

ECCO NRP

3010 Hennepin Avenue #3 – Minneapolis – 55408

Minutes

Traffic Committee Meeting

18 January 2001, 7:00 p.m.

Library, Saint Mary's Greek Orthodox Church
Committee Chair – Gary Farland (824-6744)

Attendees: Della Boutrous, Robyn Cook, Tanya Cornelius, Jim Daire (Minneapolis Traffic Department), Carol Dines, Gary Farland, Bruce Grimm, Erik Hansen (ECCO NRP), Ken Hoffman, Mark Margolis, Vince Markell, Lisa McDonald (10th Ward Councilmember), Toni McNaron, Tracy Nordstrom, Lara Norkus-Crampton, Tim Norkus-Crampton, Mary Sabatke, Margaret Seidler, Kathleen Shankwitz, Kurt Waltenbaugh.

Meeting commenced at approximately 7:15 p.m.

With the agenda approved by the panel, Erik gave a short overview of the current status of the SRF traffic plan. During the petition process three throating petitions have failed. As a result of this the remaining petitioning was put on hold in mid-December, so that a decision could be made on the future of the throating program. The neighborhoods change in the Action Plan language gives it greater latitude to determine new programs to improve the traffic flows in the neighborhood.

The goal of this meeting, Gary stated, was to determine the future of the throating component, find alternative programs in the neighborhood, and if none could be found redirect the remaining funding to other non-traffic programs. Lara voiced a desire to keep the remaining \$45,000.00 in project directed toward traffic in ECCO because it was identified as a high priority in the initial Action Plan neighborhood survey. Bruce reported the desire of the ECCO Board to see the entire NRP budgeted at the required 95 percent to allow ECCO to proceed to the Phase 2. He added that the NRP should redirect funding when neighborhood exhausts all traffic options. Lara asked why the petitions failed? The desire for alternative measures like speed humps, loss of parking, and perception that the testing of traffic throats are ineffective were the reasons given. After the effectiveness of the throats to slow traffic in the neighborhood was raised, Gary said the original intent of this component was to create an aesthetic boundary to indicate the entrance to the neighborhood. Lisa agreed and added that the throats give drivers and bicyclists better sight lines as they approach the intersection. Unfortunately, she added, it is difficult to enforce illegal parking on these throats. She favors speed humps as an alternative "traffic calming" measure. Lara stated that if the existing parking restrictions at the corners were enforced then throats might not be necessary. As for pedestrian safety, an inquiry was made into crosswalk stripping. Lisa said and Jim concurred that the city will not stripe in intersections that do not have a traffic signal or stop sign.

According to Lisa, traffic conditions in ECCO and neighboring areas are unique due to the lakes and the arterial congestion on Hennepin Avenue and South Lyndale

Avenue. She added that other neighborhood traffic models would not apply in the area. Toni spoke to this point, saying that the traffic problems on her block (3500 block of Holmes Avenue) directly related to the semaphore on W. 36th Street and Hennepin Avenue. Others stated that the light pattern on E. Calhoun Parkway and W. Lake Street cause traffic build-up which a southbound one-way would fix. Kurt added that the neighborhood should focus encouraging traffic to use streets outside the neighborhood. Vince added that traffic calming in the neighborhood has support, the SRF traffic plan does not so the neighborhood should move toward a better plan. Toni moved to scrap the SRF traffic plan. The motion passed unanimously. Lara pointed out that as a result of the ECCO traffic survey speed is greatest on Holmes Avenue, S. Humboldt Avenue, E. Calhoun Parkway, W. 31st Street and W. 32nd Street and the new plan should address these streets.

