From the desk of…

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Memo

To: Board of Managers

CC: Shana Davis-Cook, Village Manager

From: John M. Fitzgerald, Chief of Police JMF

Date: March 6, 2014

Re: Sign Survey Timeline

This memo is intended to provide the Board with a chronology of events related to the recently completed Village sign survey, and culminating in the attached recommendation by the Traffic Committee. All of the memos referenced in the below timeline are included within the materials following this memo.

Late summer, 2013:

The Village Manager met with Chief Fitzgerald and explained the need to have a comprehensive inventory and evaluation of all official signs in the Village, and she asked the Police Department to take on the project.

October-November, 2013:

Chief Fitzgerald and then-Corporal Tiedemann walked the Village streets and documented the location and condition of each sign.

December, 2013:

Clerical staff entered all of the handwritten inventory information into a spreadsheet that would make the data easier to work with. The Board is welcome to an e-copy of this spreadsheet; we will gladly send it or otherwise provide it upon request.

December 30, 2013:

Chief Fitzgerald submitted a memo to the Village Manager entitled, *Summary Report: Village Sign Survey,* which summarized the data in the spreadsheet, and included several recommendations for improvements to the existing signage.

January 17, 2013:

The Village Manager and Chief Fitzgerald met with Board Chair Patricia Baptiste and Board Vice Chair Michael Denger to review the December 30 *Summary Report* memo. Ms. Baptiste and Mr. Denger determined that some of the recommendations required policy decisions, while others did not. Ms. Baptiste directed Chief Fitzgerald to generate a written summary containing two succinct lists: actions requiring policy decisions, and actions that do not.

February 3, 2014:

In response to Ms. Baptiste's direction (above), Chief Fitzgerald submitted a memo entitled, *Executive Summary: Policy issues related to the Village Sign Survey.* After reviewing the *Executive Summary*, Ms. Baptiste and Mr. Denger directed that the policy issues be reviewed by the Traffic Committee. The Traffic Committee was tasked with making a recommendation to the Board in advance of the Board's March meeting.

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February 25, 2014:

The Traffic Committee, chaired by Dr. Porter Wheeler, convened and reviewed the *Summary Report* and the *Executive Summary*. Chief Fitzgerald and Sergeant Tiedemann were present to answer questions. At the meeting, the committee voted in support of all recommendations with one exception—11[1] miscellaneous 'no parking' signs. Dr. Wheeler asked Chief Fitzgerald for additional details regarding those signs.

February 26, 2014:

Chief Fitzgerald wrote a memo entitled, *Explanation of the 'Parking (other)' category,* and emailed it to Dr. Wheeler and every member of the Traffic Committee as agreed. That memo identified each of the locations where the 9 recommended 'no parking' signs would be placed, along with the rationale for them.

March 2, 2014:

Dr. Wheeler issued a memo entitled, *Report on Traffic Committee Meeting of February 25, 2014*. In that memo, Dr. Wheeler documented the Traffic Committee's support for all of the recommendations from the *Executive Summary* (those requiring policy decisions as well as those that do not), however, they recommended that the 'no parking' signs for the perimeter of Laurel Park be deferred until the traffic flow study was completed for the streets around the Village Hall.

[1] Of the 11 recommended signs in this category, 2 of them were recommended for Brookville Road; as those are under state control, the Traffic Committee did not address them. The elimination of these 2 signs from consideration brought the total of additional 'no parking' signs under consideration to 9.

Traffic Committee's Report
and
Recommendation Memo

March 2, 2014

MEMORANDUM

To: The Board of Managers, Chevy Chase Village
From: Porter Wheeler, Chair, Traffic Committee
Date: March 2, 2014
Subj.: **Report on Traffic Committee Meeting of February 25, 2014**
Copies to: Shana Davis-Cook, Village Manager; Members of the Traffic Committee

The Board of Managers has referred to the Traffic Committee the report and recommendations of Chief Fitzgerald related to the Village Sign Survey, dated February 3, 2014. The Traffic Committee met on February 25, 2014, to discuss the various policy issues on signage related to that Memo, and other traffic matters.

