

City of Alexandria, Virginia

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5-28-02

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 21, 2002

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE INSTALLATION OF A TRAFFIC SIGNAL AT THE INTERSECTION OF WEST GLEBE ROAD AND OLD DOMINION BOULEVARD

ISSUE: City Council consideration of staff recommendations regarding the installation of a traffic signal at West Glebe Road and Old Dominion Boulevard.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) receive this report and docket it for public hearing on June 15; and
- (2) at the conclusion of the public hearing, authorize staff to install a traffic signal at the intersection of West Glebe Road and Old Dominion Boulevard.

BACKGROUND: Neighbors in the vicinity of the intersection of West Glebe Road and Old Dominion Boulevard have raised concerns about speeding traffic along West Glebe Road and have requested that the City take steps to control the speeding traffic. The posted speed limit on Glebe Road is 25 miles per hour (mph). Staff's recent traffic surveys show that motorists are traveling an average of 29 mph. The neighbors have also requested that a traffic signal be installed at the intersection of West Glebe Road and Old Dominion Boulevard to assist pedestrians in crossing Glebe Road safely.

Staff has been working with the Upper Potomac West work group for the past several months on a traffic and pedestrian plan for Glebe Road designed to meet the concerns expressed by the neighbors. This plan has a number of recommendations, one of which is the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Glebe Road and Old Dominion Boulevard which staff recommends moving ahead with now. The remaining recommendations addressing speeding and parking issues are being developed.

DISCUSSION: Staff performed an engineering study and found that the intersection of Glebe Road and Old Dominion Boulevard meets the criteria established in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) for traffic signal installation. Specifically, the volume of traffic on West Glebe Road is high enough to make it difficult for pedestrians to cross the street and for motorists to make turning movements at this intersection.

Installing a traffic signal at this location will require removing 31 feet of parking (or one-and-a-half parking spaces) in front of 700 and 700-A West Glebe Road (see attached diagram). The parking removal is necessary in order to create two lanes (a through lane and a left turn lane) for the east bound Glebe Road traffic approaching the signal. A through lane and left turn lane already exist for the westbound Glebe Road traffic approaching the signal. The Old Dominion Boulevard approaches to the proposed signal will be vehicle actuated. This means that the signal will only cycle when there is traffic on Old Dominion Boulevard. In addition, the City is examining current technology to address speed issues through an additional means of sensor activation. Sensor activation would turn the signal from green to yellow, then red when a vehicle or vehicles are speeding along the West Glebe corridor.

The proposed traffic signal will include pedestrian signals to allow pedestrians to cross West Glebe Road safely. The next closest signal where pedestrians can cross is at Russell Road which is nearly a quarter of a mile away. This is too far to expect pedestrians destined for Old Dominion Boulevard to walk in order to safely cross the street. The proposed signal is not expected to create excessive delays on Glebe Road.

The Upper Potomac West work group, Lennox Place, and the North Ridge and Brighton Square civic associations support the proposed traffic signal. This issue was brought before the Traffic and Parking Board at its April 22, 2002 meeting. Mr. Ruggiero made a motion to deny the request that was seconded by Mr. Johnson. The reason for this motion is that some members of the Board felt that the speeding issue should be addressed before installing a traffic signal. The motion to deny the request failed. The Board approved the staff recommendation by a vote of 4-2.

It should be noted that the Police Department has initiated numerous speeding enforcement details at this location, and so far this year has issued 278 speeding tickets between the 500 and 800 blocks of West Glebe Road. Police enforcement is limited by the resources available, and the proposed traffic signal will enhance the City's ability to control speeding at all hours, especially when Police are not present to enforce speeding limits.

At the Traffic and Parking Board meeting, several residents who live in the houses on West Glebe Road near the proposed signal expressed concern about being able to safely exit their driveways when traffic is stopped at the proposed signal. With no traffic signal these residents say it is difficult to exit their driveways because of the speed and volume of traffic. These residents are concerned that when the traffic signal is operational exiting their driveways will be more difficult. Staff acknowledges that there will be times when traffic waiting for the signal will momentarily block the driveways. However, based on the 24-hour traffic volume study, this is not expected to be a significant problem. Also, the signal will be vehicle actuated on Old Dominion Boulevard; consequently, the signal will only turn red for Glebe Road when there is demand on Old Dominion Boulevard. Staff believes that the proposed signal will make it easier to exit the driveways because the speed of traffic will be slower.

