

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

Wednesday, March 23, 2005
Dublin Municipal Building – 5200 Emerald Parkway

Present:

Task Force Members

Randy Luikart	Dave Cecutti	Tina Wray
Amy Gerhart	Amy Salay	John Jung
Kimberly O'Brien	Tim Lecklider	Deborah Frazier (arrived at 8:15 p.m.)
Vince Blaeser (excused)		

Staff Members:

Paul Hammersmith

Consultants:

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

Call to Order:

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

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Luikart noted that some members had not had the opportunity to review the 3-09-05 minutes; therefore, the request for approval will be deferred to the 4-13-05 Task Force meeting.

Public Comment

Chris Sarych, 6905 Conquistador Ct., inquired how stagnating water would be prevented in the areas where many new curb bulbs will be added.

Mr. Samuelson responded that is a street engineering issue, not a traffic engineering issue, however, he would predict that two inlets would be installed. It depends on the design of the curb bulb. The drainage issue is the reason that curb bulbs are more expensive than medians.

Traffic Calming Plan Concept 10 Update

Ms. Wawzkiewicz reviewed the revisions that were made in Concept 10 in accordance with the Task Force direction at their last meeting.

Area 1 – Muirfield to Wichita

Ms. Wawzkiewicz noted that this section remained the same. Task Force members made no changes.

Area 2 - Wichita to Shady Nelms

A change has been made in the east end of this section. In response to Mr. Wong's request at the 3-9-05 meeting for additional traffic calming in the immediate vicinity of his home (5822 Tara Hill), a curb bulb has been added across from Havington Ct.

The consensus of the Task Force was to accept the change.

Area 3 – Shady Nelms to Literary Ln.

Ms. Wawszkiewicz stated that at the last meeting, Mr. Timmerman suggested narrowing the curb bulbs at Literary Lane and adding a bay immediately across the street.

Mr. Jung stated that he did not see the purpose of this addition. There is a stop sign at this intersection, and traffic must stop. There is no value to be gained from the added device.

Ms. Gerhart noted that Mr. Timmerman had pointed out that this is the third stop sign from the end, and the least effective. If removal of that sign were to be proposed in the future, the value of the additional traffic-calming device would be obvious.

Mr. Luikart stated that the curb bulbs are 5 feet at this location. At Literary Lane, they are 10 feet. Could this present a problem?

Ms. Wawszkiewicz responded that it would not pose a problem.

Consensus of the Task Force was to accept the revision.

Mr. Sarych inquired if the landscape maintenance in the area of the curb bumpouts and traffic circles would be the homeowners' responsibility or the City's.

Mr. Hammersmith responded that the landscaping within traffic circles would be the City's responsibility to maintain; however, areas that are expansions of the tree lawn are the residents' responsibility.

Mr. Sarych inquired if trees, such as evergreens, or bushes would be installed in the circles.

Mr. Hammersmith responded that nothing would be installed that could obstruct drivers' visibility. Low height landscaping would be used – nothing over three feet in height.

Consensus of the Task Force was to accept the revision.

Area 4 – Literary Lane to Downpatrick

Ms. Wawszkiewicz stated that in the west end of this area is Mr. Rowe's home (5647 Tara Hill). At the last meeting, he objected to the median across from his home, as it would eliminate the one parking spot in front of his home. She reviewed the various changes that have been made in the plan in this particular area over the last few weeks -- In Concept 5, there were two chokers in front of his home and a curb bulb at Earnest Way. In the Task Force work session, one team proposed a choker further east of Mr. Rowe's home with an oval at Earnest Way; the second team suggested a chicane orientation east of his home with a median east of the Earnest Way intersection. Concepts 6 – 8 combined the two ideas, providing chokers that were aligned with the Rowe property and a median east of Earnest Way. Concept 9 shortened the chokers and removed the median to provide on-street parking. Concept 10 removed the chokers and placed a median that was aligned with the Rowe property and curb bulbs at Earnest Way. Ms. Wawszkiewicz suggested shifting the median to the east of Mr. Rowe's property, then, the

parking space would not be eliminated. However, the next property would be impacted, so it would be necessary to communicate with that resident.

Mr. Luikart inquired if the spacing between devices would be negatively impacted.

Ms. Wawszkiewicz responded that it would not – the change would be only 40-50 feet.

Mr. Luikart stated that the letter sent to residents before the March 9 meeting shared the changes that would occur in their area. Making this change would impact another resident, which would require communication. He does not favor the alternative.

Ms. O'Brien inquired if the language of that letter indicated that the plan was final, or if it could be subject to change in response to resident input.