The Chief attended and made a thorough report including responding to numerous questions regarding the survey and documentation of signage throughout the Village. The Committee was favorably impressed by objective quantitative detail captured and the rationale underlying the recommendations. Most of the recommendations were seeking more consistent intersection and parking signage to encourage adherence to existing laws and regulations. General safety and coherence were the theme, not speed or crash experience. The Committee concurs in these recommendations and encourages favorable consideration by the Board.

The Committee considered the first section, namely "Actions Requiring Policy Decisions," in detail section by section, and makes the following recommendations:

1. Children at Play. The Committee unanimously concurs. Removal seems well founded. Children live on virtually all our streets, but should not be "at play" on the roadway. Drivers should be continuously alert.
2. 'Bump' Warning Signs. The Committee unanimously concurs. Bump warning signs should be as close to the bumps as possible, but we suggest reasonable flexibility to accommodate the individual locations. The Committee further suggests that before or upon repaving streets, households be surveyed about whether to continue existence of said bumps.
3. No Parking Any Time (NPAT). The Committee concurs with one abstention. Even though parking is not allowed near Stop signs with or without signage, the NPAT signage should be added to problem locations to reduce sight line hazards and intersection clogging. However, the Committee is concerned was about sign proliferation, and restraint was urged to focus new signs only on those locations where violations are prevalent, troublesome, or parking violations are likely to interfere with emergency access to Village residences.
4. Parking (other). The Committee requested identification of the locations recommended for the 11 additional parking restriction signs, and further information was provided promptly by the Chief. After review, the number proposed was reduced to nine. The Committee was polled and concurs with these additions to remove observed parking and/or travel hazards, but further suggests that the installations at the Laurel Park location be delayed. We understand that there is an ongoing review of traffic and parking in the vicinity of Town Hall and

the Post Office and those findings should be taken into account in case there might be inconsistencies.

5. No Trucks. The Committee unanimously concurs with the three additional signs to fill in where missing at Village entry points.
6. Stop/Yield Signs. There was substantial discussion of the rationale for these two changes of signage. The Committee concurs (two opposed) with conditions. The added signage at the intersection of Laurel and W. Melrose should be a 'Yield' sign, not a Stop sign, in better keeping with the MCUTD Section 2B.06 that states: "At intersections where a full stop is not necessary at all times, consideration should first be given to using less restrictive measures such as YIELD signs." And, a brief explanation of the rules of entry and circulation at Chevy Chase Circle should be prepared for the *Crier*.

Remaining Sections of Signage Report (actions not requiring policy decisions). The Committee discussed the remaining sections of recommended actions in some detail, and then endorsed all the additional recommendations *en masse*. The Committee commented very favorably on the removal of numerous signs that no longer served any useful purpose or conveyed outdated messages. The Committee suggests that all the signage work be performed as convenient in order to minimize the installation cost.

OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED

Pedestrian Crossing. The Committee also discussed with great dismay the SHA decision on the Village request for a pedestrian activated signal on Connecticut Avenue as conveyed by SHA (Mr. Young) letter of February 10, 2014. **A separate resolution is attached urging the Board of Managers to persevere** and redouble their much appreciated efforts on behalf of obtaining this needed pedestrian crossing.

Wisconsin Sidewalk. The Committee heard a report from members on the Wisconsin sidewalk meeting with SHA held at Village Hall on February 19, 2014. The discussion primarily focused on our inability to understand the speed and priority given to this improvement, and its inclusion of a pedestrian-activated signal without any clear indication of metrics or warrants that had been demanded related to our desired crossing on Connecticut already requested by the Village.

Memo from Chief Fitzgerald to the Traffic Committee Providing Additional Detail Regarding 9 Additional 'No Parking' Signs

February 26, 2014

From the desk of…

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Memo

To: Traffic Committee

From: John M. Fitzgerald, Chief of Police JMF

Date: February 26, 2014

Re: Explanation of the 'Parking (other)' category

In a table on the first page of the executive summary memo that we discussed last night, I listed a category entitled 'Parking (other)'. I have excerpted the relevant portions of the table below:

Actions Requiring Policy Decisions		
Sign Type	**Count**	**Description**
Parking (other)	11	We recommend **adding 11 parking restriction signs** at locations where a gap exists in a series of signs, or where parking currently creates a traffic hazard.

