

Bobbie Walthall

To: Charles Soules
Subject: RE: FW: Iowa Street Reconstruction Project

From: LLOYD NORTROP [mailto:lhnorthrop@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Tuesday, April 27, 2010 10:55 AM
To: Carolyn Hicks
Subject: Re: FW: Iowa Street Reconstruction Project

Carolyn: From the Journal-World, it does appear as though the local neighbors do see the need for the turning lane from a **safety** viewpoint for all those on Iowa.

When the city does get around to replacing the old original concrete (and widening the street to five lanes), it will be safer as it will comply with Iowa both north and south of the area under present consideration. The turning lane is the best answer.

Our car was struck in the rear end a number of years ago in the only auto accident we have had in over fifty years of driving, at the area under consideration, and it was due to the safety problem from not having a turning lane. -- Lloyd Northrop

--- On **Fri, 4/23/10, Carolyn Hicks** <chicks@ci.lawrence.ks.us> wrote:

From: Carolyn Hicks <chicks@ci.lawrence.ks.us>
Subject: FW: Iowa Street Reconstruction Project
To: "lhnorthrop@sbcglobal.net" <lhnorthrop@sbcglobal.net>
Date: Friday, April 23, 2010, 2:33 PM

The Iowa Street reconstruction project from Yale Road to Bob Billings Parkway , including center turn lane will be on the City Commission Agenda on Tuesday, April 27, 2010. The meeting will start at 6:35 PM at City Hall, 6 E 6th Street .

The City Commission Meeting Agenda can be viewed online at: www.lawrenceks.org

Thanks,

Carolyn

Carolyn Hicks, Administrative Support II - chicks@ci.lawrence.ks.us

Public Works Department | City of Lawrence, KS

P.O. Box 708, Lawrence , KS 66044-0708

office (785) 832-3143 | fax (785) 832-3398

Bobbie Walthall

To: bbishop@sunflower.com
Subject: RE: Iowa Street

-----Original Message-----

From: bbishop@sunflower.com [mailto:bbishop@sunflower.com]
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2010 1:02 PM
To: mikeamyx515@hotmail.com
Cc: Bobbie Walthall
Subject: Iowa Street

Mr Mayor Mike Amyx . . .

I won't be at the City Commission meeting tonight in support of my letter and addendum about the Iowa Street center lane -- I had arthroscopic knee surgery Friday so am "staying low" for a bit longer.

(For reference I've attached a copy of the two documents.)

The last paragraph in my April 16 letter:

"If the intent of the proposed reconfiguration is truly for the protection of motorists, then that protection should be extended to all left turning vehicles whether coming from the south or the north on the section of Iowa Street between Ninth Street and Terrace Road. Since this has already been addressed appropriately from Ninth to Harvard, it only remains to be consistently implemented from Harvard to Terrace Road."

And the last two paragraphs from the Addendum dated April 16:

"It is also important that the city of Lawrence examine the condition of streets and curbs in these affected neighborhoods and concurrently address the deterioration which now exists due to the already heavy traffic.

"I am aware we have experts on traffic. I am hopeful those experts will address the problems on Iowa Street as well as the side streets and residential neighborhoods and use their expertise to maintain the intended traffic routes in Lawrence."

Thank You . . .

Barbara M. Bishop
1641 University Drive

Date: April 16, 2010

**To: Commissioners Mike Amyx, Aron Cromwell, Lance Johnson, Michael Dever, Robert Chestnut
Department of Public Works: Charles Soules, Director and Shoeb Uddin, City Engineer
City Manager David Corliss**

From: Barbara M. Bishop, 1641 University Drive, Phone 842-6072

Subject: Center Lane on Iowa Street

A comprehensive presentation was made at Fire Station Number 5 regarding the reworking of Iowa Street and the desirability of at that time installing an extra lane dedicated to turns off of Iowa onto neighboring streets in the area from Harvard Road to the Irving Hill overpass. This meeting was attended by Mr. Soules and Mr. Corliss.

I was informed this matter was to be presented to the City Commission the last week of April therefore all comments should be submitted before this date.

