



PALATINE/WILLOW ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY

Walking and Biking for Transportation

DRAFT MEETING NOTES

April 2, 2003

10am-11:30am

Arlington Heights Village Hall

33 S. Arlington Heights Rd.
Arlington Heights, IL

Segment discussed: US 12 to IL 83

Meeting Background

On February 21, a working group of municipal staff, Northwest Municipal Conference staff, IDOT staff, Chicago Area Transportation Study staff and interested residents met to discuss in more detail the feasibility and desirability of specific strategies for improving walking and biking access along and across Palatine Road from US12 to IL83. The group requested that IDOT staff report back on the favored proposals. A follow-up meeting was scheduled for April 2, 2003

Agenda

1) Meeting Overview/Introductions

The following individuals were in attendance.

<i>First</i>	<i>Last</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Ron	Anderson	
Steve	Boime	Community Mobilization Team
Jarrold	Cebulski	IDOT
Ken	Doll	Illinois Department of Transportation
Jack	Fahey	ARL Vista Homeowners Association
Linda	Heller	Arlington Terrace, District 23
Nick	Jackson	Chicagoland Bicycle Federation
Gin	Kilgore	CATS
Dave	Landeweer	URS
Brad	McMullen	Bowman, Barrett & Associates, Inc
Beth	Murphy	Arlington Heights, District 23
Tom	Murtha	CATS
Manar	Nashif	Illinois Department of Transportation
Mark	Schoeffmann	Village of Arlington Heights

We used the notes from the February 21 meeting to structure the discussion, which focused on a few key areas, indicated in bold.

Please contact Gin Kilgore at 312.793.0451 or gkilgore@catsmpo.com with any corrections to these notes by Friday, April 11, 2003. After that time, they will be posted at www.catsmpo.com/bikeped/palwillow.htm

Desirability and feasibility of narrowing the intersections vs. using mid-block refuges to accommodate pedestrian crossings

From the February 21 meeting notes. . . *Mr. Cebulski indicated that IDOT would look into the possibility of narrowing the lanes at the intersections. IDOT will also investigate the feasibility of different traffic signal options, such as pedestrian countdowns, controlling turning movements for pedestrian crossings, modifying signal timing based on passive pedestrian detection, using different signal timing for different times of the day to coincide for peak pedestrian crossing needs or having an all red phase.*

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Mr. Cebulski reported that IDOT would not consider narrowing the lanes to 11 feet at the intersections but that it will consider:

- Tightening the corner radii, which will help narrow the intersection and discourage high speed turning movements, while still accommodating U turns and trucks with a 60' foot wheelbase. Participants expressed support for this strategy and asked some follow up questions: Can the corners be tightened further by accommodating wide turners by pulling back the stop bar? What percent of trucks are that large? What turning speed is assumed?
- Changing the dual left turn lanes on the east leg of Windsor into a single left turn lane with an 18' pedestrian refuge.
- Using signs reminding motorists that right turn on red is prohibited when pedestrians are present
- Using pedestrian buttons that activate maximum green time for crossing (seven seconds of a "walk" signal, flashing "don't walk" at a rate of 4 feet/second, and a six second solid "don't walk.") Participants felt this was ample time for most people to cross, but expressed concern that the flashing "don't walk" signal can be confusing. We discussed adding signs near the pedestrian signal activation to explain that "don't walk" really means "don't begin crossing." Mr. Cebulski also stated that IDOT has concerns about using a pedestrian count-down signal in a school zone. Will children understand how the signals work?

Strategies for indicating to westbound motorists that they are approaching a traffic signal near a school and other non-motorized traffic

From the February 21 notes. . . *The group discussed additional strategies that can be used to transition Palatine Road from the feel of an expressway to the feel of a roadway going through a community with traffic signals and people crossing the road on foot and bike. Possibilities include landscaping, signage and strobes at red lights (a strobe light is in place behind the red light at 41 and Park Avenue to alert semi-truck drivers). IDOT will report back to the group with ideas.*

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Mr. Cebulski reported that IDOT will consider:

- Adding a sidewalk on the south east section of the Schoenbeck intersection. The missing section is approximately 400'. Adding a new sidewalk would require cost participation from Prospect Heights. A rough cost estimate is \$10,000. At the 50/50 match rate, Prospect Heights would need to contribute about \$5,000. Mr. Cebulski indicated there might be other ways for Prospect Heights to contribute the local match.

