



# Island Crest Way Citizen Panel Meeting Minutes November 13, 2008 Community Center at Mercer View

*Attending:* Deborah Ehlers, Bryan Goode, Betty Harper, Jake Jacobson (by phone), Thomas Jones, Todd Kelsay, Elliot Newman, Shawn Parry, Mary Stoll, Sam Sullivan, Bonnie Wojciehowskie, Eva Zemplenyi, Mayor Jim Pearman, Council Member Dan Grausz

*Excused:* Mark Berejka, Scott Milburn, Peter Orser

*Project Team:* Assistant City Engineer Anne Tonella-Howe, Joe Giacobazzi and Jan Ciganik of KPG, Inc.

*Facilitation Team:* Steve Lancaster, Joy Johnston

## CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pearman called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. He briefly reviewed events leading up to his appointment of the Citizen Panel, and thanked members for volunteering to assist the City in reconsidering the future of Island Crest Way. Mayor Pearman urged panel members to freely share their views and ideas, and to be open-minded and respectful in hearing the ideas of others. He introduced Councilman Dan Grausz, indicating that he and Councilman Grausz will serve as members of the Panel, and should be considered to have no more influence on the Panel's recommendations than any other member. Finally, Mayor Pearman introduced Development Services Director Steve Lancaster, whom he has asked to serve as facilitator for the Citizen Panel meetings.

## INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE OF CITIZEN PANEL AND HOUSE RULES

S. Lancaster indicated that as meeting facilitator, his desire is to help keep the process moving toward a conclusion so that Panel members can focus on forming their recommendation to the City Council. He suggested several ground rules for the Citizen Panel:

- Meetings will start and end on time.
- With 17 participants, in order to have time for and everyone to share their ideas, participants will likely spend more time listening than talking.
- The goal is to reach consensus on the recommendation. This does not mean unanimity.
- All participants have an equal opportunity to influence Panel's recommendation. However, the outcome may not reflect any individual participant's "ideal solution." Every voice has equal weight.
- Homework! The project team will be mailing out information for the Panel to review before the meetings. Homework also means talking to friends and neighbors and bringing their perspectives to the Panel.

**Members of the Citizen Panel were asked if they agreed with the house rules. There were no objections or additions.**

## PROPOSED MEETING DATES/TIMES

Meeting dates were set for December 9 and January 22. *It was later determined by staff that the December 9 meeting should start at 6 pm in order to allow enough time for discussion. The January 22 meeting will need to be rescheduled because J. Giacobazzi is unable to attend on that date.*

## SCHEDULE

J. Giacobazzi reviewed the schedule for the Citizen Panel which includes two more meetings, a community meeting, and then a fourth meeting depending on the outcome of the community meetings. The plan is to present the Citizen Panel recommendation to the City Council in March 2009.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND REVIEW AND GOAL SETTING

J. Giacobazzi then summarized background information for the Panel including accident history, traffic pattern analysis, various alternatives that have been modeled, the results of the current experimental configuration, and comments heard from citizens to date. He also reviewed the goals established by the City Council in the Island Crest Way Public Involvement Process Charter which include:

- Improve safety at key intersections (e.g. Merrimount)
- Maintain or improve travel times on and across the corridor (volumes and posted speed limits)
- Provide for safe pedestrian and bicycle use of the corridor.
- Develop solutions that are fiscally responsible.
- Remain consistent with sustainability language in the City's Comprehensive Plan specifically regarding start and stop issues.
- Analysis of Island Crest Way will include the evaluation of northbound and southbound peak periods.

### *Discussion:*

S. Parry asked if the Council had prioritized the goals to which Mayor Pearman responded that they had not other than it is assumed that safety is at the top of the list.

M. Stoll asked that if a goal for fixing the intersection is to maintain insurability and this was affirmed by Mayor Pearman and J. Giacobazzi.

T. Kelsay inquired about cost and fiscal responsibility and J. Giacobazzi confirmed that estimated costs would be part of the information brought back to the Panel.

**Members of the Citizen Panel were asked if they agreed with the goals. There were no objections or additions.**

## REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVES LOOKED AT TO DATE

J. Giacobazzi reviewed the City Council's June 2008 decision regarding Island Crest Way and Merrimount and the alternatives analyzed previous to approving the 3-lane option known as Option 3C.