The above portion of the table indicates that we were recommending a total of 11[1] additional parking restriction signs. The Traffic Committee understandably wanted to know the details about these additional signs prior to making its recommendation to the Board.

After a close look at the spreadsheet, the 11 signs are related to only five locations, as follows:

Location 1:
Laurel Park. (6 added signs)

Currently, parking is prohibited along the grassy edge of Laurel Park only on the east side between W. Lenox and W. Melrose(about 40% of the park's perimeter), but there are an insufficient number of signs (only 2) to give adequate notice along that portion. **We recommend adding at least 1 additional 'No Parking Any Time' sign along that stretch** (along Laurel Park across from 8 W. Lenox).

Parking is not prohibited along the remaining 60% or so of the park's perimeter and we are recommending that signs be added to prohibit parking along the remainder of the perimeter with the exception of the stretch immediately behind the Public Works yard where there is a concrete curb. Our rationale for prohibiting parking along the majority of the park is twofold: First, parking is hazardous along the sloped and un-curbed edges of the park. Cars occasionally have difficulty getting back onto the road surface when the ground is wet due to the sloped shoulders, and when vehicles park fully on the roadway along the west side, they make it difficult for traffic to navigate in and around the western intersection of Laurel and W. Lenox. Second, storm water runoff is eroding Laurel Park, and the Board is considering hiring a consultant to recommend what to do to stem the erosion. Parking along the un-curbed, sloped shoulders of the park will accelerate this problem. **It would require 5 additional 'No Parking' signs to span this area.** The six photos below illustrate the condition of the park today.

[1] Please note that the number of recommended signs is reduced from 11 to 9; see ***Locations 4 & 5*** on the last page of this memo for an explanation.

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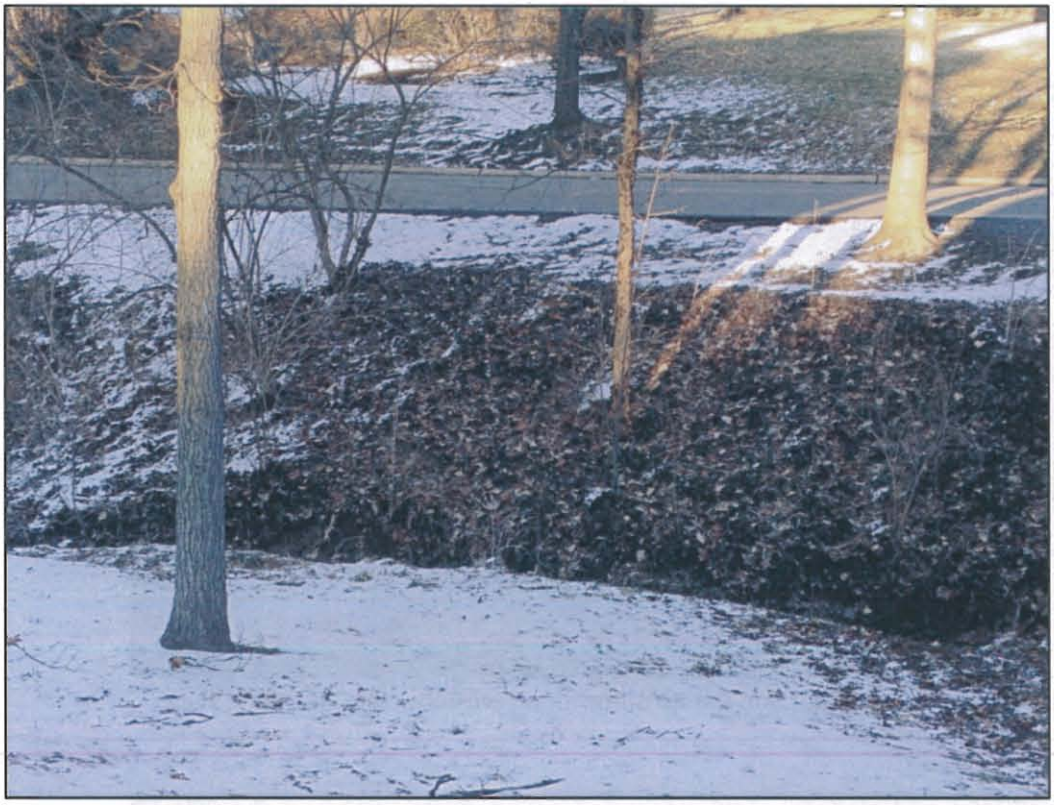
'No Parking' sign and steep topography on east side of Laurel Park