Toni made a motion to install two sets of speed humps between W. 34th Street and W. 36th Street on Holmes Avenue. In a point of information, Jim address a letter for Minneapolis Public Works saying that the city's policy is not to install humps on streets with grades of 5 percent or greater. He was unsure of the exact grade of the hill on Holmes Avenue. Toni interjected to state that a portion of the Holmes Avenue is flat and could accommodate a hump. She added that even though the city finds speed humps effective if installed in pairs, installing one would create a barrier to traffic trying to avoid the light at W. 36th Street and Hennepin Avenue. Lisa said possible solutions are to install a left-turn green arrow, no left-turns 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. signs. After point of information motion passes unanimously. Margaret moves to support a left-turn green arrow from eastbound W. 36th Street to northbound Hennepin Avenue. Kurt adds that this is the first issue that encourages traffic to move around the neighborhood. With no more discussion this motion passes unanimously.

Next, Gary introduced the issue of high levels of speed on S. Humboldt Avenue and the desire to see one speed hump on each side of the intersection at W. 32nd Street. Jim restated public works' position that installation of speed humps in pairs are most effective. He advises placing two pair of speed humps on S. Humboldt Avenue, one pair between W. 31st Street and W. 32nd Street and one pair between W. 32nd Street and W. 33rd Street. Lara adds that if S. Humboldt Avenue has speed humps then traffic will move to other streets in the neighborhood. The neighborhood should look at the traffic calming for ECCO as on whole rather than on an individual street basis. Gary said that there are special situations in the neighborhood that need attention. Since she feels traffic will move to S. Irving Avenue after the installation of speed humps on S. Humboldt Avenue, she moves that the neighborhood adopt a plan to install a pair of speed humps between W. 31st Street and W. 32nd Street and between W. 32nd Street and W. 33rd Street on S. Irving Avenue and S. Humboldt Avenue. In discussion Mary disagrees with speed bumps in the neighborhood and suggests stop signs at each intersection as an alternative. Carol asks if the speed humps will increase the noise levels in the neighborhood. Jim does not have a definitive answer. In his research, some experts see stop signs and speed humps having varying degrees of effectiveness, but there is no consensus. The motion passes on a hand count vote of 7 in favor with 5 against.

In new business, an inquiry is made on the progress of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) position concerning traffic matters on E. Calhoun Parkway.

According to Erik, as of 18 January 2001 the MPRB obtained data from the two-year traffic study and they hope to produce a park system traffic policy in the upcoming months. ECCO has over \$13,000.00 for a crossing of E. Calhoun Parkway at the Zen Center. Until the MPRB's traffic policy is undetermined the MPRB will not give approval to ECCO to proceed with the planned crossing. Others added concerns pertaining to crossings at W. 31st, 32nd, and 33rd Streets. Concerns on MPRB slow resolution of this issue led to ideas of more residences in the neighborhood contacting the MPRB often to raise awareness of support of the crossing. Lara added that the neighborhood is on the MPRB's timeline and this fact could hold NRP back from Phase 2. Bruce said that the project is worthy enough to proceed and the money for these programs will not necessarily hold ECCO from the 95 percent contracting threshold. If in the coming months the MPRB does not approve a traffic plan ECCO NRP can then redirect the funding if necessary, until then he believes this project is worthwhile. Margaret made the motion that ECCO supports turning E. Calhoun Parkway into a one-way in the southbound direction. Ken offers a friendly amendment to the motion to include enhanced crosswalks at W. 31st, 32nd, and 33rd Streets on E. Calhoun Parkway. After Gary rescinds a point of order on the motion validity in the current parameters of the agenda the motion passes on a split voice vote.

Margaret moves that the traffic calming measures pertaining to Holmes Avenue are seen as a separate entity. By this motion, the passage of these measures through the petition process bears no relation to the passage of any other traffic-calming plan in the ECCO neighborhood. The motion passes unanimously.

Gary asks Erik to describe the strategic plan for implementation of the new traffic plan. It is agreed that Erik will obtain necessary petitions and other required materials in advance of a February 2001 traffic-calming meeting to discuss the next steps. Lara and Tim Norkus-Crampton, Della Boutrous and Tanya Cornelius have initially agreed to help in the petition process.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9 p.m.