- Adding a cross walk on the south leg of the Schoenbeck intersection. There was less concern about a crosswalk on the east leg because of the lack of north/south sidewalk connectivity on the east side of Schoenbeck.
- Planting trees in the median to transition the feel of the roadway as it approaches Schoenbeck from the east. Landscaping will be done so that it does not interfere with sightlines at the intersection.
- Add School Zone pavement markings to the northeast leg.

Mr. Cebulski also reported on the lighting options. A “signal ahead” sign to notify motorists of an upcoming traffic signal is not warranted because there is no visual obstruction. To add a flashing signal/sign to signify that a school is ahead, the municipality where the light is located would have to make a request, pay for it and handle maintenance. Participants discussed the possibility of Prospect Heights, Arlington Heights and the school district collaborating. The strobe light to accentuate the red phase is still in experimentation stage; if it performs well at the test location, it could be added to this project later.

Desirability and feasibility of creating an underpass opportunity at McDonald Creek.

From the February 21 notes. . . Mr. Landeweer provided some background on the idea of including an underpass opportunity adjacent to McDonald Creek. A recently constructed path follows the creek but dead-ends at the north side of Palatine Road. This path provides a connection to Lake Arlington, a popular destination for people traveling by bike and foot. A grade-separated crossing would provide an additional connection between the north and south sides of the road.

Mr. Schoeffmann stated the Village of Arlington Heights would like to know if it’s technically feasible to construct Palatine Road to accommodate a future underpass and what the additional cost would be. . . . IDOT will report back on the feasibility of addressing this opportunity within the project.

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Preliminary analysis suggests there is no fatal flaw, but that the project would likely require realigning the path to the north and relocating storm drains through one of the retaining walls, which could significantly increase project cost. Per Mr. Schoeffmann’s request, IDOT will report back on 1) the cost of preserving the opportunity for a future underpass and 2) the cost of building the underpass.

Mr. Landeweer suggested that the road profile would not have to be raised much, if at all, if a reinforced concrete deck is used. This could minimize the financial impact of designing the culvert to underpass standards.

Desirability and feasibility of mid-block crossings between Schoenbeck and Windsor

From the February 21 notes. . . The group discussed the possibility of additional crossing options between Schoenbeck and Windsor, which are a mile apart. “Mid-block crossings” of four lane roads can work well when there is a median refuge island. Because there are no turning conflicts, the pedestrian only needs to look for a gap in traffic coming from one direction, get to the refuge, and then look in the other direction for a gap. The group discussed possible locations

for a mid-block crossing that would include pavement markings and a pedestrian activated signal. Additional crossings could better accommodate those traveling to Lake Arlington, District 23 or John Hersey High School. . . . The group identified Waterman (access to Hersey), Dale (supplement to Schoenbeck crossing for access to District 23) and Forest/Birchwood (half-way point) as locations for further study.

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Mr. Cebulski reported that it will be difficult to meet the warrants for adding a signalized pedestrian crossing. High pedestrian crossing volumes and a lack of gaps in vehicular traffic need to be demonstrated. The group will do additional research on 1) how others have met the warrants in similar situations 2) whether the lower school zone warrants could apply and 3) if we can show latent demand.

Next Steps

Mr. Cebulski suggested the working group come up with a response to IDOT's feedback. Mr. Schoeffmann reviewed what the group had reached consensus on so far:

- Reduce radii at corners as much as possible
- Use No Right Turn on Red with Pedestrians Present signs
- Plant trees in the median east of Schoenbeck
- Use School Zone pavement markings at the Schoenbeck intersection
- Eliminate a dual left on the east leg of Windsor
- Create a pedestrian cut-through on the Windsor median refuge
- Prepare a cost estimate for an underpass at McDonald Creek
- Determine whether the Village of Prospect Heights still has interest in 1) the sidewalk connection on the south side of Palatine Road, east of Schoenbeck 2) a crosswalk on the south leg of the intersection and 3) a warning light associated with that signal. If so, a formal written request for these elements needs to be made.

CATS staff will do some additional research on pedestrian countdown signals and meeting warrants for pedestrian signals. CATS staff will also arrange another meeting or conference call to refine the proposals and prepare for more widespread public involvement.

Recognizing the need to address concerns along other sections of Palatine/Willow Road, the group picked April 22 in Wheeling for a meeting to discuss accommodations that can be incorporated into the designs for the sections of Palatine Road between Route 83 and 294. CATS staff will coordinate planning and outreach for this meeting.