

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
REPORT FOR THE VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 3, 2012 AGENDA

| SUBJECT: | TYPE: | SUBMITTED BY: |
|---|--|--|
| Turn Restrictions – Webster Street at 55 th Street | ✓ Resolution Ordinance Motion Discussion Only | Nan Newlon, P.E. Director of Public Works |

SYNOPSIS

An ordinance has been prepared to amend sections of the Municipal Code to permit right turns only on southbound Webster Street at 55th Street.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The goals for 2011-2018 include *Top Quality Infrastructure*.

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

UPDATE & RECOMMENDATION

This item was discussed at the December 13, 2011 Village Council meeting. At the request of the residents of Webster Street that petitioned for the road closure, staff reviewed updated vehicle collision data and confirmed that it was consistent with the data cited in the original staff recommendation. Staff recommends approval on the January 3, 2012 Active Agenda.

BACKGROUND

During the 2010 Neighborhood Traffic Study in January, 2011, the Village received comments as well as petitions from residents of the Webster Street neighborhood regarding safety concerns due to sight distance limitations at this intersection and cut-through traffic. The residents requested a complete road closure of Webster Street at 55th Street.

Staff reviewed this intersection and found the following:

- The sight distance for southbound Webster Street traffic for left, through and right turn movements is less than the minimum recommended.
- Traffic volumes on this street are significantly lower than average for residential streets with 230 vehicles/day.
- Vehicle crashes in the vicinity of the intersection have not been higher than average during the past three years.

To address the sight distance concerns, staff reviewed several alternatives. The alternatives are summarized in the attached report to the Transportation and Parking Commission. Based on the review of the operation of this street, staff recommends permitting right turns only on southbound Webster Street at 55th Street. In addition, DuPage County has installed warning signs on 55th Street to alert motorists of the approaching intersection at Webster Street.

In 2012, DuPage County and the Village will begin a larger Phase I Engineering study for the future improvement of the 55th Street/Main Street intersection. Staff will recommend that the intersection of Webster Street and 55th Street is included in the analysis and engineering designs.

This item was presented to the Transportation and Parking Commission on November 16, 2011. The Commission voted 4-0-1 to permit right turns only on southbound Webster Street at 55th Street. Staff concurs with this recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

Staff Report and Meeting Minutes – November 16, 2011 Transportation and Parking Commission Ordinance

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
COUNCIL ACTION SUMMARY

INITIATED: Public Works **DATE:** January 3, 2012
(Name)

RECOMMENDATION FROM: Transportation and Parking Commission **FILE REF:** _____
(Board or Department)

NATURE OF ACTION:

STEPS NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT ACTION:

- Ordinance
- Resolution
- Motion
- Other

Motion to Adopt "AN ORDINANCE RESTRICTING VEHICLE MOVEMENT ON WEBSTER STREET", as presented.

SUMMARY OF ITEM:

Adoption of the attached ordinance shall amend turning restrictions on Webster Street.

RECORD OF ACTION TAKEN:

Webster Right Turn Only

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE RESTRICTING VEHICLE MOVEMENT ON WEBSTER STREET

BE IT ORDAINED by the Village Council of the Village of Downers Grove in DuPage County, Illinois, as follows: (Additions are indicated by **shading/underline**; deletions by ~~strikeout~~):

Section 1. That Section 14.52.22. is hereby added to read as follows:

14.52.22. Restrictions on Movements of Vehicles from Webster Street onto 55th Street.

It shall be unlawful for any person driving or operating any automobile, truck or other vehicle to proceed straight southbound or left eastbound on Webster Street at 55th Street. The only permitted movement is a right turn westbound onto 55th Street.

Section 2. That all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 3. That this ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in the manner provided by law.

Mayor

Passed:

Published:

Attest: _____

Village Clerk



VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE - PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION
ORDINANCE REQUEST FORM

1. Chapter and Section of the Municipal Code to be amended 14.52.22.
2. Amend text of ordinance requested (including measurements, complete street names (i.e. Avenue, Road, etc.), directions, etc.):

NEW SECTION ADD:

Section 14.52.22. Restrictions on movements of vehicles from Webster Street onto 55th Street.

It shall be unlawful for any person driving or operating any automobile, truck or other vehicle, at any time proceeding southbound on Webster Street to continue through across 55th Street or left onto eastbound 55th Street; such that the only permitted movement shall be a right turn only onto westbound onto 55th Street.

3. Current restrictions at this location. (For example, is there currently a stop sign that is to be changed to a yield sign?)