### *Discussion:*

M. Stoll said that the 3-lane option would make it easier to get in and out of her driveway.

T. Kelsay said that it might not be a good option for school buses.

B. Wojciehowskie said that the current configuration functions as a 3-lane road southbound south of the ICW/Merrimount intersection, and northbound as well until north of the intersection.

The Panel briefly discussed lighted crosswalks, similar to the lighted crosswalk at Island Park Elementary School. Estimated cost for installation is \$30-40K.

M. Stoll said that there is a crosswalk not far from the ICW/Merrimount intersection on 42<sup>nd</sup> and that area would be blind for drivers no matter what is put there.

S. Parry had several questions: 1) Will the 3-lane configuration at 42<sup>nd</sup> affect the level of service (LOS) at 42<sup>nd</sup>? 2) How would bike lanes work on that section of ICW and would they connect to anything? 3) Would a signal at Merrimount increase safety? 4) Has there been analysis of a 5-lane option?

M. Stoll asked if people usually race to get through a light and make intersections more dangerous?

E. Zemplenyi asked if a turnabout option had been analyzed. J. Giacobazzi indicated that a turnabout in that area would be very expensive because of the size requirements, existing slopes and the amount of private property that would have to be acquired.

M. Stoll said that a 5-lane option wouldn't seem feasible because of the steep grade of the road.

B. Wojciehowskie asked if people making right hand turns would slow down the traffic trying to go straight through in a 3-lane configuration. The Panel discussed the 3-lane configuration, having to use 86<sup>th</sup> to get around, and the impact of buses on the 3-lane configuration. Mayor Pearman said that bus pullouts were critical to the Council when they made their prior decision.

J. Jacobson said that while the Panel is looking at alternatives for ICW, there should be consideration of better signage or road painting in the interim to warn drivers ahead of time about the way the intersection is currently configured.

D. Ehlers asked why cyclists should be accommodated on ICW since it is a dangerous road for cyclists and the main way on and off the Island for drivers.

B. Goode said that as a cyclist, he is interested in seeing cyclists be accommodated on ICW so that it could be a commuting option. S. Lancaster told the Panel that the City is currently updating the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan.

## **IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES TO CONSIDER**

**J. Giacobazzi summarized the alternatives to analyze as follows:**

- **Modify the existing Merrimont intersection to widen the lanes and provide for more advance warning for the “turning only” lanes.**
- **Restripe the Merrimont area intersection as a 3 lane roadway (1 northbound lane, 1 southbound lane, and 1 turn lane).**
- **Return ICW to a 4 lane section through the Merrimont intersection and signalize it.**
- **Widen ICW at the Merrimont intersection to a 5 lane section and signalize it.**

**KPG will provide some analysis and cost estimates for the above alternatives for Panel consideration and discussion at the next meeting.**

B. Goode requested real life examples of road configurations.

B. Harper requested accident statistics from 2006-2007

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

S. Lancaster then opened the floor to those who were not on the Citizen Panel at 8:49 pm.

Lloyd Gilman said that there needs to be a limited sight sign going northbound toward the ICW/Merrimont intersection. He also said that there should be more police presence to record speeding vehicles.

Ira Appelman said that the Citizen Panel is not a citizens' committee because council members are on the committee. He said that the City Council wants to reduce ICW to two lanes and is putting pressure on citizens to agree. He said that the facilitator is not neutral because he works for the City.

Attila Laszlo said that there are traffic impacts to consider because of the PEAK project and that a report had been done to assess the traffic impacts. He said that if movement is restricted at this area that it would impact whole area and this should be taken into consideration.

Joyce Hedlund said that the 3-lane configuration is actually two lanes. She said she is concerned about narrowing ICW to 3 lanes because of visibility and feels “railroaded” into 3-lanes.

Kathy Thorsby said that there should be signage at 53<sup>rd</sup> to warn about lane changes ahead.

The public comment portion of the meeting concluded at 8:58 pm.

Panelist T. Jones provided copies of his own connectivity analysis of ICW to the Citizen Panel.

## **POINTS TO PONDER FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

The Panel was asked to:

- Drive Island Crest Way as much as possible and observe how it operates
- Talk about the issue with neighbors
- Email city staff if there are additional alternatives for analysis

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.