Ms. Gerhart stated that she was more concerned about the loss of an additional parking space in a tight space. She preferred to coordinate the traffic calming with the existing fire hydrant at Mr. Rowe's property, as it already causes the loss of a parking space.

Following discussion, consensus of the Task Force was not to revise Concept 10 in this area.

Area 5 – Downpatrick to Coffman Road

No revisions were suggested.

Ms. Wawszkiewicz stated that the changes would be incorporated into a final plan – Concept 11, which would be presented to Council for adoption at its May 2 meeting.

Mr. Sarych inquired if an incident in the vicinity of the curb bumpouts would be the property owners' liability or the City's. Would the property owners' deeds need to be amended to include the additional area?

Mr. Hammersmith responded that the property owner is responsible only up to the right-of-way line. That line is one foot off the back side of the sidewalk, so adding the curb bumpout would not impact the homeowner's area of responsibility. The right-of-way liability is the City's.

Draft Council Presentation

Mr. Samuelson reviewed the draft presentation which will include:

- A description of the study area
- List of Task Force representatives and subdivisions they represent
- A summary of the Task Force's goals
- Synopsis of Task Force meetings
- Examples of traffic-calming measures proposed for Tara Hill Drive.
- Views of the Concept Plan 11, including renderings before and after traffic calming
- Project Phases and cost estimates
- Future traffic patterns
- Study area exterior intersection evaluations
- Summary of the Task Force recommendations

Mr. Samuelson inquired if there were any additional recommendations that the Task Force would like to add to their proposal, other than those already included in Concept 11 and the exterior intersection improvements.

Task Force suggestions for presentation:

- Add brief history of the reason for creation of the Task Force – petition of the Tara Hill neighborhood (90% threshold resident participation)
- Mission of the Task Force
- Color code the representatives names with the subdivisions that they represent
- Replace example of median with something more representative of the recommendation
- In the list of Task Force goals, move “Increase safety” to top of list.
- Minimize the on-street parking component to properly portray traffic-calming component.

Mr. Sarych inquired if the “No Parking” areas on the street could be designated with signage.

Mr. Hammersmith responded that “No Parking” areas would be designated with signage.

- Provide talking points per slide
- Recommend that the plan be implemented in one phase, but if necessary, the middle section could be implemented as a phase 2.

Ms. O’Brien noted that the cost of the plan appears to have decreased with recent revisions.

Ms. Wawszkiewicz responded that before the plan was revised to retain more on-street parking, there were more traffic-calming components and some devices were longer.

Mr. Hammersmith suggested that the presentation show a price breakdown for design, construction, and contingency. There will be no cost for right-of-way acquisition. The road resurfacing would be paid for by separate funds for the street maintenance program, keeping separate the costs of traffic calming and the costs of street maintenance.

Mr. Lecklider stated that to put this cost in perspective, it would be good to provide information on the cost of other projects, such as bikepath tunnel construction.

Mr. Hammersmith estimated the cost of one pedestrian bikepath tunnel would be \$400,000 - \$600,000.

Mr. Lecklider stated that the Tara Hill traffic-calming project would benefit a much larger community than a pedestrian bikepath tunnel project; therefore, the cost could be considered more justifiable. What would be the estimated cost of a street tunnel or overpass?

Mr. Hammersmith responded that it would be substantially higher than a pedestrian tunnel.

Mr. Hammersmith stated that a good comparison would be the Wilcox Road improvement project, which was Phase 5 of the Southwest Traffic Calming Project, which has an estimated construction cost of \$810,000. The section of Wilcox Road involved would be the area between Heather Bluff and Innovation. Of course, the project may no longer be necessary, given the other improvements which have occurred in that area.

Mr. Luikart stated that it would be good to have some comparisons in mind, if that subject comes up with Council.

Mr. Hammersmith responded that staff would be able to provide comparable projects and their costs. The question Council wants to answer is, does the benefit justify the cost? The Task Force has been immersed in all the information, but Council has not.

Ms. Salay noted that the southwest area provides a good example of the cost benefit. The quality of life significantly improved throughout that neighborhood after the traffic calming was implemented.

Ms. Wray stated that if the benefit is an issue, perhaps the number of households that would benefit from the traffic-calming would be good to note. That number would include the homes in the whole area, not just Tara Hill Drive.

Ms. O'Brien suggested that it is an even greater area than that – this would benefit the entire City. When the quality of life is improved in any one area of the City, it makes the entire City more desirable.

Discussion continued regarding quality of life decisions that benefit the community.

Mr. Samuelson stated that this slide of the presentation would provide the total cost of a one phase project, but would provide a breakdown of that cost.

Mr. Hammersmith stated that the breakdown should include design, acquisition, construction and contingency. The cost does not include road resurfacing or the speed bumps on Downpatrick, which will be implemented this year

Mr. Jung inquired if the cost of storm drains, etc. has been included in this cost.