N/A

4. List of all current ordinances that will conflict with or be affected by the requested ordinance and the requested changes to these ordinances:

N/A

Please attach this form to the Council Action Summary Sheet.

Public Works Staff Report
File # 12-11
Webster Street at 55th Street – Safety Review

Background

At the May, 11, 2011 Transportation and Parking Commission meeting, staff summarized the results of the intersection safety and sight distance review, which began following the January, 2011 Neighborhood Traffic Study presentation. Staff stated that the north leg of Webster Street has intersection sight distance issues at 55th Street.

At this same meeting, the Commission discussed possible operational and physical options for addressing the intersection safety for Webster Street traffic north of 55th Street; however, no formal recommendation was made at that time.

Since the May, 2011 meeting, staff has been reviewing this intersection and adjacent area intersections. In addition, staff met on-site with the DuPage County DOT staff to review the intersection safety issues, to gain concurrence on improvements that the County would support. The DuPage County DOT has agreed to install intersection warning signs along 55th St in this area; it has recently been awarded federal funding to complete full intersection improvements at Main Street/55th Street. The Village is working with the DuPage County DOT on the design for these improvements and has requested that the scope of the study include the Webster Street/55th Street intersection so that the vertical geometry and sight distance issues can be reviewed in more detail.

The neighborhood has re-submitted a petition to close Webster St at 55th Street. A petition has been submitted from Summit St residents in support of this action as well. Both petitions are made part of staff's report.

Summary of Data

Traffic Volume – The traffic volume on this street has been measured within the range of 150 to 250 vehicles per day. Fourteen residential properties have driveway access from this street and staff estimates the predominant users of the street are the local residents themselves. Approximately 75% of the daily vehicles on the street are northbound and 25% are southbound. (See **Figure 1**).

The width of the public right-of-way is 50 feet. The street is approximately 24 feet wide and is constructed with curbs and gutter and public sidewalk on both sides.

The crash data shows that this is not a high accident location, nor is there an identifiable accident problem or pattern. The recorded data at this intersection shows the following crashes have occurred:

- 2009: 0 crashes
- 2010: 2 crashes on 55th St- W. of Webster (sideswipes)
- 2011: 1 crash on Webster (parked vehicle); 1 crash on 55th W of Webster (rear end)

Previously Identified Options

The following potential improvements to address the concerns about restricted sight distance at this intersection include three alternates that involve changes to turn movements through regulation and signage, and three alternates that involve physical changes to the intersection. These potential improvements are described below and illustrated on **Figure 2**.

Alternate 1: Prohibit southbound lefts, thru, or right turns from southbound Webster Street onto 55th Street. Allow northbound turns from 55th Street onto Webster Street.

Pros: Addresses the intersection sight distance deficiency. Maintains access from 55th Street to the neighborhood and access for Emergency vehicles to neighborhood via Webster Street and from 55th Street. Low cost to implement and modify if needed.

Cons: No access from neighborhood to 55th Street; would rely on signing and Police enforcement. Could increase backing on the street and turning around in driveways.

Alternate 2: Convert Webster Street to 1-way Northbound.

Pros: Addresses the intersection sight distance deficiency. Maintains access from 55th Street to the neighborhood and access for emergency vehicles from 55th Street. Low cost to implement and modify if needed.

Cons: No access from neighborhood to 55th Street (southbound); would rely on signing and Police enforcement. Residents would have to access neighborhood from 55th Street.

Alternate 3: Permit southbound right turns only from Webster Street, done with signing and lane striping of pavement.

Pros: Addresses the intersection sight distance deficiency for thru and left turn cases. Maintains access from neighborhood to 55th Street and access for emergency vehicles to neighborhood via Webster Street and from 55th Street. Low cost to implement and modify if needed.

Cons: Would rely on striping, signing and Police enforcement.

Alternate 4: Right-in-right-out design, done with physical island barrier design. Restrict all Webster Street southbound left and thru movements. Allow right turns inbound from 55th Street to Webster Street.

Pros: Addresses the intersection sight distance deficiency for thru and left turn cases. Maintains access from neighborhood to 55th Street and access for emergency vehicles. Provides physical barriers to access.

Cons: Additional right-of-way required. Higher cost to implement, due to physical changes involved. Approval and design support would be required from the DuPage County DOT for this alternate.

Alternate 5: Right-In design, done with physical island barrier. Restrict all Webster Street southbound movements. Allow only right turns inbound from 55th Street to Webster Street.

Pros: Addresses the intersection sight distance deficiency. Maintains access from 55th Street to the neighborhood. Provide physical barriers to access.