Sloped shoulder area and lack of curbing along east side of Laurel Park



Deep ravine and steep sloping banks in Laurel Park

Cracking asphalt and eroding shoulder area along the west side of Laurel Park

Close-up of cracking asphalt and the no curbs along western edge of Laurel Park

Crumbling roadway edge and sloped shoulder along west side of Laurel Park

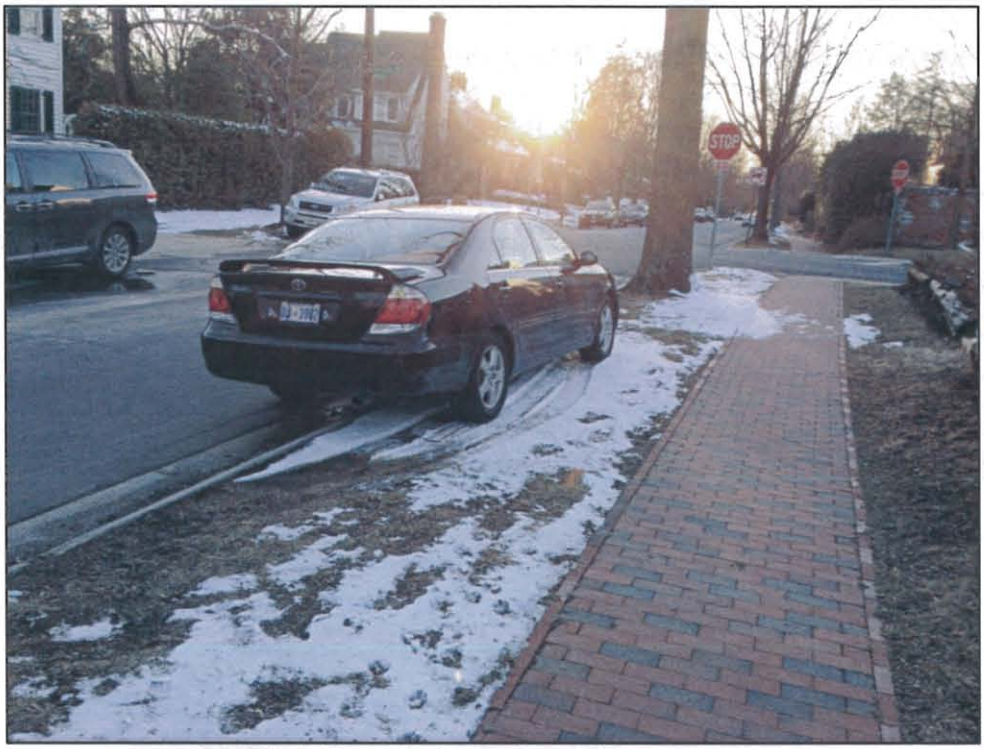
Location 2:
The south curb of the triangular green space at Oxford and Brookville. (1 added sign)

This short stretch of roadway is bordered by Broad Branch Road on the east and Brookville Road on the west, and there are stop signs at both ends. There is heavy parking 'pressure' on this short stretch of roadway. Today, there were a total of 7 cars parked at 26 Oxford—3 in the driveway and 4 on the street. I spoke with the resident there (one of her cars was illegally parked too close to the stop sign, so I asked her to move it to avoid a citation), and she said she has 5 cars as well as hired help who drive to her home, and therefore she is opposed any parking restrictions along this block.

The cars along this block routinely park over the curbs to keep the roadway passage open. It is illegal to park over the curb, and if these cars parked lawfully, the roadway would be more difficult to navigate, and it would be impossible for two cars to pass in opposite directions.

The six photos below show the condition of the area as I found it today.

