

**Poplar Bridge Neighborhood Traffic Study  
Study Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #2  
Minutes  
December 10, 2007**

**SAC Members Attendees:**

Curtis Braatz  
Mark Thorson  
Ken Tenk  
Mary Lechtenberg  
Dr. Gail Swor  
Joy Forster  
John Gingerich  
Brian Garthwaite  
Timm Wienke  
Pat Tschohl  
Karen Larson  
Russ Burnison  
Bruce Koke

**City Staff:**

Paul Jarvis  
Chad Smith  
Amy Marohn

**SRF:**

Marie Cote  
Beth Bartz

**1. Opening Remarks**

Beth Bartz, SRF, welcomed those in attendance.

**2. Review of Agenda/Meeting Objectives**

- There will be a total of four SAC meetings.
- The 1st meeting was used to identify the areas of traffic concerns and review some traffic data for the area.
- At SAC meeting #2, we will:
  - Recap what the problem is and define problem.

- Review origin-destination studies and other data.
- Discuss criteria used to evaluate alternatives.
- Discuss range of alternatives.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> open house will be held in January, 2008.
- Following open house #1, SAC will meet for 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting and begin evaluation process.
- The second open house will be held in late winter to evaluate the options.
- SAC recommendation will be developed at SAC meeting #4.

### **3. Recap for Meeting #1**

- Bartz summarized last meeting's concerns into a "Problem Statement" (see Handouts link).

### **4. Summary of Data and Analysis – How to Solve the Problem**

Marie Cote, SRF, reviewed the following traffic data:

- Traffic volumes (see Travel volumes link from SAC meeting #1).
- Traffic speed (see Speeds link from SAC meeting #1).
- Origin-destination survey results (see O-D Survey results boards link).
  - Cote noted of the 126 vehicles surveyed in the AM peak hours on Nine Mile Creek Parkway, 93% had destinations beyond the neighborhood and 7% had destinations within the neighborhood. Of the 122 vehicles surveyed in the PM peak hours on Stanley, 80% had destinations beyond the neighborhood and 20% had destinations within the neighborhood.
  - The numbers on the boards below the percentage reflect what the total number of vehicles per hour would be if the sample size was projected onto the total volume for the peak hour.
- Travel Time Analysis during AM and PM peak hours (see Travel time analysis boards link).
  - Although the average travel time for the different routes only varies by less than one minute, Route #1 on the arterial and collector streets takes longer and has more variability than the routes on the local streets (Route #2).
  - Cote stated that routes that are quicker and/or more reliable tend to be the routes that attract more motorists.

### **5. Preliminary Evaluation Criteria**

Bartz summarized the "Study Goals/Constraints/Facts/Evaluation Criteria" (see Handouts link).

- Bartz referenced the “engineer’s rule of thumb” which states if you want drivers to change their route, there has to be a 30% difference between what they currently experience and the route you want them to move to.
- She noted that part of the approach to changing human behavior is to make it less pleasant to do the thing you don’t want them to do and more pleasant to do the thing you want them to do.
- She noted the stop signs placed on W. 84<sup>th</sup> Street are possibly working against the system because motorists are annoyed that it is taking them more time to travel 84<sup>th</sup> Street. Staff noted those stop signs were installed in 1991. Bartz noted consideration could be evaluated as to their removal. SAC member indicated neighborhood concern with access onto W. 84<sup>th</sup> Street if stop signs are removed.

## 6. Potential Alternatives for Consideration

Cote addressed the alternatives (see Presentation link).

- Regional Improvements:
  - Although the City cannot control improvements on the regional system, they can continue to encourage and recommend changes.
  - Bartz noted a possible improvement to I-494 between France and I-35W would be an auxiliary lane (a lane which connects ramp to ramp). This lane would provide capacity to I-494 between those two interchanges. However, it would result in the loss of a shoulder in that area.
- Arterial Roadway and Intersection Improvements (see Handout link).
- Neighborhood Traffic Safety Improvement Opportunities (see Handout link).
  - Noted there are three approaches: Education, Enforcement, and Engineering. Cote noted the engineering methods are generally the most effective.
  - Possible options for improving 84<sup>th</sup> Street (besides the intersection improvements):
    - 1) Leave 84<sup>th</sup> Street as it currently exists.
    - 2) Leave 84<sup>th</sup> Street as it currently exists and remove traffic signal at Stanley.
    - 3) Modify 84<sup>th</sup> to a three lane section (one lane in each direction and two-way left turn center lane), remove stop signs at Quinn and Morris, and possible removal of traffic signal at Stanley.
  - Members discussed: the removal or additional signals on 84<sup>th</sup> Street, potential effects on gaps in traffic flow, median refuge at school crossing (with the option of one lane in each direction and two-way left turn lane), pedestrian bridge over 84<sup>th</sup> Street, limiting commercial truck traffic on Stanley/Nine Mile Creek, solar powered pedestrian crossings, and American Boulevard relationship to this area.
  - Bartz noted the alternatives considered may not be the final solution but different scenarios will be tested and the information gained from the testing can help shape a final scenario.

- A committee member discourages any changes to W. 84<sup>th</sup> Street that would encourage motorists to travel more quickly.
- Bartz noted 84<sup>th</sup> Street is challenging because it started its life as a residential street and has taken on a higher function over time because of its location in the grid. It is also challenged by a school, fire station, etc.
- Cote stated they will set up a model (with pedestrian traffic also) to demonstrate and test movements on and onto W. 84<sup>th</sup> Street with some of the proposed options.
- Bartz listed issues that will be studied as: capacity, speed, visibility, pedestrian crossings, bus stops, etc.
- Bartz noted the goal is to move traffic from the neighborhood to arterial routes. The result may take local residents longer or make it less convenient. There needs to be a balance as to how much the neighborhood is willing to tolerate.
- Types of Measures and Effectiveness (see Handouts link) were discussed by Bartz and Cote. These measures address reduction in traffic speeds and traffic volumes and include speed humps, speed table, raised intersection, diagonal diverter, half closure, traffic circle, choker, center island narrowing, and landscaping.
- It was noted that the committee was open to studying the option of installing diverters in the neighborhood.
- A committee member felt many of these devices could be temporarily installed to test their effectiveness before permanent installation.
- It was noted that speed tables were placed on Stanley several years ago as a temporary trial. A committee member noted they were noisy for homeowners along Stanley.
- A committee member stated about four years ago the Stanley neighborhood presented the City Council with a petition signed by 100% of the residents on Stanley Avenue, south of W. 84<sup>th</sup> Street, to request that barricades be placed between Stanley and Nine Mile Creek (with a removable gate for emergency vehicles). To prevent cut-through traffic, diagonal diverters could be placed on 86<sup>th</sup> Street at other intersections to the east. This committee member noted this would be a fairly inexpensive recommendation.
- A committee member emphasized that volunteer fire fighters live in this neighborhood and any changes to the street network would affect their travel time response time to reach Fire Station #4.

## **7. Upcoming Meetings**

- Open House on January 7, 2008, 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Poplar Bridge Elementary School with City staff and SRF staff.
- There will be a storyboard open house format with SRF staff providing a short orientation at 6:00 p.m. There will be opportunity for residents to provide feedback.

## **8. Preview next meeting**

- The next meeting will be in late February, 2008.

## **9. Adjourn**

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