Cons: Higher cost to implement, when compared to Alternate 4. Limits access from Webster Street to 55th Street. Approval and design support would be required from DuPage DOT for this alternate. Additional right-of-way potentially required to construct.

Alternate 6: Total closure of Webster Street at 55th Street, done with physical barrier.

Pros: Addresses the intersection sight distance deficiency. Provides physical barriers to access.

Cons: Higher cost to implement. Would restrict all access (inbound and outbound) from Webster Street to 55th Street; no access for Emergency vehicles from 55th Street. Approval and design support would be required from DuPage DOT for this alternative. Backing trucks for routine refuse collection and snow removal operations. Decreased prioritization for snow removal from through street to non-through street.

RECOMMENDATION

At this time staff recommends implementation of Alternate 3, to prohibit southbound through and left turn movements and permit right-turn only movements for southbound Webster Street traffic. This alternate addresses the intersection sight distance deficiency for the thru and left turn movements and maintains access from the neighborhood to 55th Street and through access for service, delivery and emergency vehicles to the neighborhood. The change could be implemented quickly without permitting from the DuPage County DOT. If implemented staff would continue to monitor the traffic operation at this intersection and work with DuPage County to improve signage on 55th Street.

Staff recommends that the Transportation & Parking Commission forward a positive recommendation to the Village Council that the following be implemented:

- **MODIFY THE EXISTING OPERATION OF WEBSTER STREET AT 55TH STREET, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALTERNATE 3 AS PRESENTED, SUCH THAT SOUTHBOUND WEBSTER STREET APPROACH IS RESTRICTED TO RIGHT TURNS ONLY WITH SIGNAGE AND STRIPING;**
- **REQUEST THAT DUPAGE COUNTY DOT INCLUDE THE INTERSECTION OF 55TH ST AND WEBSTER STREET IN THEIR PHASE I ENGINEERING FOR MAIN ST AND 55TH STREET IMPROVEMENTS.**

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 16, 2011

1. **File # 12-11. Webster Street at 55th Street - Follow-up Safety Review.** Traffic Manger, **Mr. Fera**, reviewed a Power Point presentation on the data collection he received regarding the Webster Street at 55th Street petition. He reviewed the history of this area, discussed the neighborhood meetings that took place, and spoke about the various traffic counts from the study. A final traffic count was done in November 2011 only on Webster Street which resulted in a finding that the daily average traffic count from the last two traffic counts (September & November) on Webster is 230 cars, which was different from the original data collection due to it being a different time of year and other events going on in town. Speed was about 29 MPH which was in keeping with the neighborhood. Crash data for both streets and the intersection were reviewed.

In addition, **Mr. Fera** addressed the fact that both the DuPage County DOT and the Village of Downers Grove did receive some grant funding for improvements but the county's main goal was to address improvements along 55th Street, with focus on intersections such as Main St. and Fairview Ave. to consider providing exclusive left-turn lanes.

Mr. Fera recalled at the May (2011) meeting there were six alternative scenarios that were discussed for the area, with three of them being turn restrictions. Staff was recommending Alternative No. 3, an operational change, that included exclusive signage and striping to provide only a south-bound right turn lane off of Webster onto 55th Street. Staff felt the alternative would address many of the issues with the intersection and preferred that implementation and observation take place for approximately six to nine months. Staff also requested that a recommendation be made to the county to have the DuPage County DOT include the Webster Street intersection as part of its Phase I Engineering designs.

Mr. Fera reminded the Commission that the neighborhood request was for a full closure of Webster Street and Summit Streets. Staff felt a full closure would require many operational changes as well as a lowered priority of snow removal because the street would be treated as a cul-de-sac.

Asked why the retention of the left turn (eastbound 55th) into northbound Webster Street would remain prior to addressing the issue of sight distance through the re-design of Main Street/55th intersection, **Mr. Fera** explained that the best solution expected would be that the roadway was lowered to reduce the roadway profile but he did not expect that to be addressed by the county. However, he called attention that the eastbound left-turn maneuver onto 55th Street was a shorter maneuver and required less gap time versus making a full left-turn out of Webster and onto 55th Street. He reported that the data reflected that rear-end accidents were not occurring when encountering eastbound left-turners onto Webster Street because drivers were finding other ways to get to Webster. **Mr. Fera** had no specific turn data on that intersection due to it being the DuPage County DOT's jurisdiction.