There were people in favor and people in opposition of the city's proposal. There was no consensus except that there are real dangers for southbound traffic making left turns off of Iowa onto Oxford, Stratford and University Drives. I would note there are also dangers for entry into driveways for homes along that part of Iowa.

I would also add that for northbound traffic on Iowa there is danger in left turns onto Terrace Road, Orchard Road and homes in that particular area.

Request

I would ask that when making a decision that you to please consider the *entire* area from Harvard to Terrace Road as a candidate for a center lane for turns (left or right) as exists on many other streets in Lawrence.

Example: Iowa from Ninth Street to Harvard *already* has this kind of lane. There is a dedicated left turn lane for northbound traffic at Ninth and a dedicated left turn lane for southbound traffic at Harvard. Between and connecting these there is a *center turn lane with arrows showing left turns for traffic traveling both north and south*.

Please do NOT have just *one* neighborhood street with a *dedicated left turn lane* for southbound traffic on Iowa. This would be a broad signal to all Iowa Street traffic that that one street was the *preferred* alternate method of heading east and consequently permanently change the character of that particular neighborhood.

Conclusion

If the intent of the proposed reconfiguration is *truly* for the protection of motorists, then that protection should be extended to *all* left turning vehicles whether coming from the south or the north on the section of Iowa Street between Ninth Street and Terrace Road. Since this has *already* been addressed appropriately from Ninth to Harvard, it only remains to be consistently implemented from Harvard to Terrace Road.

Date: April 16, 2010

**To: Commissioners Mike Amyx, Aron Cromwell, Lance Johnson, Michael Dever, Robert Chestnut
Department of Public Works: Charles Soules, Director and Shoeb Uddin, City Engineer
City Manager David Corliss**

From: Barbara M. Bishop, 1641 University Drive, Phone 842-6072

ADDENDUM

Subject: University Drive

I would like to note that one person in attendance at the city's meeting on reworking Iowa Street thought a center lane on Iowa would facilitate her being able to more easily leave the neighborhood by using University Drive to turn south onto Iowa.

I believe she might be mistaken and that what may very well happen is that there will be an *increase* of drivers attempting left turns onto Iowa and that consequently there will be a backup of cars on University Drive and therefore a real restriction on cars desiring to turn right (north).

Thoughts

The city has solved the above problem of backups on such streets as 21st Street at Iowa by having both a right *and* a left turn lane on 21st Street facilitating access to Iowa. There are many other streets in Lawrence which are marked similarly. This might be a solution for University Drive and perhaps Stratford?

It is also important that the city of Lawrence examine the condition of streets and curbs in these affected neighborhoods and concurrently address the deterioration which now exists due to the already heavy traffic.

I am aware we have experts on traffic. I am hopeful those experts will address the problems on Iowa Street *as well as* the side streets and residential neighborhoods and use their expertise to maintain the *intended* traffic routes in Lawrence.

Bobbie Walthall

To: David L. Corliss
Subject: RE: Iowa turn lane

From: John or Karla Spurgeon [mailto:kandjspur@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2010 3:27 PM
To: Charles Soules
Subject: Iowa turn lane

Mr. Soules,

Please pass our comments on to the city commissioners at the meeting Tuesday night, as we may not be able to attend. We have lived 1/2 block west of Iowa on Orchard Lane for 26 years. We are adamantly in favor of a turn lane on Iowa. While walking our children to Hillcrest we have seen many accidents over the years along the stretch of highway under consideration. We realize the concerns of those who live east of Iowa, but we feel that the safety of drivers turning east or west from Iowa onto the side streets, as well as those entering Iowa from side streets both east and west of Iowa strongly warrants having the dangers diminished by adding the turn lane. Iowa, also as Highway 59, is a major thoroughfare into Lawrence and the University of Kansas. We urge you to make it a safer stretch of roadway. Since it is necessary to redo the road soon, we feel it is imperative that the safety of those turning on this highway be given priority over the objections of some who are concerned about higher volumes of traffic in their neighborhood.

Thank you for considering all safety concerns.

