. Luikart inquired if it would be better to place the median in front of #6910. The overall spacing would be more appropriate.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that a median was at that location in Concept 7. The present three devices are placed well. If the Task Force wants to return to four devices, as in Concept 7, the parking ratio will be reduced to less than 2.0.

Mr. Lecklider inquired if a choker on the north side of Tara Hill would be effective at #6910 and #5428 Carric Ct. is it necessary that chokers be paired?

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that it would be less effective than two because the pavement is not narrowed as much.

Ms. Frazier stated that this section needs additional traffic calming. A median at either of the two suggested locations would help. The streets near Downpatrick have a significant amount of pedestrian traffic crossing the street. More traffic calming there makes sense.

Mr. Luikart suggested placing curb bulbs on Earnestway.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that would be possible.

Ms. Frazier noted that this is the start of Tara Hill for all the traffic that comes out of Downpatrick and turns left.

Ms Frazier stated that either a median or curb bulbs are needed.

Mr. Jung inquired if curb bulbs would affect parking on the south side.

Mr. Luikart responded that they would, but he questions the usefulness of parking between 5587 and 5577.

Ms. Frazier stated that one of the residents was at the last Task Force meeting, and they indicated that they do not need those parking spaces.

Mr. Luikart stated that if the median were removed, as indicated in Concept 9, there would be several parking spaces available in that area.

Mr. Jung stated that he is not in favor of putting a device 50 – 100 feet from the stop sign – it serves no purpose. It would be more functional if placed midway between Earnestway and Roscommon.

Mr. Luikart responded that if the intent is to eliminate the stop signs, this plan should not depend upon them to accomplish traffic calming at those intersections. He noted that it is the consensus of the Task Force that Concept 9 provides insufficient traffic calming between Roscommon and Downpatrick.

Mr. Lecklider noted that earlier concepts had more traffic calming. Concept 9 is a response to citizen input.

Mr. Luikart suggested that perhaps Concept 9 went a little too far in the other direction, and somewhere between Concepts 7 and 9 would be better.

Mr. Samuelson stated that adding additional traffic calming would produce a parking ratio in this section that does not meet the Task Force criteria. If that, however, is the direction of the Task Force, traffic calming can be added.

Mr. Luikart noted that it does not meet the Task Force's overall objective not to have sufficient traffic calming in this section in preference of a parking space ratio.

Mr. Hagerty suggested that the question be resolved by asking the residents of this area their preference before the next meeting.

Mr. Lecklider stated that he did not perceive that the ultimate goal was to eliminate the stop signs.

Ms. Salay stated that it depended from whose perspective the issue is viewed. City engineers would like to eliminate the unwarranted stop signs.

Mr. Lecklider stated that whether or not they were warranted is no longer the point. They are there, and it would take a great deal for those stop signs to go away.

Ms. Salay agreed. The neighborhood is attached to those signs and would object to their removal.

Ms. Frazier agreed that most of the residents are attached to them. A few in the immediate area, however, would prefer not to hear the sounds of braking and acceleration.

Mr. Luikart stated that Mr. Hagerty's suggestion to poll the residents in this section of Tara Hill regarding their preference for greater traffic calming or parking spaces is good. In the meantime, however, is there any direction to Zande regarding changes in this section?

Ms. Frazier stated that it is necessary to have a concept to show the residents.

Mr. Luikart inquired the differences between Concept 7 and 9.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz compared the two concepts, noting that there is approximately 400 feet between the traffic-calming devices in Concept 7. The goal was to maintain 300-600 between the devices.

Discussion continued regarding the devices.

Mr. Blaeser inquired if the Task Force has an obligation to discuss this issue with the residents whose homes have a yellow dot on this plan, or no on-street parking in front of the home. They should be made aware of this plan.

Mr. Luikart agreed it is the Task Force's obligation to do so.

Ms. Frazier suggested that curb bumpouts be added to Earnestway, and the remainder of Concept 9 be left as it is. Task Force members should discuss that issue with the affected homeowners.

Mr. Lecklider inquired if the only change would be the bumpouts. There was quite a bit of discussion regarding medians here.

Ms. Wray expressed concern that the snowplows would have a problem with the curb bulbs.

Mr. Lecklider added that the mailboxes would also be difficult to reach.

Ms. Willis responded that the mailboxes could be relocated to a better position. If it is part of the City construction project, the City could do that.

Mr. Jung inquired if the median is to be added back in where the plan now reads "no median."

Task Force consensus was that it would not be added back in.

Mr. Cecutti referred to the Task Force mission statement. It is important that the final plan is realistic and effective. The Task Force must look to Zande to give their opinion regarding this concept.

Mr. Samuelson responded that the cumulative effect of the plan would be effective.

Mr. Jung inquired how many parking spaces would be eliminated with the addition of the curb bulbs at Earnestway.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz responded that 3-4 spaces would be sacrificed.

Mr. Jung stated that Concept 9 provides 54 parking spaces in this section. There are 24 driveways. His calculations indicate that the plan could drop to 48 spaces and still meet the Task Force's goal of 2.0 parking spaces per driveway. He suggested that the curb bulbs be lengthened to 20 feet, rather than 10 feet to improve the traffic calming effect.

Mr. Samuelson agreed that 20 feet would be more effective, due to the visual effect.

A citizen inquired if the curb bulbs are added to Earnestway, is there is any need for the chokers immediately to the west of Earnestway.

Ms. Wawzkiewicz indicated that the chokers would ensure the effectiveness of the plan in this section.

Discussion continued regarding the spaces that would be lost.