Mr. Wrobel was concerned about left turners onto Webster due to the proximity of Webster to Main Street and the traffic flowing through the stop signs because they were very quick. He believed drivers would be traveling at higher rates of speed, because of the pressure from traffic, people's schedules, etc. He cited other examples and did not believe staff's study addressed those drivers coming straight across 55th Street from the southern part of Webster or those vehicles traveling to Maple.

Responses by staff included that No Turn signage would be installed on Webster St, and that the peak hours of Webster Street are approximately 8:15 AM to 9:15 AM and 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Also, the extent of vehicle stacking on both 55th Street and on Webster Street was asked. **Mr. Fera** stated from his observations, there was a lot of stacking on 55th Street at Main Street. Also, in the peak AM and PM hours, drivers on Webster need to be cautious and look in all directions in order to exit safely from Webster Street. Other questions followed regarding the land grades for both streets, sight lines, and where the money would come from for any physical barriers. **Mr. Fera** stated there was no money anticipated in the 2012 budget for physical barriers.

Should staff's recommendation be forwarded, **Mr. Schiller** asked if the recommendation for the DuPage County DOT's portion be put through in 2012, wherein **Dir. Newlon** explained she was meeting with the county next week to begin the process of hiring an engineering firm for the early part of 2012. Breaking ground, she expected, would be about three years after going through the various governmental agencies. Details followed on what was to be expected up to that time.

Mr. Schiller opened up the meeting to public comment:

Mr. Mike Ruta, 5405 Webster Street, on behalf of his neighbors on the 5400 block of Webster, prepared a packet of key points which he hoped the commission would consider. He stated it was the neighbors' position, as well as the Public Works Department, that the recommendations did not address the true safety concerns, which were the sight line difficulties and the cut-through traffic. Instead he said it was more of a response to the proposed changes that were going to be made on Washington Street. He restated the cut-through traffic on northbound Webster from westbound 55th Street was still a concern, pointing out the data found by the Public Works Department, which supported same. Other concerns included the deficiencies in traffic patterns, increased traffic on Webster Street and the Public Works Department not following through on site/distance measurements for vehicles making a left turn off of 55th Street onto Webster Street. He stated the safety problems alone resulted in the inadequate sight lines and justified the neighbors' request for a dead-end.

Mr. Ruta further cited other communities which had streets along 55th Street which were, basically, closed off due to cut-through traffic. He pointed out the fact that he reached out to surrounding residents and discussed with them the idea of blocking off Webster Street. Surrounding residents on Summit Street between Washington and Main agreed with his neighbors as well as residents along Main Street between 55th and Summit. **Mr. Ruta** stated that the residents' petition did meet all of the requirements of the village's Road Closure Policy. Lastly, he reported that should the commission and village council support the street closure, the residents agreed to fund the closure construction through an SSA (Special Service Area).

Mr. Schiller stated the PowerPoint presentation indicated that the 24-hour traffic volume had only 230 vehicles and that there had not been a large increase in vehicle volume since the other plan was implemented. Wherein, **Mr. Fera** responded that this matter was discussed at staff level and staff agreed that the original data from the first counts were not indicative of the actual traffic and the 230 figure was more representative of what was occurring currently. However, **Mr. Fera** did not believe traffic from the east was shifted westward to Webster. He stated the October 2010 traffic count was the "soft" number, while the counts in 2011 were more solid. Also, he pointed out the fact that it was a "snapshot" of the area at the time and date and, other factors, such as construction, could change the numbers.

Regarding the safety issue and the left turn issue, **Mr. Schiller** pointed out there were no crashes in 2009; there were two in 2010; and two incidences in 2011. He queried staff

as to how the intersection under discussion compared with other areas, wherein **Mr. Fera** stated it had a very low number as compared to other locations in town.

Ms. Vicek asked **Mr. Ruta** if he and his neighbors were prepared that a street closure would affect access for safety vehicles, snow plows, etc., to which **Mr. Ruta** responded positively and believed the street would only be affected in severe weather. As to emergency vehicles, he and his neighbors spoke among themselves and he assumed that the emergency vehicles could “handle making it through the city and the one-way streets,” etc. He and his neighbors did discuss that if parking was limited to one side of the street, it would be more than enough room for vehicles to back up. He and his neighbors understood the ramifications.

Mr. Cronin raised the question on whether the Commission could close a street thru Public Works only, without the consultation of the Police and Fire Departments and that possible liabilities existed to the village. **Dir. Newlon** responded that she was not too concerned about emergency vehicles since the village already had streets with similar configurations. Details followed on how various service vehicles already handled such streets. **Mr. Cronin** stated he wanted input from the police, fire, and emergency departments.