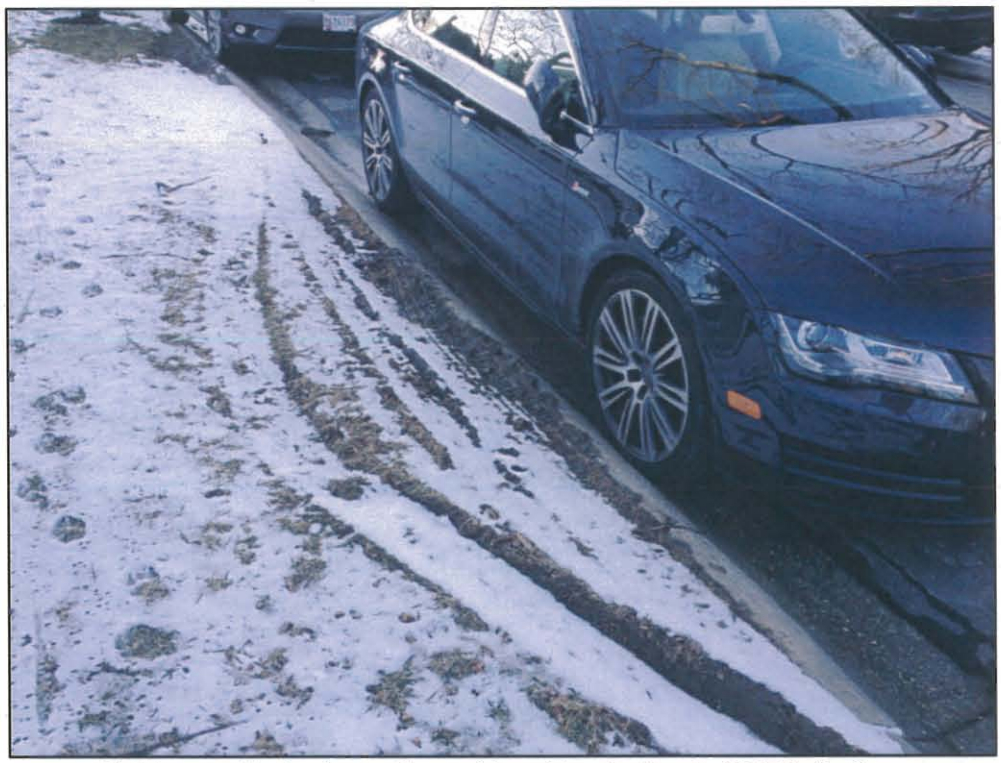
Oxford facing west from Broad Branch looking toward Brookville



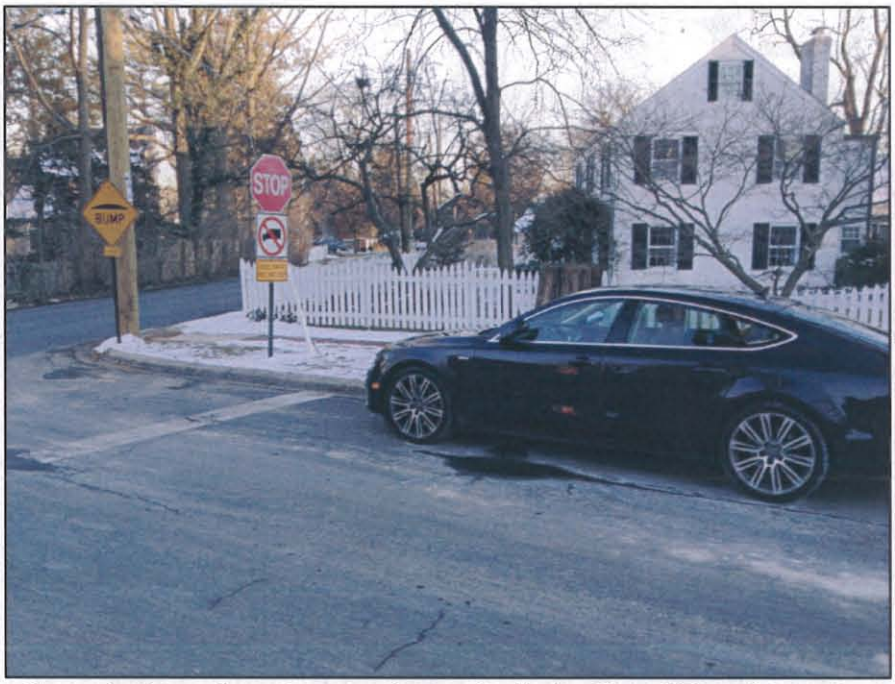
A car illegally parked over the curb on Oxford

