SAFETY ADVISORY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The Safety Advisory and Transportation Committee meeting was held on April 24, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. with Chairman Hutchison presiding. Members present were Mr. Perza (arrived at 5:11 p.m.), Mr. Davis, and Mr. Keller. Mr. Dixon was absent.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Keller moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Davis and unanimously carried.

Safety Concerns - New Dover High School Pedestrian/Vehicular Traffic

During the Committee Meeting of January 30, 2013, staff reviewed concerns regarding pedestrian/vehicular traffic in the area surrounding the new Dover High School. As a result, the Committee recommended that staff be directed to gather information from the Capital School District, including the number of people going in and out of the school and the total number of students walking and driving, as well as information from the Police Chief pertaining to traffic patterns, accidents, and safety information, and that this information be compiled, perhaps including input from State officials, and presented to the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) with a request for further review and consideration of a traffic signal at the east entrance of the New Dover High School. This recommendation was approved by City Council during their Regular Meeting of February 11, 2013.

Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning, Community Development, and Recreation, introduced Mr. Rich Vetter, Executive Director of the Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), as well as Mr. Jonathan Hermes and Mr. Andrew Howard of Century Engineering. She reminded members that staff met with representatives of the Capital School District and determined that, although the signalization was an important issue, there were also concerns regarding gaps within the pedestrian network. A meeting was then held with MPO staff and, with their assistance, a Dover High School Pedestrian Study was performed and a pedestrian plan for the new high school was developed which identified sidewalk gaps in the network. She advised members that costs were being obtained for addressing these gaps and that a meeting had been scheduled with local legislators for Tuesday, April 30, 2013 in an effort to obtain funding assistance.

Mrs. Townshend provided members an informational brochure on High-Intensity Activated Crosswalks (HAWK) Signals ***(Attachment #1)*** and explained that this is a pedestrian only activated system. She advised members that a HAWK signal has been approved as meeting the warrants for the east entrance of the new Dover High School and will be installed at that location.

Responding to Mr. Davis, Mrs. Townshend stated that DelDOT had clearly indicated that the intersection did not meet the warrants for a standard traffic signal. However, she explained that once the infrastructure (conduit, wiring, etc.) for the HAWK signal was installed, if at some point in the future the intersection met the warrants, it would be easier to change the signal rather than having to dig up roadway, install conduit, and install a whole new signal. She felt that the HAWK signal would address well over half of the concerns and issues; however, it would not address concerns regarding bus traffic turning into the site. She noted the possibility that once the school is

operational, if there is an indication that a standard traffic signal is needed, the City could request a warrant analysis. Mrs. Townshend reminded members that buses would enter the site at the east end and teachers and students with vehicles would use the west entrance.

Mr. Davis noted that pedestrian traffic would interrupt bus traffic entering the site. Responding, Mrs. Townshend stated that there would be further discussions regarding the intersections and assured members that issues regarding bus and pedestrian traffic would be brought forward.

Mr. Keller noted that it appeared the concerns regarding the pedestrian crossing had been addressed; however, no action had been taken to alleviate issues related to bus traffic. Responding, Mrs. Townshend stated that she felt confident that this issue would be brought up for consideration during the meeting to be held with legislators.

In response to Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Vetter estimated that there would be approximately 270-275 students within a two (2) mile radius walking to school. He stated that public involvement would be needed to address pedestrian access, particularly from owners of property where an easement would be necessary.

Mr. Vetter reviewed a Dover High School Pedestrian Study Map ***(Attachment #2)*** and advised members that the pink areas denoted sections where there were currently no sidewalks and the blue outlined existing sidewalks. He advised members that a concept plan was developed, including drainage, utility, rights-of-way, etc., and the cost to complete the work was estimated at $450,000. He reiterated that the purpose of meeting with the legislators was to attempt to acquire sources of funding. *(Clerk's Office Note: Subsequent to the meeting, Mrs. Townshend clarified that this estimate applied to the cost of filling sidewalk gaps on the north side of Route 8 and that an additional estimated $450,000 would be required to address gaps on the south side of Route 8.)*

Elaborating, Mrs. Townshend stated that providing a signal without a safe way for pedestrians to access it (a sidewalk) would not offer a safe means of access to the school. She indicated that, in accordance with State law, if there were no safe way for students to walk to school, the Capital School District would be required to bus students. This would not be a good use of public monies; therefore, there was an incentive to install sidewalks. She advised members that the Pedestrian Study also provided information regarding longer-term issues that need to be addressed, such as additional pedestrian traffic on Mifflin Road, drainage issues, sidewalk gaps along Kenton Road and in front of Nottingham Meadows, etc. However, she explained that the sidewalk gaps on the north side of Route 8 need to be addressed before the opening of the school.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Hermes indicated that there is a HAWK signal located on Route 72 in Newark approaching Library Avenue that has been in use for approximately nine (9) years. The signal was erected to provide University of Delaware students access to and from the College of Agriculture and associated farmland. He stated that although these signals are used in many other states that would have more information, the HAWK signal on Route 72 is the first and only such signal in Delaware.