Karla and John Spurgeon
2319 Orchard Lane

Bobbie Walthall

To: David L. Corliss
Subject: RE: Why adding a fifth lane to Iowa will make things worse

From: siyuan han [mailto:syhan_66044@yahoo.com]

Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2010 7:10 PM

To: Mike Amyx; Robert Chestnut; David L. Corliss; Aron Cromwell; Michael Dever; Jonathan Douglass; Lance Johnson; Scott McCullough; Tom Orzulak; Charles Soules; Diane Stoddard; Cynthia Wagner

Subject: Why adding a fifth lane to Iowa will make things worse

Dear Sirs/Madams:

In the last few weeks the City launched a PR campaign aimed at pushing its “solution” to Iowa Street’s traffic problem by adding a fifth lane designated for left-turn between Yale and University section of Iowa. To manipulate public opinion the City not only disperses a series of misinformation but also tried hard to smear anyone who is against the plan for proper causes as selfish and unreasonable. If our common goal is to solve the problem I wish the City would stop its propaganda machine and instead to formulate a real solution by addressing the root cause of the problem.

It is well known the traffic problem on this section of Iowa is due to insufficient capacity of the 9th Street and 15th Street east of Iowa. Both streets have about 200 to 300 yards from their Iowa intersections that only have two lanes which create traffic bottlenecks. This is the reason why many people to make left turn on Iowa to use the side streets to avoid these bottlenecks. The right approach is to eliminate these bottlenecks by widening 9th and 15th east of Iowa to four lanes. It is the time that the City should work with KU and neighborhood communities together to get the problem solved once for all instead of moving it to different locations and in the process destroying the neighborhood.

The proposed plan does not address the root cause of the problem but simply shifts it from Iowa to side streets such as Stratford and University. It will make these streets more dangerous for residents, pedestrians, bikers, and in particular school children who play various sports in the Water Tower Park.

I admire the City’s goal to make Lawrence more compact and friendly to families, kids, pedestrians, and bikers. However, this plan is doing exactly the opposite. It will not solve Iowa Street’s traffic problem but will certainly make the side streets and neighborhood much more dangerous from significantly increased traffic.

In addition, most of accidents involving motorists making left turns on south bound Iowa were caused by speeding and bad driving habits such as making calls and/or texting while driving. Otherwise, they should have sufficient time to slow down and/or stop before hitting the vehicle in front of them. Solution to this problem should include better enforcement of traffic laws and driver education. Furthermore, because most of accidents on Iowa currently are collisions between vehicles they usually do not cause serious personal injury and/or fatality. If the plan is implemented, despite strong opposition from the people who have the greatest stake in this matter, a significant increase of accidents that result in severe personal injury and death will be a certainty. So please be extremely prudent when making your decision.

Finally, the City claims that a large majority of people who sent in email comments supported the plan but never mentioned where those people live. In fact, most of the residents of Stratford and University are against the plan. It’s not surprising that people not from Stratford and University are in general for the plan because they have nothing to loss but potentially have something to gain. In contrast, the residents of these two streets

have everything to loss but little to gain. Hence, any attempt to justify the plan by saying that it enjoys the support of majority is misleading at its best. On this issue the City essentially is arguing that the residents of Stratford and University should happily sacrifice their interests for the “good” of the larger community. It should be pointed out that this line of argument may be common in China and North Korea but has no place in a democratic society as the United States of American.

Thank you for your attention,

Siyuan Han
1909 Stratford Rd.
Lawrence, KS 66044

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TO: City Commission, Shoeb Uddin, Dave Corliss
FROM: Bill Mitchell, 1201 Emery Road, Lawrence 66044
SUBJ: Iowa turn lane
DATE: 5 April 2010

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CITY MANAGERS OFFICE
LAWRENCE, KS

One letter, multiple recipients, limited ideas. Thanks, first, to Shoeb Uddin for a well-conducted public meeting, with adequate notice. Then, anticipatory thanks to the Commissioners and City Manager for listening to (really hearing, not just tolerantly sitting through it) what I have to say, some of which you (or your predecessors) have heard over the last 20 years, some of which is new.

You've heard from me before that traffic planning based on "free" money is poor planning; that's still true but what's new is that I now realize that the City has to do both traffic planning and fiscal planning and I am resigned to the fact that short-term fiscal planning for you trumps long-term traffic planning. So you're going to do this deal, no matter my well-reasoned arguments against.