Mr. Murray suggested that the medians could be more effective than the curb bulbs as the traffic would be pushed to the inside chokers, then to the outside with a median. Curb bulbs push the traffic to the center.

Ms. Frazier suggested that the "shortened median," (located at 6951 Tara Hill) indicated on the plan be returned to the longer length.

Mr. Luikart summarized the changes:

- lengthen the curb bulbs that say "shortened"
- remove the curb bulbs that are indicated as "moved and shortened"
- add curb bulbs at Earnestway
- add no median where it says "no median"
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Mr. Jung clarified that the curb bulbs would be 10 feet.

Ms. Frazier inquired if the curb bulb on the left of Earnestway could be made a median, to accomplish what Mr. Murray was referring to.

Mr. Samuelson stated that the median would be more effective, as the line of sight is obstructed by the median.

Mr. Luikart stated that there are two possible locations for a median in this section – (1) where it was located in Concept 7 and (2) where it says "moved and shortened."

Ms. Wawzkiewicz stated that they would try to work it into Concept 10.

A resident inquired if a median were placed at the point in the plan that now reads "moved and shortened," could a crosswalk across the median be included?

Ms. Willis responded that the City discourages mid-block crosswalks, as they are a safety hazard. They give pedestrians a false sense of security, where often drivers do not anticipate their presence.

Ms. Wray noted that the one parking space indicated on the plan between #5407 and 5423 is actually a crosswalk.

Mr. Samuelson agreed. The parking space indication is an error.

Ms. Gerhart noted that the sidewalk does not have a crosswalk on Tara Hill; they only run parallel to the street.

Ms. Wawskiewicz stated that a sidewalk crosswalk could be added through the curb bulb.

Section 5: Downpatrick to Coffman

Ms. Wawskiewicz noted that the parking space ratio would be 2.4, with a potential total of 34 parking spaces. Concept 9 shortens the curb bulb, removes the oval, and shortens the median.

Ms. Frazier inquired the distance between the turn on to Tara Hill from Coffman and the first shortened median.

Ms. Wawskiewicz responded that it is approximately 330 feet.

Ms. Frazier stated that she does want to lose the traffic oval, as it is an effective traffic-calming measure.

Mr. Samuelson noted that the oval at 5342 Tara Hill would eliminate only two parking spaces, but it is very close to Roscommon chokers.

Ms. Frazier suggested that the shortened median at 5355 be returned to the longer length.

The consultants agreed to do so.

Mr. Jung stated that there is a lengthy, “no parking” area on both sides at the end of Tara Hill before entering Coffman Road. Traffic will queue up in the mornings to exit Tara Hill, but coming into Tara Hill, could bump outs be added behind the first parking space to narrow the street to one lane?

Ms. Wawskiewicz responded that the turn lanes are striped at that end.

The traffic consultant will revise Concept 9 to incorporate the Task Force guidance for the next Task Force meeting.

Public Involvement Process

Mr. Luikart noted that it is important to achieve a “community endorsed” plan.

Ms. Wray inquired if the intent is to achieve a certain percentage of endorsement from Tara Hill Drive or a greater portion of the study area.

Ms. Willis recommended that the Task Force focus on the affected area only – Tara Hill and the cul de sacs off Tara Hill.

The Task Force discussed door-to-door canvassing of the affected area to gain community endorsement versus holding another open house to present the final plan to the residents.

Consensus of the Task Force was to hold an open house on March 9 with a contingency plan that if the open house turnout were to be poor, group meetings would be held in the neighborhood the following two weekends to gain additional neighborhood support. No specific neighborhood meetings will be scheduled at this time. Door-to-door canvassing would not be an effective use of time.

Task Force consensus was that an open house invitation would be sent to the residents of the affected neighborhood, which would be approximately 217 homes. The mailing would include two inserts: (1) a copy of the Concept 10 traffic-calming plan and (2) the available parking map. The map will not show lost parking, only available parking. Ms. Willis noted that it would be difficult to have a draft invitation available for the February 16 meeting. It will be forwarded to the Task Force via email for review/input.

Mr. Cecutti stated that the communication should focus on the traffic calming planned for this area, not on the parking.

Mr. Luikart indicated that he would prepare a draft letter for the open house mailing to provide Ms. Keller-Wilt (Community Relations) with a starting point.

Staff will erect signage that will also notify residents of the Open House date.

Mr. Luikart noted that the March 9 meeting should be the last opportunity for citizen input. From that point on, the plan would be finalized for presentation to Council on May 2.

Ms. Salay responded that can be the goal, but the consultants should be prepared to “tweak” even later, if it is necessary to achieve community consensus.

Second Draft Memo to Council

Ms. Willis will make the minimal changes suggested by the Task Force and email to Task Force members for their review before the February 16 Task Force meeting. Following review at the 2/16 meeting, the approved status report to Council would be included in the 2/17 Council packet for the Tuesday, February 22 Council meeting. Mr. Luikart will present the Task Force status report at that meeting.

Future Steps/Schedule of Remaining Task Force Meetings

The traffic consultant will prepare Concept 10 for the February 16 Task Force meeting. Pending their approval, copies of Concept 10 will be included in the direct mail to the residents.

Mr. Samuelson requested copies of any emails that Task Force members have received from study area residents with input concerning the traffic-calming plan. Mr. Luikart indicated that the email he had received from a Tara Hill resident would be forwarded to the consultants.

Additional Task Force meetings are scheduled for: February 16, March 9, March 23, April 13, May 2 – Presentation to Council. Tentative dates for neighborhood group meetings, if needed, will be discussed at the 2/16 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Submitted by:

Deputy Clerk of Council