Mrs. Townshend noted the importance of a warrant analysis in determining the need to install HAWK signals, explaining that if there is not enough pedestrian volume, drivers do not become conditioned to the traffic signal, which can cause safety issues. She felt confident that the signal for the new Dover High School would have a substantial amount of use by pedestrians, unlike the signal in Newark for the University of Delaware.

Mr. Hutchison suggested that Mrs. Townshend visit Newark to observe the HAWK signal to obtain a better understanding.

No further action was taken by the Committee.

Briefing on Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) Projects

Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning, Community Development, and Recreation, provided an update on Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) Projects, as follows:

DelDOT Repaving Project

Mrs. Townshend stated that the repaving project had started back up. Milling and paving of Governors Avenue was tentatively scheduled for the first two (2) weeks of June and milling and paving of Loockerman Street for mid-June to the end of June. Loockerman Street would be the last location to be completed, tentatively by the end of July, at which point the entire contract should be complete.

West Dover Connector

Mrs. Townshend indicated that DelDOT continued to refine the final plan package for the project, with submission planned to occur at the end of the year. The rights-of-way acquisitions were ongoing, with cleared rights-of-way planned for March 2014. Demolitions had begun on the total acquisitions processed to date on Charles Polk Road. Advertisement of the project was scheduled for April 2014, with construction to start in late Summer 2014.

Route 8/Hazlettville Road Connector

Mrs. Townshend advised members that there was no funding in the current Capital Transportation Program (CTP) for the Hazlettville Road Connector project. Preliminary engineering money was previously shown in FY 2017; however, in the latest round of funding cuts, all funding for that project was moved to the out years.

Briefing on Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Projects - Rich Vetter

Mr. Rich Vetter, Executive Director, Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), announced that a groundbreaking for the Capital City Trails had been scheduled for Friday, April 26, 2013 at 1:30 p.m. at Legislative Hall. Members were provided a copy of the flyer for the event.

Mr. Vetter indicated that Century Engineering had been working with the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) regarding the possibility of making improvements to West Street, such as trail connections (sidewalks) in the area, in an effort to provide a connection to the Transit Center.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison, Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning, Community Development, and Recreation, stated that the Bicycle/Pedestrian Subcommittee meets every two (2) weeks and that the next meeting was scheduled for May 7, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. at the Dover Public Library.

Mrs. Townshend announced that a "Bike to Work Day" event was being organized to be held on May 15, 2013 and that members would be provided further information as the event approaches.

Mr. Davis moved for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Keller and unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

James L. Hutchison
Chairman

JLH/JS/jg/mk/dd/tm
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Attachments
Attachment #1 - HAWK Signal Brochure
Attachment #2 - Dover High School Pedestrian Study Map

HAWK Signal FAQs

Q. How does the HAWK Signal work?

A. When a pedestrian approaches a crosswalk that is equipped with a HAWK signal, they will press a button, much like they do at a regular crosswalk, which will activate the signal. Once it is activated, the signal will go through a series of stages that will stop traffic long enough for pedestrians to safely cross the roadway. Traffic will then be allowed to proceed and the signal will reset itself until activated again.

Q. Is the HAWK signal like a regular traffic light?

A. No, the HAWK signal is only activated when a pedestrian presses the button. When it is not activated by a pedestrian, the signal is dark and traffic can move across the road freely.

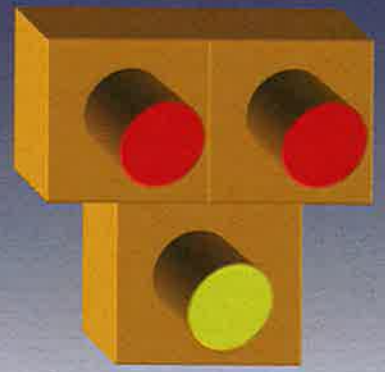
Q. Why don't you just install a normal traffic signal?

A. The HAWK is installed at locations that don't meet the criteria for a normal traffic signal. The HAWK provides a better message to drivers (solid red = STOP!) to allow pedestrians to safely cross than normal signs or flashing yellow beacons, but disrupts traffic less than a normal signal.

Delaware Department of Transportation

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HAWK Signals



A Users Guide to High-Intensity Activated Crosswalks

Delaware Department of Transportation

ATTACHMENT #1
SA&T Committee Meeting of 04/24/2013

About the HAWK

HAWK stands for **H**igh-Intensity **A**ctivated Cross**walk**. One problem for engineers has been the safety of pedestrians who cross the road at "uncontrolled" locations, those without traffic signals or stop signs installed. Some research has even shown that just installing striped crosswalks on high-volume, high-speed roadways may even decrease safety for pedestrians who cross. The HAWK signal is the latest tool that will be utilized in Delaware to combat this problem.

