

## Minutes of Parkwood Residents Association Meeting, February 6, 2017

The meeting was called to order by Kira Lueders, president. Thirty-nine persons were present. Participants introduced themselves sharing what street they lived on and how many years they had resided in Parkwood. Many had resided in the neighborhood for 30-40 years and a few since the houses in Parkwood were first built in the 1950's.

### PRA Business

Minutes of the October 2016 PRA meeting were approved.

### Recommendations Regarding Traffic Management in Parkwood

Jeffrey Griffith and Kira Lueders had represented the PRA at a recent meeting of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) Integration Committee (BIC) where they shared Parkwood's traffic concerns. They reported that the State Highway Administration traffic engineer at the meeting was receptive to their concerns and ideas for improvement and agreed to conduct a new traffic study in the next few months.

Jeffrey and Kira presented five proposals that could improve traffic in the Parkwood area. Each was discussed by participants, who then voted whether to support the proposal. (Four of these proposals were outlined in detail in the winter 2017 PRA Newsletter, posted on the Parkwood web site). Kira introduced the discussion by stating that the PRA executive board would act on the decisions of the group in presenting the proposals to the state or county as appropriate.

Proposal 1. Remove the three pairs of side islands at the intersections of Cedar Lane and Dresden, Cedar Lane and Franklin, and Cedar Lane and Glenridge. Put pedestrian crossing markings on Cedar Lane.

Rationale: the islands have not been shown to improve safety and have the potential for causing accidents by narrowing the road and pushing cars closer to each other.

Discussion: The timing for this is good as Cedar Lane will soon be repaved.

Neighboring associations will be consulted on this proposal.

Participants were reminded that one of the original reasons for these islands was to enable pedestrians to more easily cross Cedar Lane. Several persons expressed opinions that the islands were not effective for this purpose.

**Decision: Participants voted to recommend Proposal 1: Removal of side islands on Cedar Lane.**

Proposal 2. Designate the westbound right hand lane of Cedar Lane at Wisconsin Ave. (MD 355) "Right turn only."

Rationale: This would enable cars going north onto MD 355 to turn right on red, thereby reducing backup and waiting/idling. There is a clear line of sight for cars anticipating this turn.

Discussion: Neighboring associations are also interested in making the right lane of westbound Cedar Lane at MD 355 a right-turn dedicated lane. A State of Maryland traffic engineer has offered to do a

traffic count at this intersection.

**Decision: Participants voted to recommend Proposal # 2, designating the westbound right lane of Cedar Lane at Wisconsin "Right turn only."** Two members present voted against this resolution after concerns were voiced about pedestrians crossing MD 355.

Proposal 3. Adjust the size of the traffic islands at the intersection of Beach Drive and MD 355 (at Grosvenor) so that drivers wishing to travel north on MD 355 are not unnecessarily blocked by cars traveling straight across MD 355 onto Grosvenor.

Discussion: Because of the prized Linden Oak on the right side of this intersection, space cannot be taken from the grassy area on the right. The only way to ease this bottleneck would be to narrow the center traffic island.

There is significant back-up at this intersection especially during peak travel periods. Cars going straight across MD 355 onto Grosvenor are often unaware that cars behind them are trying to make a right turn on red.

Participants also suggested that signage be improved as some drivers are unaware that they have to be in the second lane from the right to travel straight across MD 355 onto Grosvenor. A line painted on the roadway could also serve as a reminder to for cars not to block cars turning right.

**Decision: Participants voted to recommend narrowing the traffic islands to lessen the delay for cars making a right turn onto MD 355 from Beach Drive. They also recommended improved clarity of lane and directional markings at this intersection.**

Proposal 4. Change the red/green left-turn arrow on southbound MD 355 at Cedar Lane to a flashing red arrow during non-peak hours. This would permit cars traveling southbound on MD 355 to turn left onto Cedar Lane with fewer delays and idling. The current red/green arrow would remain during peak hours.

Rationale: Cars often idle needlessly waiting for the green arrow during non-peak hours when no traffic impedes a left turn.

**Decision: Participants voted to recommend a flashing red arrow for the left turn for cars travelling south on MD 355 during non-peak hours,**

Proposal 5. Kira presented a new proposal to change configuration of traffic signals on Cedar Lane and MD 355 so that all lanes of westbound traffic move at once, followed by all lanes of eastbound traffic. This configuration would allow for variations in signal lengths due to differences in morning and evening peak traffic volumes.

Rationale: this would move traffic more efficiently.

This discussion was postponed due to time constraints.

## **Walter Johnson Cluster Position Statement**

The Parkwood Residents Association was asked by representatives of the Kensington Parkwood Elementary School PTA to support a Walter Johnson Cluster Position Statement to request that the County plan for land needed for future adequate school facilities for students in the Walter Johnson Cluster (that is all schools feeding into Walter Johnson High School).

Discussion: This proposal had been explained on the PRA list-serve with a unanimous “yes” vote of over 60 respondents.

**Decision: PRA membership voted to support the Walter Johnson Cluster Position Statement.**

## **Presentation: Traffic Issues and Options in the Coming Decade in the Washington Region**

Mr. Richard Parsons, Vice Chair of the Maryland Suburban Transportation Alliance, used slides to present data showing that traffic will get worse in the coming decade. The regional perspective is that the area’s transportation network is underbuilt, heavily congested, in poor repair and not aligned with regional transportation priorities. All of us in the Washington regional area pay a high cost for congestion which is a major threat to our environment, our pocketbooks, and our health.

Mr. Parsons asserted that there are cost effective solutions that could significantly reduce congestion by adding capacity and eliminating chokepoints. The problem has not been poor planning. We just haven’t followed through on good plans.

According to Mr. Parsons, it is a myth to suggest that we should put all our resources into one solution, such as mass transit. We need support for all modes of transportation: roads, highways, Metro, buses, trains, bike-ways, pedestrian walkways, etc. He listed five priorities for the region: 1) Modernize and redesign I-270, adding express toll lanes; 2) Expand the American Legion Bridge, add a new Potomac crossing, and repair the Memorial Bridge; 3) Modernize and redesign the Capital Beltway, adding electronic toll lanes (ETLs) and BRT’s (bus rapid transit); 4) Add suburb-to-suburb transportation links such as the Purple Line and ICC; and 5) Invest in the Metro System.

Mr. Parsons’ provided much data on regional traffic and transportation issues. He agreed to provide his slide presentation for the PRA website.

## **Treasurers’ Report and 2017 Budget**

Gerald Sharp, PRA treasurer, presented the treasurer’s report for 2016 and the proposed budget for 2017. These were voted on and accepted by the membership. A vote was also taken to approve the beautification budget for 2017.

The treasurer’s report shows a balance that could be used for further enhancements to Parkwood. There was a short (due to time constraints) discussion regarding suggestions. There was a suggestion for a portable battery- or solar-powered speed monitoring device (showing “Your Speed Is...”). No action was taken.

Another suggestion was providing additional doggy potty stations (boxes with dog waste bags). Membership voted to provide two additional stations. Suggested locations for these station are Westbrook Lane and Parkwood, an entry point to Rock Creek Park, and Franklin and Parkwood. Installing "My Little Library" kiosks, where readers can take a book and leave a book, in the Parkwood area was also suggested. This idea will be further discussed at a future meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Dighe, secretary