The root problem remains KU, as it was identified by the Task Force and Consultants in the last century. When asked at the 29mar10 meeting if, before this was submitted to the CC for action, if KU could be consulted, Dave Corliss cheerily replied "Sure." Well, sure, "consulted" but there's obviously still no more desire on the City's part to urge action on KU than there is on KU's part to help the City with the traffic problems KU creates. Both institutions remain regrettably short-sighted. I earnestly wish that the City would seize the moment with a new Chancellor who has expressed a belief in the importance of neighborhoods (in the recent save the schools campaign) and I hope that is what Dave Corliss' "Sure" meant. (Dream on.) How anyone could plan for an interchange connecting 15th Street with the western leg of the SLT without thinking about 15th Street east of Iowa baffles me, except, I suppose, there is the expectation of free money at the west end, none for the east end. And free money trumps planning. Ah, well...

There were, by my reckoning, 3 basic positions expressed at the public meeting, one by the presenters, two by the audience members. The City's position is that the roadway must be rebuilt (new from 2007 and not easy to dispute) and, as in 2007, that a turn lane should be included in the rebuilding. One neighborhood position is that "safety" and convenience of drivers on Iowa overrides all else and that a turn lane should be built; the other neighbors' position is that the underlying problem (access to KU via 15th Street and 9th & Mississippi/Indiana) should be addressed first and that through-neighborhood traffic should be re-routed or, at least, discouraged.

And here's something more new from me: Assuming that there is still no will to work with the University to fix the 15th & Iowa "entrance" and to widen Naismith north of 15th and complete the 1920s planned beltway from Naismith/Crescent to 11th & Mississippi and further assuming that the \$1mil "safety" money trumps any neighborhood concern about mixing neighborhood kids with high-count, 40-50 mph traffic on Stratford and University, I suggest you offer us a fig or two. (In fact, I think the City would have been politically wise to have done this at the meeting or before, unprompted – you know, as good PR.) Give us a 20 mph speed limit in the west-of-campus area – ENFORCED. Give us also, perhaps, high-yield speed humps on Stratford and University. Give us these things in conjunction with the turn lane; I don't want the opportunity, as described by Mr. Uddin, to appear before the Traffic Safety Commission to plead our case. You are moving the traffic-safety problem from the intersections of Stratford and University with Iowa onto the stretches of those streets between Iowa and West Campus Road so make 20 mph and high-yield calming devices (no roundabouts, please) an integral part of the \$1mil safety "fix." And please don't say you can't do that for if, without consulting TSC, you can create a turn lane on Iowa to grease the flow of traffic into a residential neighborhood (in violation of the Comprehensive Plan's stated intent to discourage cut-through traffic – see Commissioner Harris' comments at the Planning Commission meeting of 5-21-07), you can make provision to help control that traffic once it is safely off of Iowa. Yes, you can.

I am disappointed in my City for taking such a short-term view of planning and showing such disregard for our neighborhood as I am in my University for its unwillingness (at least the previous administration) to cooperate with the City on traffic problems of its making and their failure to understand the contribution made by our neighborhood to KU's welfare. I am also tired. So you win? Well, no, both institutions get what you want short-term but we all lose.

For the benefit of those of you not involved in the 2007 turn-lane attempts are enclosed copies of couple of my letters at that time; I've re-read them and there are some good ideas there, if I do say so myself.

cc: West Hills Homes Association; Chuck Soules

Afterthoughts: Speaking of planning, where does Chuck Soules' 2007 explanation that Iowa needs to be 6-lane clear through town fit in to this "plan?" And help me understand how the CIP as approved by the Planning Commission in May 2007, which was approved with a textual modification ("no turn lane"), is being ignored?

TO: City Commission
FROM: Bill Mitchell, 1201 Emery Road
SUBJ: Center left-turn lane on Iowa, Harvard Rd. to University Dr. - please NO
DATE: 19 March 2007

First, a quick word about the process-in-general: I understand the City wanting to get "free" money any way possible but (leaving aside the undeniable fact that KDOT money is not free) basing the City's traffic planning on the availability of KDOT cash is close approaching the ultimate in poor planning. Just look at the KDOT-planned projects you recently turned down: 6th & Iowa roundabout, 9th & Avalon left-turn lane, 19th & Naismith roundabout - pretty poor plans all.

