

**Township High School District #113 & City of Highland Park
HIGHLAND PARK HIGH SCHOOL ADVISORY GROUP
Meeting Agenda**

September 24, 2015

7:00 p.m., SD 113 Offices, 1040 Park Avenue West, Highland Park, IL

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approve Minutes
4. Questions from the Public
5. Review of the Traffic, Safety and Parking plan
6. Police Update
7. Bus Update
8. Trip Reduction Update
9. Communications Update
10. Status report on Vine Street parking lot, Woodpath crosswalk, St. Johns sidewalk and other construction work
11. Review of HPHS stakeholder feedback not otherwise addressed.
12. Other Business
13. Adjourn

**Minutes of A Meeting of The
Township High School District #113 & City of Highland Park
Highland Park High School Advisory Group**

Meeting Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2015
Meeting Location: District 113 Administration Building
1040 Park Avenue West, Highland Park, Illinois

Call to Order and Roll Call:

At 7:33 p.m., Dan Jenks, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Advisory Group members present: Ms. Torrie Behrens; Mr. Jim Coretti; Ms. Joni Friedman; Ms. Michelle Holleman, Highland Park City Councilman; Mr. Dan Jenks; Ms. Monica Kornberg; Dr. Patrick Sassen, HPHS Assistant Principal; Chief Paul Shafer, Highland Park Police Department; Mr. David Small, District 113 Board of Education Member; Mr. William Tellone, HPHS Security Manager; and Mr. Allen Wehner, HPHS student.

District 113 Administrators present: Mr. Daniel Mortensen, Director of Facilities Management.

City of Highland Park officials present: Sergeant Chris O'Neill, Highland Park Police Department.

The following visitors were present: Annette Lidawer, Lois Lourie.

Introductions:

Each member introduced themselves, described their background and motivations for serving on the Advisory Group.

Advisory Group Mission:

The Chair reviewed City of Highland Park Ordinance 53-15 establishing the Advisory Group and its mission.

Organizational Resolutions:

Mr. Wehner moved approval of a quorum of 6 for the Advisory Group, the motion was seconded by Mr. Coretti and on a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Coretti moved approval of the proposed first year meeting schedule of the Advisory Group (September 16, 2015, November 18, 2015, January 13, 2016, March 16, 2016 and May 11, 2016), the motion was seconded by Mr. Wehner and on a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion passed unanimously.

Public Input:

Annette Lidawer, President of the District 113 Board of Education, attended the meeting as a member of the public. She thanked all the members of the Advisory Group for their service.

Communication About Advisory Group Meetings:

Mr. Coretti asked about communicating meeting agendas and information to the public. The Chair explained that the City and District will each post meeting notices and agendas, the District has a link on its website with Advisory Group information and an e-mail list for interested parties will be established. Prior to each Advisory Group meeting, an e-mail with an agenda and meeting time will be sent as required under the OMA (Illinois Open Meetings Act).

Traffic, Safety & Parking Plan:

Dr. Sassen reviewed the new traffic patterns at HPHS, the location and responsibility of each traffic monitor and locations for drop-off and pick-up. He explained that no less than 9 monitors (including 2 community service officers) will be on duty at drop-off and pick-up and that the location of each monitor will vary as needed. In the West parking lot, there will be 3 lanes entering the lot – a teacher lane on the left, a parent drop-off lane in the middle and a fire lane on the right. Dr. Sassen noted that the District will communicate these new traffic patterns to the wider community and that traffic monitors will play an important role in educating drivers when the school year begins.

Dr. Sassen also discussed the District's trip reduction strategy, including incentives for students to carpool, ride the bus and, during warm months, to bike and walk. Carpool strategies – including parking discounts, preferential parking spots and gift cards – are in the advanced stages. Other strategies are still being developed.

Bus Policy:

Dr. Sassen explained that District 113 provides bus service to every student who is legally entitled to it. While legal bus limits are 71 students per bus (3 to a seat), the District aims for 49 students per bus (2 to a seat). Bus ridership is seasonal and bus routes are lengthened and shortened based on demand. It was noted that it cost \$49,700 for each additional bus route added.