Mr. Samuelson stated that they have been.

Jerry Lane, Missy Park Drive, stated that he does not believe the residents are aware of the fact that it has been estimated that 320 more individuals will travel Adventure Drive than do so now. If the residents were aware of that, they would be here at the meeting. The City should have been more open in communicating the anticipated impact to the surrounding neighborhood.

[Ms. Frazier arrived at 8:10 p.m.]

Mr. Lane inquired if the requirement still exists that an 80% buy-in of the neighborhood is necessary before traffic-calming can be implemented.

Mr. Hammersmith responded that the Task Force was created in lieu of that requirement.

Mr. Lane stated that the Task Force minutes reflect that the community's dream has been for a central community park and municipal campus. He believes that the clarification would be that

it is City Council's dream. The community would rather retain a road there. The Tara Hill Task Force was created to appease the Tara Hill residents.

Ms. Salay responded that comment is not accurate. She briefly reviewed the work of the Coffman Park Task Force regarding the traffic issue.

Mr. Lane requested that the Task Force not discard the normal procedure, and that a petition of 80% of the residents be obtained before proceeding.

Mr. Lecklider stated that Mr. Lane's neighborhood has a representative on the Task Force. Why haven't the community's concerns been communicated to him?

Mr. Lane responded that the Task Force representative has not informed the neighborhood that the projections are that the traffic on Adventure Drive will be increased by 330 vehicles. Why is the Task Force not concerned that much of the diverted traffic will move to Sells Mill and Adventure Drive? There is an elementary school on Sells Mill.

Mr. Lecklider commented that the impact of this traffic-calming project on other streets within the study area will be monitored, and if it is determined that any of those streets has been unduly impacted, the City will address that, also.

Mr. Lane challenged the Task Force regarding the negative ramifications of the proposed traffic-calming plan.

Discussion continued regarding the anticipated changes in traffic flow within the study area.

Steve Stidham, President of the Hemingway Civic Association, stated that he is a proponent of traffic-calming and a supporter of this Task Force. However, he lives on Adventure Drive. He has two little girls, and if the traffic increases on Adventure Drive, he will be one of first to complain and to request remedial action by Council. He inquired if studies have been conducted regarding the impact of traffic-calming on property values within the affected neighborhood.

Ms. Salay responded that in the southwest area, property values increased after the traffic-calming was implemented.

Mr. Hammersmith suggested that the presentation include some impact numbers, such as the addition of Jerome High School reduced Tara Hill traffic by an estimated number, but the redirection of Post Road is anticipated to increase traffic volume by a estimated number. That gives a better projection of what the net effect will be.

Additional Recommendations

- Continue targeted enforcement
- Pursue traffic-calming improvements at Sells Mill, Tullymore and Valleystream
- Advance the redirection of Post Road, so that the southbound left turn at Post/Muirfield can be implemented

- Evaluate the impact of the Tara Hill traffic-calming on the other streets within the study area, specifically Sells Mill and Adventure Drive.

The results of that evaluation will be published, and those neighborhoods would determine if they want to request traffic-calming for their streets.

Mr. Stidham stated that it was important that the follow-up evaluation be included in the plan recommendation.

Ms. Frazier inquired if the volume of Tara Hill Drive could be evaluated after the plan is implemented.

Mr. Hammersmith responded that the Police Department could conduct a Stealth Stat.

Ms. Frazier expressed strong support for conducting a study of the traffic-calming impact on the adjacent streets and communicating that information to those neighborhoods.

Mr. Cecutti stated that he remembers that issue was specifically addressed by the Task Force.

Mr. Jung indicated that the October 13, 2004 minutes reflect that the study of the impact on adjacent streets would occur, and a 20% increase in volume and a 10% increase in speed would be considered adequate triggers for the petition process, if the neighborhood should desire to pursue it.

Mr. Sarych inquired if the cost of additional catch basins are included in the total cost.

Mr. Hammersmith responded that they are included.

Mr. Luikart noted that a Letter to the Editor was published in the *Dublin News* today written by an area student. As an Eagle Scout civics project, he attended the last Task Force meeting. He offered his views on the Tara Hill traffic-calming project. Unfortunately, a couple of his comments were not only negative, but also inaccurate.

Following discussion, Mr. Luikart noted that he would draft a letter of response for the Dublin News editorial section. He will forward that draft to the Task Force for their review. He will keep the tone of the letter very positive.

Ms. Salay offered some suggestions for the content of the letter.

An additional Task Force meeting is scheduled for: March 23, May 2 – Presentation to Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

Deputy Clerk of Council