

Taft and Van Buren Street Improvements

TAFT AND VAN BUREN STREET IMPROVEMENTS

PUBLIC MEETING

APRIL 17, 2008

NOTES

Materials: PowerPoint Slide Presentation

Presenters: Aaron Christie (DOWL), Steve Noble (DOWL), and Russ Oswald (Municipality of Anchorage [MOA])

Steve Noble (DOWL) welcomed the group and introduced the project team. He explained that the main purpose of this project is to provide alternative access for trucking companies that will not intermix with residential traffic. The project was initiated in 2002, and funding issues put the project off until now. Northwood Drive and the Tudor/Harding intersection projects have also been part of this project. Steve also explained why the current alternative was chosen versus previous proposed alternatives. Comments and concerns raised at the meeting are summarized below. Staff responses are in italics.

When did conception of the ball field occur? *Steve said it happened in 2003.*

Will access to the circular areas in the ASD parking areas be blocked off? *Russ Oswald (MOA) said there will be new driveway access and there will be a gate for truck access. Residential access will remain off of Van Buren.*

What is the estimated time frame for Phase 1 construction? *Steve said it should begin in mid-August 2008. It will not be completed until the end of next year.*

Since the parkland swap has not happened yet, what happens if it does not get approved? *Russ said that Van Buren Street will remain as is and the improvements will be tried for again on a future ballot until it is approved.*

Will Van Buren Street remain the same width? *Aaron Christie (DOWL) said that it will remain the same width, except for when the choker is put in.*

Comment: An attendee was concerned about safety on Taft Street if the diverter goes in. The resident said he is afraid that there will be more car accidents on Taft Street. He stated that there have been no accidents on record between trucks and residential traffic, so that should not be a safety concern. *Aaron said that traffic volumes will be evaluated in the neighborhood.*

Will there be sidewalks down Van Buren Street? *Aaron said there will be a multi-use trail down the west side of Van Buren Street.*

Comment: There was a concern that water flow does not go into the storm drain at the corner of Northwood Drive and Aspen Drive. Water is pooling and draining down Northwood Drive. It seems like the storm drain is in the wrong place. *Russ said this concern will be addressed this summer.*

Will landscaping be completed on Northwood Drive? *Russ said it will be completed this summer.*

Multiple attendees suggested that signage banning trucks from going down 48th Avenue past Taft Street would be sufficient and said they did not want traffic diverted down Taft Street. Concerns with people speeding from the Spenard Recreation Center were expressed. They want residential traffic to be able to continue to Harding Street on 48th Avenue.

What is the cost estimated to add Phase 2 to this project? *Russ said it would be evaluated and on the ballot next April.*

Will the parking lot to the soccer field be gated? *Russ said it would likely be gated during off season times and hours.*

Comment: A resident said he would like to discourage skateboarders from using the walls. *Aaron said skateboard deterrents would be considered. Russ said walls on Northwood Drive will be retrofitted this year with skateboard stops.*

Can the crosswalk at 48th Avenue and Northwood Drive be put on a motion sensor? *Steve said it is not usually effective because the cars trigger the crosswalk and then become immune to looking for pedestrians. Russ said the overhead light will be wired to the push button this summer.*

Steve thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting encouraging the attendees to submit their comments in writing.