A number of questions related to bus policy were raised. Ms. Friedman and the Chair noted that each of their children was dissuaded from riding the bus because they had failed to get a seat at the beginning of the year. Mr. Coretti asked if the District knew what the perception of seat availability was among students. Councilman Holleman noted that the District was not using all of its resources, including RFID tags, to collect bus usage data. The Chair asked about how often bus routes were remapped, how and by whom these routes are developed and whether there was a real cost picking up students within 1.5 miles if the buses weren't full. Mr. Small noted that it wasn't just the time on the bus that factored into bus riding decisions – the question was how much longer did it take to get to school. Ms. Friedman concurred with this viewpoint, noting that distance to bus stops and wait times also were important factors in deciding whether

to take the bus. Councilman Holleman asked whether the District had ever considered utilizing the PACE system to increase bus ridership, particularly within the 1.5 mile area.

After a lengthy discussion, it was concluded that the topic of bus policy deserved a fuller discussion and the Chair moved that the District make a detailed, comprehensive bus policy presentation in November. Councilman Holleman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously via voice vote.

Police Resources:

Chief Shafer explained that 2 community service officers will be allocated to HPHS during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up, subject to being called away for emergencies. CSOs can issue tickets for non-moving violations. In order to continue to focus on traffic and safety issues while on duty around HPHS, CSOs will take photographs of violations and tickets will be mailed later. Chief Shafer also noted that police officers are rotated around each of the schools in Highland Park (including HPHS) as the need arises to ensure compliance with traffic laws.

Warnings, rather than tickets, for violations will be sent out during the first 8 days of school. Dr. Sassen confirmed that the new enforcement policy will be communicated to parents. Mr. Small suggested handing out palm cards to offenders during this initial period explaining the parking rules around HPHS. In response to a question from the Chair suggesting that a CSO officer located at Vine & St. Johns might cut down on illegal parking or standing on Vine, Chief Shafer noted that similar tickets had been issued last year without necessarily changing behavior.

Tickets for parking violations start at \$25 apiece. Chief Shafer stated that the goal is to change behavior rather than to impose a punitive cost on violators. Mr. Coretti stated that the fine for parking violations, \$25, is viewed by neighbors as a parking fee and that the fine is not a deterrent. Mr. Small suggested that, in the future and after due inquiry, the Advisory Group may want recommend changes to the City's ticketing policy around HPHS, including some sort of sliding scale for offenders. Chief Shafer responded that after 3 tickets, the fee rises to \$60 apiece and after 9 tickets it rises again.

Ms. Kornberg stated that she observed not only parents speed down St. Johns but also school bus drivers as well. Sgt. O'Neill said that the Police Department will measure speeds at HPHS and that it would cost about \$3,500 for a permanent digital speed reader.

Vine Parking Lot:

Mr. Mortensen reviewed the layout of the Vine parking lot and stated that construction on the Vine parking lot was scheduled to commence on August 26th and finish on October 1st. Mr. Small confirmed that all the related contracts – construction, lighting, landscaping - had been executed by the District and that everything was in compliance with and pursuant to Ordinance 53-15. Mr. Mortensen stated that, pursuant to the Ordinance, the District is the process of getting final approval for the landscape plan from the City Forester, which approval is expected shortly.

Mr. Mortensen confirmed the receipt of an e-mail from a neighbor, Mr. Jeffrey Winton, with suggestions for minimizing glare from the Vine parking lot lights. Mr. Mortensen thanked Mr. Winton for his comment, passed Mr. Winton's suggestion onto the District's architects and confirmed that the District's plans will minimize glare to the extent possible.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Mortensen stated that the District did not believe that work on the Vine lot – or any other construction work scheduled during 2015-2016 school year - would interfere with normal traffic operations in and around HPHS and that the District would particularly strive to minimize conflicts around pick-up and drop-off times. Once the Vine lot is completed, HPHS will once again have pre-referendum levels of parking, 631 parking spots, for staff, students and visitors.

It was confirmed that Ordinance 53-14 required the Vine lot lights to be activated by motion sensors only between dusk and 11:00 p.m. every night.

Woodpath Crosswalk:

The District and the City have met to discuss the installation of a cross-walk at the northeast corner of Woodpath and St. Johns. Pursuant to Ordinance 53-14, the District committed to finishing this cross-walk by December 31, 2015. Mr. Mortensen notes that the District will extend an existing sidewalk on the HPHS property so that the new cross-walk will line up with this sidewalk. Issues of how to properly grade the sidewalk across the street from HPHS and finding an electrical source for the crossing lights are currently being addressed. Both the City and District are working well together.