Vehicle parked over the curb on Oxford near Brookville

Different angle of the same car in the previous photo



Evidence of prior 'over the curb' parking in front of 26 Oxford



Car parked too close the stop sign on Oxford at Broad Branch

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE….

Location 3:

Bradley Lane (south curb) between Connecticut Avenue and the easternmost driveway from the rear of 1 Quincy Street (the Sauls). (2 added signs)

Parking is unrestricted along this stretch of Bradley Lane. When cars traveling on westbound Bradley stop and wait at the red light at Connecticut, the line of cars is quite long. This is not a problem by itself, but it becomes a problem when cars are parked along the eastbound curb near Connecticut Avenue. When this occurs, cars traveling east on Bradley from Connecticut logjam behind the parked cars; they cannot drive around the parked cars because the stack of waiting westbound cars prevent them from being able to do so. **We recommend placing 2 signs prohibiting parking along the south (eastbound) curb of Bradley to cure this problem.** The below photo was taken today.

Bradley facing east from Connecticut with stopped westbound traffic stacked at the light.

Locations 4& 5:

The remaining two locations (Brookville and E. Melrose—1 recommended sign; 6300 block of Brookville—1 recommended sign) are under the control of the Maryland State Highway Administration, so they **are moot for our purposes.**

The total number of additional parking restriction signs that we recommend now stands at 9 (rather than 11) after subtracting the two signs from item #4 immediately above.

Please let me know if you need further information.

Executive Summary: Policy issues related to the Village Sign Survey

February 3, 2014

From the desk of…

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Memo

To: Board of Managers

CC: Shana Davis-Cook, Village Manager

From: John M. Fitzgerald, Chief of Police JMF

Date: February 3, 2014

Re: Executive Summary: Policy issues related to the Village Sign Survey

In the sign survey memo to the Board (12/30/2013), we identified four action categories to be considered by the Board. Some of the actions would require that the Board make policy decisions, as follows:

Actions Requiring Policy Decisions		
Sign Type	**Count**	**Description**
Children at Play	8	**We recommend removing these signs.** Drivers should be careful on all residential streets, and children live on all of our streets. No children should be 'at play' on the roadway. These signs add no value.
'Bump' warning signs	40	We recommend **relocating these signs so that they are adjacent to the speed humps.** Our 'Bump' warning (BW) signs are placed inconsistently. Some of our signs are fairly close to the speed bumps, while others are much too far away. The County's BW signs are placed directly adjacent to their bumps. Virtually all of our BW signs were erected without any guiding policy as our current Speed Hump Policy was established in January, 2011. The language in our policy related to BW sign placement states that the signs should be placed wherever "the Public Works Department finds most suitable." I suggest we tighten that up a bit.
NPAT 30' from Stop sign	21	We suggest **adding a total of 21 No Parking Any Time (NPAT) signs near 'Stop' signs** to clearly identify the area where parking is prohibited. Parking too close to an intersection creates a sight line hazard. There are 44 stop signs without NPAT signs in the Village, however, after reviewing our data to determine where violations are most prevalent, we identified 21 locations where we suggest NPAT signs be placed.
Parking (other)	11	We recommend **adding 11 parking restriction signs** at locations where a gap exists in a series of signs, or where parking currently creates a traffic hazard.
'No Trucks'	3	Three Village entry points lack this sign.
'Stop'	2	We recommend **changing the 'Yield'** on Magnolia at CCC **to a 'Stop'**; we also suggest **adding a 'Stop' sign** at the intersection of Laurel Parkway and W. Melrose

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The below recommended actions can be accomplished *without* the Board having to make policy:

Actions NOT Requiring Policy Decisions		
Maintenance Items		
Corrective Action	**Count**	**Description**
Replacement sign needed	44	Includes signs that are badly faded; old 'text' style signs that should be replaced by the universal symbolic style; signs that are incorrect (ex: a NP sign that needs a two-headed arrow rather than one); signs that are too small to be effective; missing signs
Clean	27	Signs that are dirty and must be power washed
Straighten	16	Poles or signs that are crooked
Obstruction	4	Signs that are partially or fully obscured by bushes or tree limbs
Fastener	1	Missing bolts needed to re-attach existing sign
Sign Removals		
Sign Type	**Count**	**Description**
Neighborhood Watch	49	The Village is not actively participating in the Neighborhood Watch (NW) program.
Traffic Laws are Photo Enforced	20	We need these signs along Connecticut Avenue to satisfy the law and to give fair warning to motorists. We should consider removing them from all other locations.
This Area Under Surveillance	3	There is no active video surveillance conducted anywhere in the Village.
Deaf Child	2	Both are on E. Lenox; I spoke with Ms. Nancy Mellon (9 E. Lenox) who had advocated for the signs on behalf of her son many years ago; he is now 22 years old and Ms. Mellon agrees that we should remove them.
Consistency Items		
Corrective Action	**Count**	**Description**
Relocate signs	15	Includes signs on the wrong side of the street (must be on the right), or signs that are too close to or too far from an intersection, etc.
Increase sign height	1	1 sign is only 3' from the ground; must be at least 5' above ground
New Signs Needed		
Sign Type	**Count**	**Description**
Street names	2	Missing street name signs
Bump	1	1 location without a sign

Village Sign Survey Report

December 30, 2013

From the desk of…

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Memo

To: Board of Managers

CC: Shana Davis-Cook, Village Manager

From: John M. Fitzgerald, Chief of Police JMF

Date: December 30, 2013

Re: Summary Report: Village Sign Survey

At the request of the Village Manager, during the months of October and November, Corporal Eric Tiedemann and I conducted a street-by-street survey to inventory and evaluate every sign in the Village. Combined, we catalogued information for 935 signs on approximately 700 sign poles, and we have since placed all the information in an Excel spreadsheet to make it easier to manage the data. A hard copy of the spreadsheet is attached hereto, but a soft copy will be available to you, as well.

The below table provides an interesting 'quick look' at the most prevalent signs in the Village (including state-controlled Connecticut Avenue and Brookville Road) by type:

5 Most Prevalent Signs by Type	
Sign type	**Quantity**
Parking (all variations)	344
Stop	133
Street names	128
Bump	56
Neighborhood Watch	49
Speed limit	44
Total	**754**

Most of the signs are fine as they are, while others may require some action by the Village. We have identified four action categories to be considered by the Board; the categories are:

Maintain. (92 entries). This category includes actions such as cleaning or replacing a sign, updating a sign with a newer version (universal symbol vs. text), straightening a bent or twisted sign or pole, moving a sign to a better location, etc.

Remove. (83 entries). This category identifies signs that are no longer needed for any of a variety of reasons.

Consistency. (56 entries). This category identifies inconsistencies in sign placement. For the most part, entries in this category are not urgent from a traffic safety perspective, but they may be helpful in establishing relevant policy going forward.

No sign. (40 entries). This category identifies places where either a sign is missing (e.g. the pole is there but the sign is gone), or where the placement of a new sign should be considered.

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Each of the four categories is broken out in greater detail, below.

Maintain (92)
Public Works could perform the corrective actions in this category. There would be some cost for the replacement signs.

'Maintain' Category Breakdown		
Corrective Action	**Count**	**Description**
Replacement sign needed	44	Includes signs that are badly faded; old 'text' style signs that should be replaced by the universal symbolic style; signs that are incorrect (ex: a NP sign that needs a two-headed arrow rather than one); signs that are too small to be effective; missing signs
Clean	27	Signs that are dirty and must be power washed
Straighten	16	Poles or signs that are crooked
Obstruction	4	Signs that are partially or fully obscured by bushes or tree limbs
Fastener	1	Missing bolts needed to re-attach existing sign

Examples:

Faded sign and crooked pole

Dirty

Crooked

Obscured

Remove (83)
Public Works could remove all signs in this category fairly easily for the cost of their labor.