Second, a quick word about the process-in-specific: Having (wisely) turned these carefully crafted projects down, our City traffic planners went seeking more KDOT-funded wisdom and probably think they've found it. It is clearly evident from the process that produced this potential project that traffic planning is not foremost in their minds, free money is. Further evidence of this was demonstrated when, at the neighborhood public hearing, I asked David Woosley how many southbound left turns were made from Iowa onto Stratford and University and he said he didn't know because he'd collected only the traffic counts KDOT wanted (24-hour volume north- and southbound). To get an idea of how many, I said, he could have counted southbound just past Harvard and again just past University; yes, he agreed, but KDOT didn't ask for those numbers - although he could do it. Now, I can understand KDOT not caring about impacts on residential neighborhoods but I cannot understand a similar disregard by our local traffic planners. And to say that it could be done when a go/no go decision has to be made in 2 weeks (let's all hear it for planning ahead) is uncommonly disingenuous.

The sense of the neighborhood meeting (30 or 40 people maybe) seemed largely favorable to the project and, if I could read Chuck Soules between the lines of noncommittal, he will, I believe, report the project to you as generally approved of. The reasons for this "approval" are at least two: 1) more yeas showed up than did nays and 2) many of the yeas see it as a quick and easy (and "free") solution to the too-many rear-end accidents on Iowa. I agree that there are 'way too many such accidents, also that a turn-lane is a quick and easy partial solution but it is not free (state money is our money and the waste involved in tearing out good curbs and sidewalks is egregious); the project's worst feature, however, worse even than the impact of increased traffic on Stratford and University, is its short-sightedness.

Then a not-so-quick word about getting to the root of the problem, something I (perhaps naively) think planners should be thinking about on a regular basis. It is not necessary to do origin & destination surveys of traffic on Stratford/University east of Iowa to know that most of it has KU as either its origin or destination. If we were dealing with storm water, the engineer would design a channel to move the water through in order to prevent it from flooding the neighborhood; it is a sound analogy (except, perhaps, that homeowners can buy floodwater insurance but not floodtraffic insurance) and the channel of choice is plain to see, although it needs to be cleared of some obstructions to make it free-flowing: 15th Street east of Iowa. The channel has been obvious for years and has been ignored for an equal period. The University just built a grand gateway at 15th & Iowa (a gateway they say to the University but more like a gateway to congestion); 15th & Engel was lamented when St. Lawrence Church was dropped into the neighborhood, but lamentation has not eased traffic flow; traffic volume through the neighborhood keeps increasing (and will suffer another devastating increase should this lane be built).

The University does indeed put, as the fund-raising motto said, "KU First" - not a bad thing except that it is done so single-mindedly that adjacent neighborhoods and the City at large are put about 27th or 139th on the list (lip-service to "cooperation" doesn't count in the ranking). (One quick example: when the "Campus Plan" was being developed in the '90s - and sold through public meetings - I attended 2 of them, one for our neighborhood, the other for faculty and staff. When asked at the faculty meeting about

impacts of the Plan on traffic, the University's representative smiled and said that we (the royal KU "we") weren't concerned about traffic except to keep as much of the burden as possible on City streets; not surprisingly, he gave a different answer to the neighborhood group. It's pretty apparent which answer reflected their real intent.)

Instead of a left-turn lane on Iowa which will relieve - again - the University from meeting their obligation to help manage the traffic problems to which they contribute, it is time (past time) to face up to the root problem: traffic with a KU destination should generally use Naismith from 23rd, Mississippi from 9th and 15th from Iowa and such traffic flow should be encouraged in its free flow by eliminating obstructions and bottlenecks. (A corollary is that, as with storm water, flow through the neighborhoods should be impeded.) 15th Street from Iowa to Naismith should be 4 lanes (yes, right up against Jayhawk Towers) and, so that the location of the bottleneck be not merely moved eastward, Naismith south of 15th should be 4-laned as well as north of 15th to the Chi Omega circle. (From there I think KU should complete the beltway behind JRP and down 11th to Mississippi but that can come later so long as KU doesn't build something to obstruct the route.) Now, by the way, is a good time to pursue this widening because Lindley Annex has been bulldozed, thus eliminating it as an excuse for not widening Naismith up the hill.

