PETITION

To: Mr. Chris Tomich, Staff Liaison, and the Northbrook Safety Commission

From: Danielle Waintraub, 1700 Longvalley Drive, Northbrook, Illinois
Melissa Granholm, Attorney at Law, 1709 Longvalley Drive, Northbrook, Illinois

Subject: Longvalley Drive
Date: July 17, 2007

1. Introduction

This proposal is brought by residents of Longvalley Drive in the Arrowhead Subdivision. (Copies of signed petitions are attached as Exhibit A.) The residents are concerned with the high motor vehicle traffic volume on Longvalley Drive. Longvalley Drive is an access street for the Northbrook West subdivision located to the west of Longvalley. Longvalley is the only northbound means of ingress and egress to and from Northbrook West and, as such, handles much of the northbound traffic from Northbrook West. We have developed some proposals to alleviate the problem and are writing to request their immediate implementation.

Copies of the Village Maps of the area are attached as Exhibit B. Photographs of the relevant streets are attached as Exhibits C and E.

2. Summary

The Longvalley area is dense with traffic, housing, and cars and is hazardous to both people and pets. The Village Subdivision and Development Code provides guidelines to address problems of this kind. We propose rerouting traffic and reducing the speed on Longvalley and request immediate implementation of these proposals or other similar proposals to ensure a resolution of this problem.

3. Description of the Longvalley Traffic Flow

The Longvalley area is dense with traffic, housing, and total number of cars.

3.1. Road Conditions. Longvalley Drive is a U-shaped street that connects to an east/west street, Robincrest Drive. Because of its U-shape, Longvalley has a long sweeping curve, with a slight rise in topography, and motorists who enter Longvalley from Landwehr or Meadow pick up speed through the curve (consciously or not) and have no traffic stops or reasons to slow down. At the mid-point of Longvalley there is a T-intersection with Meadow Street, a road that leads to the Northbrook West subdivision. Longvalley is 27 feet wide, improved with curbs and sidewalks. The neighborhood speed limit for Northbrook West is 20 mph. The neighborhood speed limit for Longvalley is 25 mph.

3.2. Housing Conditions. There are 49 houses on Longvalley Drive and 20 houses on Robincrest Drive. Longvalley has a population of 35 children under the age of 14, the vast majority of whom are under 8 years of age. In contrast,
there are 212 houses located in Northbrook West. There are two southbound points of ingress/egress for Northbrook West, namely, Highland Avenue and Central Avenue. Both of these streets intersect with Techny Road. The only other way to enter and exit Northbrook West is via Longvalley at its intersection with Meadow. Traffic can pass either to the south to Robincrest or to the north, on Longvalley. The overwhelming majority of the traffic passing through the intersection of Longvalley and Meadow continues on north via Longvalley to access Landwehr Road.

### 3.3. Car Ownership and Usage

According to Village of Northbrook demographics, 17% of Northbrook households own three or more cars. Fifty-four percent of households own at least two cars. (See Exhibit D.) An extrapolation of these statistics indicates (conservatively) that the residents of Northbrook West subdivision would have approximately 398 cars. If each car makes one northbound round trip using Longvalley, approximately 796 cars would pass along Longvalley each day.

### 4. Problem with the Longvalley Traffic Flow

As a consequence of this traffic-flow density, the Longvalley area is hazardous to both people and pets. Because of its U-shape with its long sweeping curve and slight rise in topography, Longvalley has been a place of hazard for drivers and pedestrians. One human fatality has occurred on this curve. The fatality involved a car striking a tree, killing the driver. A family pet was also run over while on a leash. This curve poses a danger to all persons using the sidewalks and driveways because of the volume of traffic using Longvalley. Speeders and distracted drivers have just increased the danger.

### 5. Village Subdivision and Development Code Transportation and Circulation Systems: Section 4-102

Section 4-102 (A)(6) of the Code should guide the Safety Commission as it addresses the issues pertaining to Longvalley Drive. Longvalley measures 27 feet wide and fits the classification of a local street. The parameters for the design of local streets in Northbrook are as follows:

1. Traffic movements should be minimized.
2. There should be a uniform and low volume of traffic.
3. Excessive speeds should be discouraged.
4. Topography of the street should be taken into account.

See Exhibit F - Village Subdivision & Development Code.

### 6. Proposals for Change

Longvalley Drive can be made safer by rerouting traffic and reducing the speed.

**6.1. Rerouting Traffic.** Rerouting can be achieved by opening another northbound entrance and closing Longvalley at Meadow.

Relieve traffic on Longvalley by opening another northbound entrance to Northbrook West at Prairie Avenue.
Prairie Avenue is a north/south street in Northbrook West that was never connected to Prairie Avenue in the Prestwick/River Falls subdivision (Area 131 on Village map, Exhibit B) Prairie Avenue has a rather large empty easement which would appear to provide ample room to connect Prairie Avenue. See Exhibit C).

A connection would allow traffic to access both Landwehr and Walters by using a combination of streets, namely, Prestwick, River Falls, Hemlock Knoll Terrace and Arbor. Opening up Prairie Avenue would spread out traffic volume so all northbound traffic does not travel solely on Longvalley. Additionally, the streets in the Prestwick/River Falls neighborhood are set up on an east/west and north/south grid and would not create a traffic hazard like the Longvalley curve. Spreading and scattering the Northbrook West traffic by allowing several routes to Walters and Landwehr would not intensify traffic for just one road but would spread it out. Less traffic, fewer hazards.

**Close off Longvalley at Meadow except for emergency vehicles. See the photographs attached as Exhibit E.**

This option would not pose any safety hazards to Northbrook West but would improve safety for the Longvalley neighborhood.

**6.2. Reducing Speed.** Speed reduction can be accomplished by placing calming devices and reducing the speed limit.

*Place traffic calming devices (boulevards, narrowing, traffic circles, stop signs) at strategic positions.*

Road narrowing and/or other traffic calming devices may provide additional protection to pedestrians using sidewalks along the curve.

**Reduce the speed limit to 20 mph.**

The difference in speed limits between the neighborhoods encourages motorist to accelerate along Longvalley.

**7. Conclusion**

The Arrowhead subdivision and the Northbrook West subdivision were developed in the 1950’s and 60’s. The increase in automobile ownership and the mobility of the population today should cause the Village to consider changes to Longvalley Drive. Longvalley Drive is not adequate to handle the current traffic volume.

The residents of Longvalley Drive are asking the Safety Commission to recommend to the Village Board the aforementioned changes to Longvalley, Prairie and Meadow, in any combination, or for any other relief as the Safety Commission sees fit.