'Remove' Category Breakdown		
Sign Type	**Count**	**Description**
Neighborhood Watch	49	The Village is not actively participating in the Neighborhood Watch (NW) program (Note: In place of NW, we have a robust communication protocol to keeps our community informed of crime activity and crime prevention strategies).
Traffic Laws are Photo Enforced	20	We need these signs along Connecticut Avenue to satisfy the law and to give fair warning to motorists. We should consider removing them from all other locations (except Brookville Road) as they are unnecessary and we do not foresee placing cameras on other roadways in the Village. There are only 3 such signs along Brookville; this roadway is heavily traveled and leaving them in place may have a calming effect on traffic on that roadway.
Children at Play	8	Drivers should be careful on all residential streets, and children live on all of our streets. No children should be 'at play' on the roadway. These signs add no value.
This Area Under Surveillance	3	Two of them are on E. Irving and should be removed as there is no surveillance in that area. The third sign is at the north end of the Buffer Zone (Belmont/Park), and it is properly placed, but to reduce potential Village liability, the text should be changed to read, "Video Cameras in Use." The current language may create an expectation that someone is actively watching/protecting the reader.
Deaf Child	2	Both are on E. Lenox; I spoke with Ms. Nancy Mellon (9 E. Lenox) who had advocated for the signs on behalf of her son; he is now 22 years old and Ms. Mellon said that there is no more need for the signs and that we should remove them.
N/A	1	Pole without a sign

Examples:

"This area under surveillance"

"Traffic laws photo enforced"

Consistency (56)
Public Works could perform the corrective actions in this category for the cost of their labor.

'Consistency' Category Breakdown		
Corrective Action	**Count**	**Description**
Relocate 'BUMP' sign (adjacent to/closer to speed hump)	40	Our 'BUMP' warning (BW) signs are placed inconsistently. Some of our signs are fairly close to the speed bumps, while others are much too far away. The County's BW signs are placed directly adjacent to their bumps. According to the Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), Chapter 2C, table 2C-4, there is no minimum distance recommended for placement of our warning signs based upon our side street speed limit (25 mph). The Board should consider a standard policy for placing the BW signs (I suggest directly adjacent to the bump, or within 25' prior to the bump if direct adjacency is not possible at a particular location). Virtually all of our BW signs were erected without any guiding policy as our current Speed Hump Policy was established in January, 2011. According to our records, only two speed humps (on Hesketh) were placed since our policy was adopted. The language in our policy related to BW sign placement states that the signs should be placed wherever "the Public Works Department finds most suitable." I suggest we tighten that up a bit.
Relocate other sign	15	Includes signs on the wrong side of the street (must be on the right), or signs that are too close to or too far from an intersection, etc.
Increase sign height	1	1 sign is only 3' from the ground; must be at least 5' above ground

Examples:

'Bump' sign about 100' away from the hump

'No outlet' sign on left side of the roadway

No Sign (40)

Public Works could install the signs in this category. There would be a cost for any added signs.

'No Sign' Category Breakdown		
Sign Type	**Count**	**Description**
NPAT 30' from Stop sign	21	Many of our intersections have No Parking Any Time (NPAT) signs that clearly identify the area where parking is prohibited (underlying law prohibits parking within 30' of a stop sign), while others do not. Parking too close to an intersection creates a sight line hazard. There are **44** stop signs without NPAT signs, however, after reviewing our data to determine where violations are most prevalent, we identified **21 locations where we suggest NPAT signs be placed.**
Parking (other)	11	A small number of locations were identified where parking control signs should be added.
No Trucks	3	Three Village entry points lack this sign.
Stop	2	Consider changing the 'Yield' on Magnolia at CCC to a 'Stop'; also need a 'Stop' on Laurel at W. Melrose
Street names	2	Missing street name signs
Bump	1	1 location without a sign

'No parking any time ➡' near intersection on even side of Grafton @ Cedar

Absence of parking restriction sign near intersection on odd side of Grafton @ Cedar

'Yield' on Magnolia at Chevy Chase Circle vs.

'Stop' on Grafton at Chevy Chase Circle

I will be available to discuss this report with you further at your convenience.