

**MINUTES OF THE
TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Monday, April 18, 2016
City Hall, Room 207
5:30 pm**

MEMBERS: Chairperson Matt Kuepers, Vice Chairperson Daniel Theno, Lieutenant Karl Ackermann, Alderman Mark Steuer, Chuck Karow, and Brigid Riordan

EXCUSED: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Ald. David Nennig, Ald. Tom De Wane, Ald. Brian Danzinger (arrived at 5:50 PM), Representative Eric Genrich, Director of Public Works Steven Grenier, Recording Secretary and Traffic Engineer David Hansen, and others

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Approval of the agenda.

A motion was made by Ald. M Steuer, seconded by D. Theno, and carried to approve the agenda.

2. Approval of the minutes from the March 14, 2016 Traffic Commission meeting.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by D. Theno, and carried to approve the minutes from the March 14, 2016 Traffic Commission meeting.

3. Report by the Traffic Engineer of Common Council modifications to the March report of the Traffic Commission.

Eng. Hansen stated that Council overturned a March meeting motion from the Traffic Commission to receive and place on file the request by Ald. Wery to change the 2-WAY YIELD condition on Spence St at Thorndale Dr to a 4-WAY STOP at Spence St and Thorndale Dr. The 4-WAY STOP condition will still be on a 90-day trial. It was installed last week.

A motion was made by B. Riordan, seconded by Ald. Steuer, and carried to receive and place on file the report by the Traffic Engineer of Common Council modifications to the March report of the Traffic Commission.

INITIAL REQUESTS

4. Request by Ald. Tom De Wane for a crossing guard study at the intersection of Radinz Road and Aphrodite Road.

Eng. Hansen displayed an interactive map of the area and described the existing roadway features. He stated that the intersection has not had a crash since 2010. No pedestrians were involved in that crash, but rather the crash was snow-related when one car slid into another car. All crossing guard installations must have a supporting study. He recommended the item be referred to staff for study.

Ald. Tom De Wane stated that he has visited the intersection about 5-6 times. It is only congested during the school release time. Many students will cross Aphrodite Rd. Residents are in support of a study.

A motion was made by B. Riordan, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to refer to staff for a crossing guard study of at the intersection of Radinz Road and Aphrodite Road.

5. Request by the Department of Public Works to remove the PERMIT PARKING ONLY 7 AM TO 5 PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY zone on the south side of Northland Avenue west of Adams Street.

Eng. Hansen stated that Baylake Bank has merged with Nicolet Bank. They are closing the Adams Lot branch and drive-thru no later than May 1. The permit parking zone on the south side of Northland Ave needs to be restored back to metered parking.

A motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by B. Riordan, and carried to remove and adopt by ordinance the PERMIT PARKING ONLY 7 AM TO 5 PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY zone on the south side of Northland Avenue from a point 140 feet west of Adams Street to a point 50 feet west of Adams Street.

6. Request by Ald. Steuer to research and report back on Assembly Bill 491 seeking to change Wisconsin from a “yield to pedestrians” state to a “stop for pedestrians” state.

A motion was made by Ald. Steuer and seconded by C. Karow to suspend the rules.

Eric Genrich (1081 Division St) stated that the initial idea of Assembly Bill 491 came from former Ald. Thiesen who saw STOP FOR PEDESTRIANS signs in crosswalks in other states. AB 491 was referred to the Assembly Committee on Transportation, but it did not receive a hearing or vote prior to the end of this year’s legislative session. There was interest in the proposal this session, and the bill may get a hearing once the next session begins in January.

Discussion took place considering drafting a city resolution supporting the proposal contained in AB 491.

A motion was made by D. Theno and seconded by Ald. Steuer to return to regular order of business.

Discussion took place on the nationwide trend on yield vs. stop for pedestrian laws. Eng. Hansen stated that DPW staff supports AB 491.

A motion was made by Ald. Steuer, seconded by D. Theno, and carried to refer to DPW staff to research and report back on Assembly Bill 491 seeking to change Wisconsin from a “yield to pedestrians” state to a “stop for pedestrians” state.

POSTPONED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

7. Request by Ald. Wery (on behalf of the Western Corridor Neighborhood Association) to establish a NO STOPPING OR STANDING zone on both sides of Western Avenue at Hudson Street.