Mr. Small noted that while the District is obligated to install this crosswalk under the Ordinance, the District's referendum project Oversight Committee is not in favor of this crosswalk. The Oversight Committee believes there are significant pedestrian safety issues here, chiefly due to insufficient sightlines and short stopping distances leading up to this crosswalk, which may provide pedestrians with a false sense of security. It was noted that there will be a monitor at that location during drop-off and pick-up and that students are currently crossing St. Johns in the absence of any crosswalk.

St. Johns Sidewalk:

The District is in very early conversations with the City about the possibility of extending the sidewalk along the west side of St. Johns from the HPHS auditorium entrance to the bus loop entrance. Significant grade, construction and safety issues exist and several Advisory Group members questioned the necessity of this extension given the new Woodpath crossing.

Communication:

Dr. Sassen indicated that communications will be going out in the next few weeks to parents and students regarding student parking, carpooling, police parking enforcement, new traffic patterns and other issues related to parking, traffic and safety around HPHS.

The District has created a link on its website where all agendas, minutes and other information related to the Advisory Group (including Ordinance 53-14 and the District's transportation plan) can be found.

The District will make a concerted effort to inform neighbors and other stakeholders of upcoming Advisory Group meetings, including expanding an existing neighborhood e-mail list and e-mailing notices of future Advisory Group meetings and agendas.

Dr. Sassen will send out a monthly or regular e-mail to neighbors alerting them of upcoming HPHS events that may affect traffic in the neighborhood. In addition, the District will also place this information on the Advisory Group section of its website.

Analysis of Traffic, Safety and Parking Plan:

How (and when) to assess the efficacy of the plan will be addressed at a future meeting. The Chair stated that measuring traffic flow probably didn't make sense in the fall while construction was ongoing. Mr. Small suggested reaching out to the neighbors for feedback.

Feedback:

The Chair suggested putting a link on the District website for comments from neighbors, parents, students, teachers and other stakeholders. The Chair further suggested that someone from the District be appointed to receive comments from stakeholders and offered to be copied on all comments from and responses to stakeholders.

Other Business:

There was no other business from the Advisory Group.

Adjournment:

At 9:30 p.m., Chief Shafer moved to adjourn and Ms. Kornberg seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the Advisory Group unanimously approved that the meeting be adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Jenks, Chair
Highland Park High School Advisory Group

Highland Park High School Advisory Group

July 14, 2015 Status Report To The City of Highland Park & Township High School District #113

Pursuant to Section 5(D)(4) of the City of Highland Park Ordinance 53-15 (the “Ordinance”), the Highland Park High School Advisory Group (the “Advisory Group”) met for the first time at 7:33 p.m. on July 14, 2015 at the District 113 Administration Building. This status report is being delivered to the City and the District pursuant to the requirement set forth in Section 5(D)(6) of the Ordinance.

Meeting Synopsis:

During the meeting, the Advisory Group reviewed the requirements of the Ordinance and the District’s plans for complying with this Ordinance. Specific topics covered included (i) new traffic patterns in and around HPHS; (ii) the location of traffic monitors and community service officers at HPHS; (iii) the District’s trip reduction strategy; (iv) the District’s bus policy; (v) Highland Park Police Department resources available to encourage compliance with applicable traffic laws; (vi) the expanded Vine Avenue parking lot; (vii) the Woodpath crosswalk; (viii) the proposed St. Johns sidewalk; and (ix) upcoming District communications to parents, students, neighbors and other stakeholders. Pursuant to Section 5(D)(5) of the Ordinance, public input was solicited at the beginning of the meeting.

Resolutions Passed:

The Advisory Group passed several organizational resolutions, including establishing a quorum and a first year meeting schedule pursuant to Section 5(D)(4) of the Ordinance.

In reviewing the District’s bus policy, the members of the Advisory Group wanted to know if the District was taking all reasonable measures necessary to maximize bus ridership. Because there were many unanswered questions during this discussion, the Advisory Group unanimously passed a motion requiring the District to make a detailed, comprehensive bus policy presentation at the Advisory Group’s November meeting. The November meeting date was chosen because the Advisory Group anticipates focusing at the September meeting on how the District’s initial traffic, safety and parking plans have worked in practice and whether modifications are necessary or appropriate.