FISCAL IMPACT: The construction cost of the traffic signal is estimated to be \$80,000. This will be funded through the reprogramming of funds from a Capital Improvement Project for Bridge Repair and Rehabilitation that has been postponed pending State revisions to the project. These funds have already been allocated by City Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

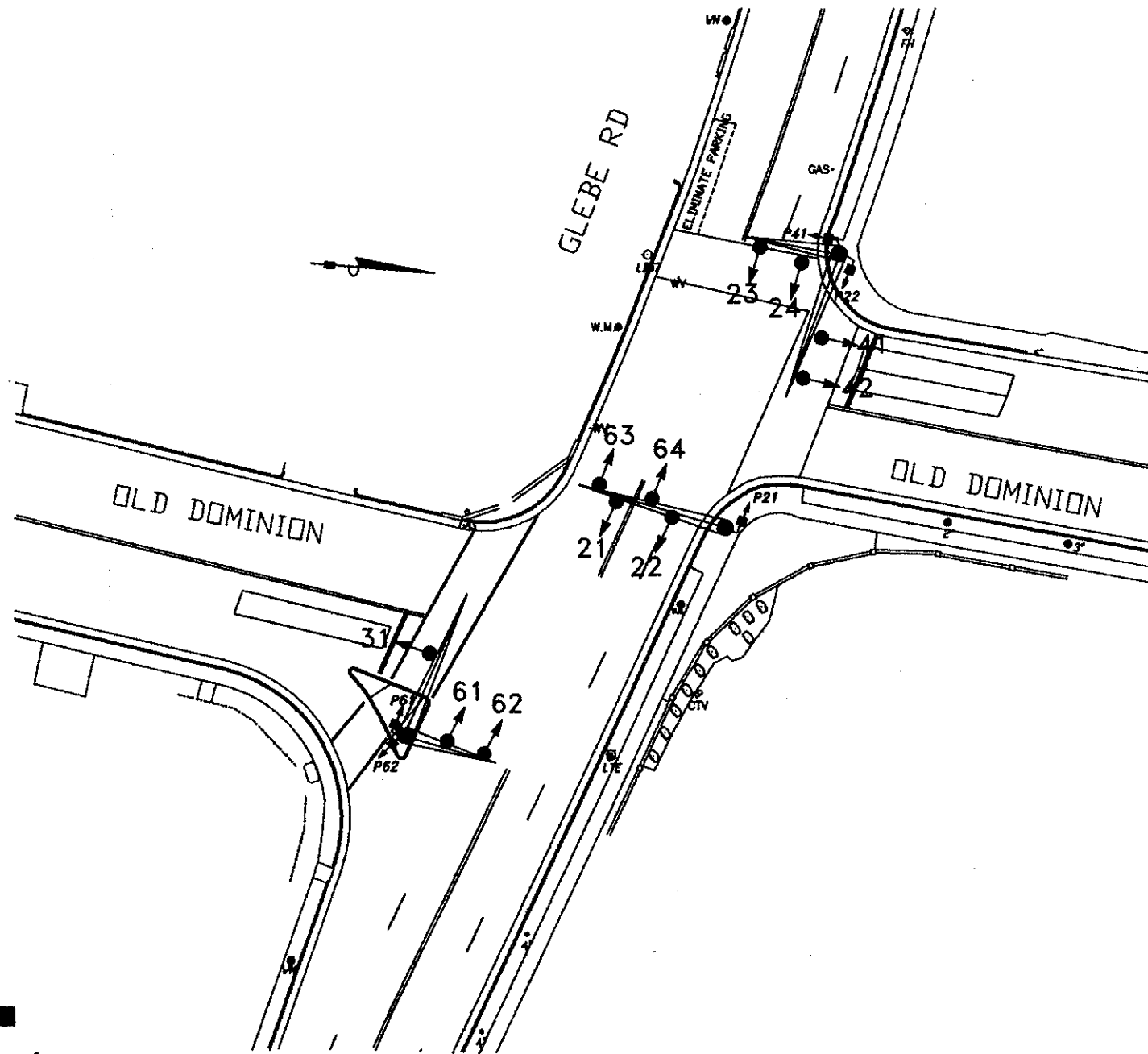
Attachment 1. Diagram showing the removal of parking on Glebe Road

STAFF:

Richard Baier, P.E., Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

Douglas McCobb, P.E., Deputy Director, Transportation and Transit Services, T&ES

Alfred Coleman, Budget/Management Analyst, OMB



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