I've no doubt that Iowa will someday need widening (more than just Harvard to University) but I'd like to see it done 1) after the 15th Street bottleneck is eliminated (because to create the turn-lane now will again relieve the pressure on the University to actively cooperate, pressure that the City should be (should have been) exerting) and 2) done with a long-term view, guided by local planners meeting local needs, in cooperation with KDOT of course, but not led by KDOT, with us salivating after their "free" money.

Please give a thought to the well-being of our fragile west-of-campus neighborhood and to some long-term, root-of-the-matter planning; and - difficult as it may be - face up to the City's responsibility to help the University face up to theirs. Do this and you will get not only my thanks but those of generations to come.

c: West Hills Homes Association
Dave Corliss
Chuck Soules

TO: Dave Corliss, City Manager
FROM: Bill Mitchell, 1201 Emery Road
SUBJ: Left-turn-lane on Iowa: past, present, future
DATE: 22 April 2007

Past. After the City Commission meeting at which the Iowa turn-lane was voted down - although I was very pleased with the decision - I had some unsettling thoughts about the process that led up to that meeting. As briefly as I can: At the earlier neighborhood meeting at which public support was to be gauged, I asked Chuck Soules which residents had been notified (I was pleased and a little surprised to have been given notice because I was well beyond the usual 200' range); he couldn't tell me exactly but said that they'd tried to notify widely and that they'd also given notice to all neighborhood associations in the area. That sounded good to me.

As it happened the turnout at Hillcrest School included only about two from our association, one who had been vocal in the defeat of the "no left turn" plan from last Fall (and who was vocal in favor of the turn-lane) and me. The well-represented University Heights group was very vocal in support of the turn-lane and said, in fact, that their group had voted on the matter and favored it.

I quickly called this and the upcoming Commission meeting to the attention of the West Hills association and learned that it was all news to them although the president and another board member live on Stratford just 4 doors east of me. ("Wide notice," it seems to me, would surely include notification of every homeowner along Stratford and University between Iowa and West Campus, the two streets that would be most affected by increased traffic.) Strange, I thought, but the president said it was possible that he had just overlooked the notice, although he thought not. Then, at the Commission meeting, Faye Watson of the University Heights group spoke up in favor of the turn-lane, saying that she and her group had been tracking the project since the defeat of the "no left turn" plan last Fall. The first stirring of my unsettling thoughts: Could it be that some folks were kept informed right along (Watson, University Heights), others given essentially 2 weeks notice (me), others no notice at all (West Hills Homes Association, others along Stratford & University)? The obvious eagerness of Public Works to capture a chunk of KDOT money was not in itself, at first, unsettling but...

Were this the old Public Works, I'd be quick to assume the worst but this is the new PW, which I believe to be above such shenanigans. I hope I'm right and would very much like to be shown that my unsettled thoughts are just paranoia.

Present. Since we are so eager to capture KDOT money and since it was pretty much agreed at the Commission meeting that the Iowa Street problem extends (at least) to the 9th and 15th Street intersections, is there a possibility of taking advantage of the closing of the Citgo station at 9th and incorporating that long-a-problem property in an intersection-improvement-project? The greatest immediate need is to fix 15th Street east of Iowa but it may be that Citgo presents an opportunity not to be missed.

Future. Another opportunity not to be missed is that of helping the University to complete the West to North beltway (15th to Naismith to Jayhawk to 11th (behind Carruth-O'Leary & JRP) to Mississippi). Plans for a new Business School building may involve removing Carruth-O'Leary and erecting a much larger structure between C-O and Potter Lake, thus effectively blocking that beltway route. The recent removal of Lindley Annex has opened the way for widening Naismith north of 15th (the University used to use it as an excuse for not being able to widen Naismith) and I can imagine them hungering after, not only a new building, but also a new excuse not to contribute to a solution of their traffic problem. (Oh, dear, more paranoia?)

c: City Commission
Chuck Soules, Public Works
West Hills Homes Association