

**MINUTES OF THE
TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Monday, April 15, 2013
City Hall, Room 207
5:30 pm**

MEMBERS: Chairperson Matt Kuepers, Vice Chairperson Bryan Lipke, Alderman Thomas Sladek, Lieutenant Karl Ackermann, Charles Karow, Victoria Jones, and Daniel Theno

ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Alderman Tim De Wane, Alderwoman Amy Kocha, Alderman David Boyce, Recording Secretary and Traffic Engineer Dave Hansen

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Approval of the minutes from the March 18, 2013 Traffic Commission meeting.

A motion was made by Ald. Sladek, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to approve the minutes from the March 18, 2013 Traffic Commission meeting.

The remaining agenda items were taken in the following order: 5, 2-4, 6-7

INITIAL REQUESTS

2. Request by Ald. Tim De Wane on behalf of Mr. Peot to change the 2-WAY YIELD condition on Louise Street at Heyrman Street to a 2-WAY STOP condition.

David Hansen, City Traffic Engineer, stated that this identical request was brought forward to the Traffic Commission at the November 19, 2012 meeting. At that time, the Commission motioned to receive and place on file the request. He provided a summary of the past discussion on the item and supported his past recommendation of keeping the YIELD signs in place:

D. Hansen displayed a map of the intersection and neighborhood, and showed pictures of all approaches and view of the intersection. He stated that intersection site distance was more than adequate, and that both EB and WB YIELD signs were clearly visible from a distance. The E leg of the intersection is a cul-de-sac, and provides access to only 2 homes. He reviewed intersection crash history and found no crashes. D. Hansen stated that no crashes in the intersection's history are proof that the YIELD sign is working.

Ald. Tim De Wane stated he doesn't believe it will harm anybody by changing the YIELD signs to STOP. He would like the floor opened so that the requestors can speak about their concern.

Kevin & Gwen Peot (1636 Louise St) stated they see high speed motorists in their neighborhood where many children live. They reside on a corner property of the intersection. Motorists ignore the YIELD sign and the 25 mph speed limit, and travel fast when turning north from Louise St. Most violations take place during the morning into the afternoon. K. Peot stated he was told by CSI officers that speed radar boards were going to be placed near Louise/Heyrman but never were placed. Other nearby intersections need STOP signs too. Motorists stop on Louise St at the last minute if there is a conflicting vehicle on Heyrman St. Many residents and Proko-Wall funeral home visitors park on their street. They were questioned by Commissioners if near misses were occurring (no), and about how many vehicles per hour travel on Heyrman St (not known).

D. Theno stated he's not convinced that the request is the right solution. Other similar nearby streets have YIELD signs like Edison St. If motorists are disobeying YIELD signs at this location, then wouldn't they disobey STOP signs? This is more of a speed enforcement issue, not a sign issue. Based on statements, it appears Heyrman St has more of the speeding issue.

M. Kuepers questioned K. Peot on his definition of "high speed" in the context of making the EB to NB turn from Louise St to Heyrman St. K. Peot responded 35 mph in a 25 mph zone.

C. Karow and D. Hansen both supported D. Theno's statement that the concern is likely better addressed through enforcement versus engineering. C. Karow and M. Kuepers questioned and doubted whether it is possible to make a left-turn at this intersection at 35 mph.

Lt. Ackermann clarified the use of speed boards, and questioned K. Peot on which direction has the most speeding. K. Peot responded that he sees most speeders going northbound. Lt. Ackermann stated he could place speed boards next week on Heyrman St, and collect speed data.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by Ald. Sladek:

- A. To receive and place on file the request to change the 2-WAY YIELD condition on Louise Street at Heyrman Street to a 2-WAY STOP condition.
- B. That the Police Department place speed boards observing speeds on northbound Heyrman Street near Louise Street.

Ald. Tim De Wane stated 4 traffic officers will be dedicated to a new traffic enforcement unit. Lt. Ackermann added that these officers may be available for traffic enforcement as early as 1 week.

Motion carried.

3. Request by Ald. Kocha to evaluate the necessity of the traffic signal at the intersection of Henry Street and Deckner Avenue. **(Ald. Kocha – District 5)**

D. Hansen stated that in July 2010, Ald. Kocha brought forward a request to the Traffic Commission to revise the signal timings at this intersection to better accommodate Deckner Ave left-turn movements, and to consider adding vehicle detection to the signal. The motion at that time was to direct the Traffic Engineer to modify the timings to alleviate the left-turn concern. That in turn was completed by re-distributing the green times around the intersection, resulting in more green time for Deckner Ave. This likely is contributing to complaints of a longer wait time on Henry St, as the signal is pretimed/fixed.

Ald. Kocha stated that wait time is too long on Henry St. One constituent is opposed to removing the traffic signal. Ald. Kocha questioned if removal is the appropriate action. She asked when traffic counts were last taken at the intersection.