Eng. Hansen stated that he discussed the traffic concerns brought up at the last meeting with Principal Hauser of Franklin Middle School. In response, the school will publish information to students and parents not to park in the intersection of Western Ave at Hudson St or block driveways and crosswalks. The Parking Division reported that they have enforced the location 3 to 4 times, and have only had to issue a couple of citations. Vehicles have moved out of the intersection. The ongoing efforts have been effective. He displayed photos of the past parking issues for clarification.

A motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to receive and place on file the request to establish a NO STOPPING OR STANDING zone on both sides of Western Avenue at Hudson Street.

REFERRED BACK FROM STUDY

8. For staff to collect speeds on both Locust and Platten Streets from Dousman Street to Velp Avenue to determine the effectiveness of the number of SPEED LIMIT 25 signs along both streets.

Eng. Hansen displayed a summary map showing directional traffic volumes and speeds at 3 locations along N Locust St and 3 locations along N Platten St. Speeds were collected on both streets between the same side streets. Collection locations were (1) just south of Velp Ave, (2) midpoint between Velp Ave and Dousman St, and (3) just north of Dousman St. Speeds can be summarized as follows:

- Just south of Velp Ave, the average speed on Locust St was 25.2 mph and was 26.3 mph on Platten St (1.1 mph faster on Platten St). Locust St carries 34% more traffic than Platten St in this segment.
- Between Minahan St and Desnoyers St, the average speed on Locust St was 29.8 mph and was 29.6 mph on Platten St (0.2 mph faster on Locust St). The traffic volumes were nearly identical in this segment on both streets.
- Just north of Dousman St, the average speed on Locust St was 29.4 mph and was 28.7 mph on Platten St (0.7 mph faster on Locust St). Platten St carries 3.5 times more traffic than Locust St in this segment.

He recalled from the last meeting that 9 SPEED LIMIT 25 signs are posted along N Locust St and 4 SPEED LIMIT 25 signs are posted along N Platten St. In sum, the street with more speed limit signs had higher speeds than the one with less. Therefore, on these two streets, adding more speed limit signs did not improve motorist compliance.

A brief discussion took place that the study results should be remembered for future requests for speed limit signs.

A motion was made by Ald. Steuer, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to receive and place on file for staff to collect speeds on both Locust and Platten Sts from Dousman St to Velp Avenue to determine the effectiveness of the number of SPEED LIMIT 25 signs along both streets.

9. To refer to DPW staff, the request to consider installing a left-turn arrow signal on southbound Military Avenue, turning east onto Bond Street.

Eng. Hansen stated that at the last meeting, he recommended receiving and placing on file the request due to low crash history (1 southbound left-turn crash which was not correctable by adding a left-turn arrow), low southbound left-turn volume, and efficient timing plan. He displayed a video of the southbound movement taking a left turn, noting no issues seeing northbound opposing traffic when turning. If left-turn arrows were added, then vehicle detectors would need to be placed in the left turn pockets. Eng. Hansen noted on the video that a crest hill was visible at a distance from the intersection. However, once vehicles enter the left-turn pockets, they are past the hill. He recommended no changes to the signal operation.

Ald. Steuer stated that multiple constituents have complained to him about the sight issue. Are they onto something even though the crash data does not indicate a problem? He inquired about the cost to upgrade the signal with left-turn arrows. Eng. Hansen responded that the cost to add left-turn arrows to both northbound and southbound directions would be about \$30,000 with material and labor. The signal system is quite old, leading to difficult upgrades and higher costs. Ald. Steuer questioned how we select locations for left-turn signal upgrades. Eng. Hansen responded that it is primarily safety driven.

A motion was made by Ald. Steuer, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to receive and place on file the request to consider installing a left-turn arrow signal on southbound Military Avenue, turning east onto Bond Street.

10. To refer to staff the request to consider the renaming of the Traffic Commission to the new designation of “The Bicycle, Pedestrian, & Traffic Commission.”

See Item 11 for discussion and motion, as a renaming of the Traffic Commission must be done through a change in municipal code.

11. To refer to staff the request to consider revisions to the Municipal Code pertaining to the rule of the Traffic Commission in regards to access pedestrian/bike considerations and alternative traffic goals within the community.

Eng. Hansen stated he met with Ald. Danzinger, Director Grenier, and Natalie Bomstad (Live 54218) to resolve unanswered items from the last Traffic Commission meeting. Additionally, he summarized his research on other similar sized U.S. cities and metro areas with comparable climates to learn if they had committees inclusive of alternative transportation modes. Out of the 10 cities researched, he found none having a committee specifically addressing bicycle and pedestrian matters. Only 1 other had a Traffic Commission. He has no concerns placing Green Bay on the map as being progressive regarding bike and pedestrian accommodations via committee, as it suits the direction the Commission and community are going. DPW staff would support a name change to the “Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian” Commission. The order of the 3 names within the proposed name is recommended with “traffic” first so that the transition is easier for the public. Most people will see it that bikes and pedestrians were added to the function of the Traffic Commission rather than thinking it is completely revamped.

