



PALATINE/WILLOW ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY

Walking and Biking for Transportation

DRAFT MEETING NOTES

February 21, 2003

10am-11:30am

Arlington Heights Village Hall

33 S. Arlington Heights Rd.

Arlington Heights, IL

Segment to be discussed: US 12 to IL 83

Meeting Background

On January 30, 2003 over 50 people participated in a meeting to discuss specific strategies compiled by CATS staff for improving walking and biking access along and across Palatine Road from US12 to IL83. This smaller, more focused follow-up meeting of municipal staff, Northwest Municipal Conference staff, IDOT staff, Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) staff and interested residents was proposed to further discuss the feasibility of the strategies that generated the most interest. A public meeting will be organized once more solid proposals are available for discussion.

Agenda

1) Meeting Overview/Introductions

The following individuals were in attendance.

<i>First</i>	<i>Last</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Larry	Bury	Northwest Municipal Conference
Jarrold	Cebulski	IDOT
Ken	Doll	Illinois Department of Transportation
Danielle	Gray	Northwest Municipal Conference
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
Cris	Papierniak	City of Prospect Heights
Mark	Schoeffmann	Village of Arlington Heights

- 2) *Develop different scenarios that could meet the diverse needs on Palatine Road between US12 to IL83. Refer to summary of written comments from the January 30 meeting.*

The group's discussion focused on a few key areas, indicated in bold.

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

The feedback from the January 30 meeting suggested there is more interest in narrower cross sections than relying on median refuges to get people across in two stages. In general, people seemed more comfortable with the idea of getting people across in one traffic cycle than having people wait in a median refuge between cycles. IDOT indicated that it was going to do traffic counts in the coming weeks to reassess the need for a dual left turn at Windsor. Eliminating one of the left turn lanes would create a better pedestrian crossing environment, and would create a wide median refuge on the east leg of the intersection. However, it does not help reduce the cross section because a dual left is being sought on the other side. Another possibility is to taper the travel lanes to 11 feet at the intersection.

Mr. Schoeffmann and Mr. Papierniak indicated that the Village of Arlington Heights and the City of Prospect Heights are very interested in keeping the intersections as narrow as possible. Because the taper would begin after trucks have already merged into Palatine, it shouldn't create conflicts or capacity problems.

Ms. Murphy asked if a grade separation at Schoenbeck is possible. A number of people responded with various issues a grade separation would raise. For example, a grade separation of Palatine Road would require a large structure with minimal or no access between Palatine Rd. and Schoenbeck, probably forcing the traffic onto other streets in an area where there are few alternative routes. In addition, right-of-way would probably be required, adversely affecting adjacent property owners and residents. A pedestrian grade separation may only serve pedestrians traveling down one side of Schoenbeck and would require residential right-of-way.

Mr. Schoeffmann called attention to the pedestrian improvements that are already part of the design. The reconfigured road will already be much better for pedestrians. Anything we can come up with this at this point in the project will just be adding to the improvements.

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.

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

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.

The group discussed the possibility of including a sidewalk on Palatine Road, southeast of Schoenbeck. Because the state owns the land, it might be possible to set it back from the road. If a sidewalk exists now, it would be eligible for reconstruction at no cost to Prospect Heights. Otherwise, the sidewalk could be provided at the request of Prospect Heights with cost participation. Prospect Heights and IDOT staff said they would investigate.

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

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. In order to provide a 10 foot clearance, the road might need to be elevated three feet, which might require additional right-of-way acquisition. It is possible to provide only eight feet in clearance, but the future facility will not be as welcoming. Mr. Landeweer suggested the floor height might not need to be more than nine inches over the current culvert height. One possibility is to design for a "10 year" as opposed to a "100 year" flood event. Is it better to have a facility that sometimes cannot be used because it is under water or no facility at all? In the past, the property owner to the south has not expressed interest in a path extension. However, the Palatine Road reconstruction presents an opportunity; it might be worth creating options for the future, even if there is not support for an underpass and path right now.

IDOT will report back on the feasibility of addressing this opportunity within the project.

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

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. Mr. Schoeffmann stated that previous discussions with property owners had indicated lack of interest in a signalized crossing at Birchwood, but at the time it was presented as a full signal, not a ped-only one. 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.

3) Develop an action plan for decision-making, including soliciting more public input.

Ms. Kilgore noted that Michael Ronkin, Oregon DOT's Pedestrian and Bicycle Program Manager, would be speaking about pedestrian crossing options on roads such as Palatine at the Feb. 25th Pedestrian Design Workshop. She encouraged people to attend the workshop. She received no objections to her request to include some Palatine Road questions in the "local case studies" section of the workshop. CATS staff is in the process of summarizing the relevant ideas that were discussed at the workshop.

IDOT agreed to assess the feasibility of the ideas discussed during March. We will hold another small meeting at the Arlington Heights Village Hall 10-11:30am on April 2, 2003. The group proposed to aim for a public meeting in late April.

4) Generate ideas for short-term improvements to the walking environment.

Because of time constraints, we tabled this agenda item.

5) Draft a strategy for addressing other segments of Palatine/Willow Road.

IDOT will look at comments generated at previous meetings and see what suggestions can be incorporated into the designs for the sections of Palatine Road between Route 83 and 294.