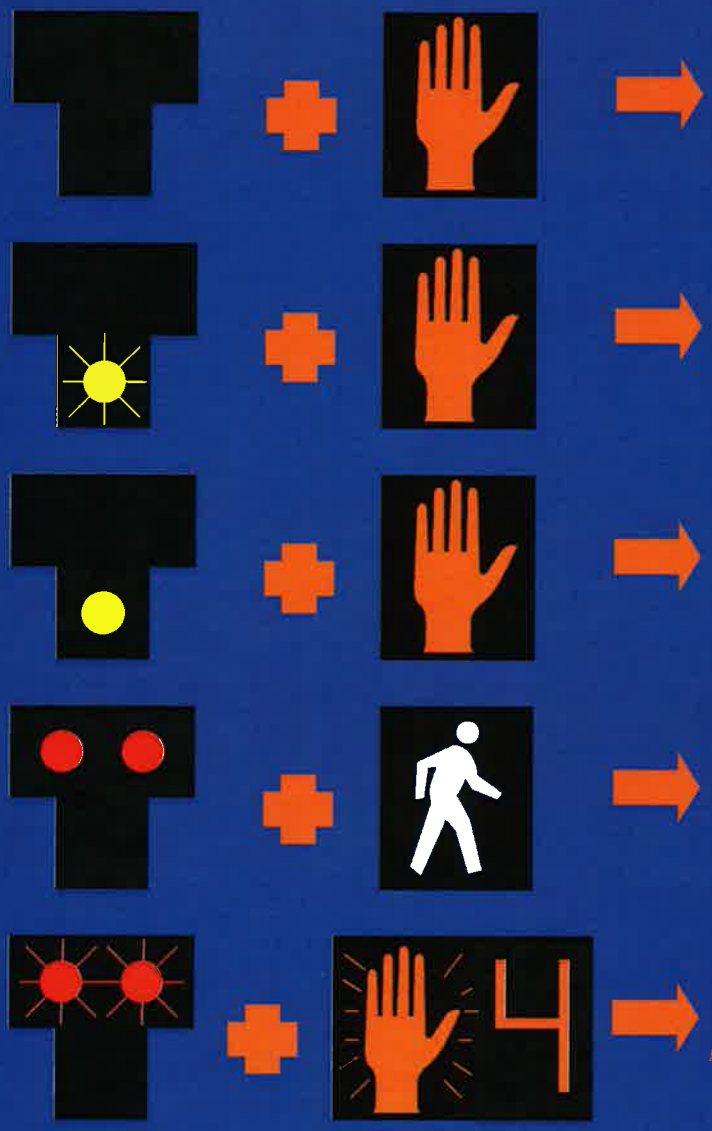
HAWK signals were developed by the City of Tucson, Arizona to give a safer alternative for those crossing streets in school zones. The signals were such a success that there are now nearly 100 HAWK signals throughout Tucson. They have also been used in other jurisdictions throughout the United States.

The first location in Delaware will be at Route 72 and Farm/Webb Lane, which serves the University of Delaware Agricultural College. The signal will be installed by fall 2010 and will allow students and staff to more safely cross the road. If successful, we will consider its use at other appropriate locations throughout the state in the future.

How the HAWK Signal Works

What You See:

What You Do:



Flashing Timer

Drivers: ***Proceed through the Signal***

Pedestrians: ***Press button to Cross***

Drivers: ***Signal has been Activated***

Pedestrians: ***Wait to Cross***

Drivers: ***Prepare to Stop***

Pedestrians: ***Continue Waiting to Cross***

Drivers: ***Stop and Remain Stopped***

Pedestrians: ***Cross the Roadway with Caution***

Drivers: ***Continue with Caution after Coming to a Complete Stop***

Pedestrians: ***Already Crossing - <u>Continue</u>***
Not Yet Crossing - <u>Don't Start</u>

▶SYSTEM RESETS◀

CENTURY ENGINEERING

DOVER HIGH SCHOOL PEDESTRIAN STUDY

Dover/Kent County MPO
Metropolitan Planning Organization

HUNTERS POINTE
FOX HALL WEST
HEATHERFIELD
CRANBERRY RUN
EAST HEATHERFIELD
BRANDYWINE COURT
WESTWIND MEADOWS
ENGLISH VILLAGE
WALKER WOODS
BICENTENNIAL VILLAGE
THE GREENS OF DOVER
DOVER HIGH SCHOOL
VILLAGE OF CANNON MILL
VILLAGE OF WESTOVER
MOTTINGHAM MEADOWS
WOODMILL
SCHUTTE PARK
MODERN MATURITY CENTER
GREEN TREE SHOPPING CENTER
WAWA

STATE COLLEGE RD
WALKER RD
FIELDSTONE CT
KENTON RD
GREENWAY LN
GREENTREE DR
INDEPENDENCE BLVD
GEORGE WASHINGTON DR
STONEY DR
HEATHERFIELD WAY
MARSH CREEK LN
CRANBERRY RUN DR
FORREST AVE
8
MIFFLIN RD
HAZLETTVILLE RD
WYOMING MILL RD

Scale: 1" = 200'
April 2013

N W E S

PROJECT OVERVIEW

LEGEND

- EXISTING SIDEWALK GAPS
- EXISTING SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED SIDEWALK BY OTHERS
- POTENTIAL HIGH-INTENSITY ACTIVATED CROSSWALK
- EXISTING PROPERTY LINES
- EXISTING TRAFFIC SIGNAL

ATTACHMENT #2
SAKT Committee Meeting of 04/24/2013