Mr. Wrobel discussed his observations seen in the Village of Cicero where streets were turned into one-way streets using a right-turn out to a main street only. He believed it could be a compromise for the residents and the service vehicles. A dialog followed on this suggestion.

However, **Mr. Ruta** pointed out that if the above suggestion was used, the house that sits on the east corner of Webster and 55th Street posed a sight line concern.

Ms. Vicek asked if time restrictions could be placed on Webster to restrict traffic volume during peak traffic hours, wherein **Mr. Fera** stated all of the turns off of Webster could be restricted but those on 55th Street would have to be agreed to by the county. Furthermore, **Mr. Fera** reported it could be done but it is not preferred due to the fact that sight line issues deficiencies are not tied to the traffic volumes, and happen every time a vehicle from Webster Street tries to access 55th Street.

Mr. Jason Hagen, 5417 Webster, stated that the fire station was a block away from Webster and he did not see any concerns with emergency access to the block. As to installing the restrictive signage, he asked how the signage would be enforced and questioned its effectiveness. He cited the points made by **Mr. Ruta** and the street's existing deficiencies.

Mr. Cronin did not believe there was any liability with unsafe conditions anywhere, which was why he wanted to hear from the other emergency departments.

Mr. Schiller summarized that he believed it was necessary to move from the least invasive approach to the most drastic. He personally supported staff's Alternative No. 3 as stated, with the understanding that the village did not know what the DuPage County DOT was going to do in the future. He did not support closing a street until there was more input and more study.

Mr. Kevin Osterman, 5406 Webster, did not see much difference with Alternative 3 as to what already existed. He questioned the collected data regarding speed on Webster and where the data locations were located. **Dir. Newlon** clarified the speed was in the 85th percentile speed, explaining that all vehicles traveling on the street were traveling less than the 29 MPH. It was not the average speed. **Mr. Fera** responded that data was collected at mid-block locations.

Mr. Don Schultz, 5400 Webster, discussed the petition and the unanimous decision that his block of residents and another block supported. He discussed the near misses his neighbors voiced when presenting them with the petition, the difficulty of making a right turn out of Webster Street and the backed up traffic on 55^t Street. He supported signage changes or pork-chops in the future.

A resident asked whether other municipalities were contacted regarding their own experience with road closures, i.e., whether the results proved positive or negative.

Mr. Wrobel asked **Mr. Ruta** about the location of the property on the west side of Webster next to 55th Street and the sidewalk location, to which **Mr. Ruta** stated it was not similar to the property at the east corner and he was not sure of the position of the sidewalk.

Mr. Cronin closed by commenting that due to lack of money, the village could not construct any physical barriers. He asked staff why it did not consider Alternate No. 2. **Mr. Fera** responded that the one-way direction would, again, create similar issues as Alternate No. 1 with no southbound access to 55th Street, and that Alternative 3 would address all of the issues and the accessibility to the neighborhood. **Dir. Newlon** also agreed that with Alternative No. 1, most of the neighbors already avoided the Webster and 55th Street intersection and travelled northbound to avoid same. Making the street one-way would force the residents on that street to go through 55th Street and they would not have the option of going to Webster from the north. One-way streets are very difficult to control as far as vehicles not seeing the restrictive signs and causing head-on collisions.

Mr. Saricks asked if the commission's decision to approve an alternative affected the county's future plans and whether this matter could be revisited, wherein **Mr. Fera** stated the Commission could always revisit the intersection, during design preparations and even after the county's improvements are done.

Mr. Wrobel invited commissioners to consider Alternate No. 4, given there was a lane restriction on Claremont as one comes off of Fairview, along with a physical barrier. Mr. Saricks noted that Alternative 3, however was basically Alternative 4 without the physical barrier and county-approval was necessary for No. 3 while the village had no money for the physical barrier of Alternative No. 4.

A motion was entertained by Mr.Schiller:

MR. CRONIN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE STAFF'S ALTERNATIVE NO. 3, AS PRESENTED. THE VILLAGE WILL COORDINATE WITH THE DUPAGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING STUDY AND SHOULD BETTER IMPROVEMENTS BE MADE AVAILABLE BY THE COUNTY, THE VILLAGE WILL REVISIT THIS LOCATION TO DISCUSS OPTIONS IN THE FUTURE.

SECONDED BY MS. VLCEK.

ROLL CALL FOLLOWED:

AYE: MR. SCHILLER, MR. SARICKS, MR. CRONIN, MS. VLCEK

NAY: NONE

ABSTAIN: MR. WROBEL

MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 4-0-1