D. Hansen responded that the last count of the intersection was Summer 2011, and displayed the count summary on the computer displays. He noted the high SB Henry St right-turn volume, and that those motorists can take a right on red. He showed the results of the level of service (LOS) analysis of the existing intersection during the AM peak period and the signal timings, noting that Deckner Ave operates at LOS A (near free flow) while Henry St operates at LOS C (restricted free flow). Many intersections and movements operate at LOS D or E (near or at capacity) during peak hours, especially on side streets. Traffic signal warrants consist of more factors than just traffic volumes. Upgrades to the traffic signal such as adding vehicle and pedestrian detection would make the intersection operate more efficiently, but would cost tens of thousands of dollars to

construct, as the existing signal equipment is very old and would require upgrades to accommodate the new detection system and bring it up to code.

D. Theno, Commissioner and President of Oak Grove Neighborhood Association (OGNA), stated that OGNA recently met and discussed their concerns of the intersection, including too much wait time on Henry St and complaints of red lights on Deckner Ave when there's no traffic on Henry St. He doesn't think the signal is there for safety reasons, and that the signal is just costing money to maintain it. He recommended a study of its removal.

Ald. Kocha hesitates to claim that there is no safety issue. It would be difficult to cross Deckner Ave without the traffic signal during peak hours. She is satisfied with conducting a traffic signal warrant analysis, and was curious if the last study investigated warrants. D. Hansen clarified that the last study was only to retime the signal, and didn't include signal removal evaluation. He added that increasing the nighttime flash time may also be another way to address the concerns.

A motion was made by Ald. Sladek, seconded by D. Theno, and carried to refer to staff for study the request to evaluate the necessity of the traffic signal at the intersection of Henry Street and Deckner Avenue.

4. Request by Ald. Kocha to evaluate the traffic speeds on Van Deuren Street at Newtols Street, and to consider switching the 2-WAY STOP condition from Newtols Street to Van Deuren Street, with possible action. **(Ald. Kocha – District 5)**

D. Hansen showed maps of the intersection and vicinity. He stated that Van Deuren St carries significantly more traffic than Newtols St. Therefore it is appropriate for Newtols St to yield or stop for Van Deuren St. He noted that all side streets either YIELD or STOP for Van Deuren St between Henry St and Danz Ave. The street could become or is a cut-through route for those motorists avoiding University Ave. He cautioned switching the STOP sign directions, as the City hasn't had much success in doing so, as it confuses motorists and decreases safety. If speeding is the concern, then either road tubes can be placed to determine speeds, speed boards could be temporarily installed to display motorists' speeds, or police speed enforcement could occur.

Ald. Kocha brought the request forward written how the residents wanted it on the agenda. The requestors are open to suggestions in resolving their concerns.

Lt. Ackermann stated that placing road tubes at this location may be more appropriate, as it is more helpful to get an unbiased speed sample before enforcement rather than the effect of slowing traffic with the use of speed boards.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by B. Lipke, and carried to refer to staff for speed study the request to evaluate the traffic speeds on Van Deuren Street at Newtols Street, and to consider switching the 2-WAY STOP condition from Newtols Street to Van Deuren Street, with possible action.

5. Request by the Parking Division to change the 2-HOUR parking zone on the east side of Pearl Street from Walnut Street to Hubbard Street to a PARKING BY PERMIT ONLY 7 A.M. TO 5 P.M. MON TO FRI zone. **(Ald. Warner – District 9)**

D. Hansen stated that this side and segment of Pearl St used to be posted PERMIT PARKING ONLY until 2003 when the zone was changed to 2-hour parking based on a decrease in the number of permitted stalls. Parking Division has since leased the remaining stalls and need to restore the area back to permit parking. He supports the request.

A discussion took place about who holds permits; the history on changes to this particular parking zone; that nearby time-limited parking zones are available nearby; and if Ald. Warner was involved in the process.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by B. Lipke, and carried that, on a 90-day trial, to:

- A. Remove the 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 5 PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY zone on the east side of Pearl Street from a point 50 feet north of Walnut Street to Hubbard Street.
- B. Establish a PARKING BY PERMIT ONLY 7 AM TO 5 PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY zone on the east side of Pearl Street from a point 50 feet north of Walnut Street to Hubbard Street.

TERMINATION OF TRIAL PERIODS

- 6. That, on a 90-day trial, to establish a NO PARKING zone on the east side of Lyndon Street from Velp Avenue to a point 65 feet north of Velp Avenue.

A motion was made by Ald. Sladek, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to establish and adopt by ordinance a NO PARKING zone on the east side of Lyndon Street from Velp Avenue to a point 65 feet north of Velp Avenue.

- 7. That, on a 90-day trial, to establish a NO PARKING zone on the west side of Lyndon Street from Velp Avenue to a point 50 feet north of Velp Avenue.

A motion was made by Ald. Sladek, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to establish and adopt by ordinance a NO PARKING zone on the west side of Lyndon Street from Velp Avenue to a point 50 feet north of Velp Avenue.

There being no other items of discussion, a motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by B. Lipke, and carried to adjourn from the regular order of business. The meeting ended at 6:22 P.M.

The next Traffic Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 20, 2013, at 5:30 P.M. in Room 207.