A motion was made by Ald. Steuer, seconded by D. Theno, to suspend the rules.

Ald. Danzinger stated he backs renaming to the “Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Commission” to support the vision and mission of including alternative transportation in Green Bay. He didn’t think renaming would confuse alders and constituents, as alders facilitate which committees accept each request they receive. The new code would leave it open for a city bike plan.

Joshua Schwalbe (1216 Cherry St) stated that eventually motorists become pedestrians during each trip. Pedestrians are the most vulnerable mode of transportation, and should be given priority. The renaming order should be pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic. With that order, citizens will have knowledge where to place requests. Ald. Steuer asked which local communities have Ped-Bike Committees. J. Schwalbe responded that Ashwaubenon has one subcommittee. He supports having one committee, not one plus a subcommittee.

Heather Gentry (249 Kenney St, Allouez) stated that she is the president of the Green Bay Bicycling Club. She stated that a name change supports the multi-modal movement in Green Bay and tells the public they have a place to be heard for these issues. She supports a name expansion change regardless of word order, and the code change.

Dawn Goodman (607 County Rd K, New Franken) stated that she is the PR Chair of the Bay Shore Bike Club. She facilitates a group of bicyclists on the Fox River Trail because riders feel unsafe on streets. They deserve space on streets. She also supports a name change regardless of word order.

Roger Retzlaff (209 W Whitney St, Allouez) stated he is a member of the Historic Preservation Commission. He wants Green Bay to be a place for people to visit, and pedestrian safety is an important part to traffic. The Traffic Commission is responsible for the safety needs for all road users. He supports three modes of transportation included in a future renaming. Order would be Pedestrian Bicycle and Motor Vehicle Commission. Historically, the pedestrian mode of traffic is the most important one to protect.

Natalie Bomstad (2455 Garden Park Terrace, Bellevue) stated that she is the Operations Director at Live 54218. They support the name change to Pedestrian, Bicycle and Traffic Commission, which identifies the most vulnerable mode of transportation first in the name. She acknowledged that Traffic Commission currently supports Bike-Ped initiatives, and a name change would support that legacy.

A motion was made by Ald. Steuer, seconded by D. Theno, to return to regular order of business.

Eng. Hansen brought up the proposed municipal code that addresses the Traffic Commission on the screens (that code is included at the end of the minutes). The revised code is a modified version by staff based on the version received from Natalie Bomstad. He stated the primary changes to the existing code are (1) renaming to "Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission", and (2) references to existing transportation, bicycle, and pedestrian plans.

D. Theno supports a name change, and prefers "traffic" to be first in the name since most items brought before the commission are traffic-related.

B. Riordan supports a name change, and prefers the order "pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic" because of the vision of protecting pedestrians.

Ald. Steuer supports a name change, and prefers the order "pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic" because of its perception, and would like Green Bay to be more progressive.

C. Karow supports a name change, and prefers "traffic" to be first in the name since most items brought before the commission are traffic-related, and for reasons that staff mentioned.

Ald. Danzinger stated that the root of all traffic-related issues is the pedestrian. Staff and alders will direct which committee will hear all bike-ped-traffic requests. The City has a high priority in promoting health in this community. Renaming supports that priority. The population is starting to shift toward bike and ped as a mode of traffic.

A discussion took place that a renaming cannot de-emphasize the primary issues decided upon by the Traffic Commission. "Traffic" already includes bikes and peds. Should we add trucks, parking, and other elements of transportation also? Safety for all modes is always first and foremost in the decision-making process of commissioners and staff. Communications will not be lost due to renaming. Staff believed initially that a renaming was unnecessary because the word "traffic" includes bikes and peds. Although staff is okay if they are added to the name "Traffic Commission", many bike and ped related requests are addressed by other committees.

Director Grenier stated that if "pedestrian and bike" are mentioned first in the renaming, then there will be an over-emphasis of bike-ped requests coming before this Commission. There are many bike-ped related issues that never come and shouldn't come before the Traffic Commission as they are addressed either at another committee or by DPW staff. Ordering in of sidewalks is addressed at Improvement & Services Committee. Incorporation of bike and ped facilities on a construction project is addressed by DPW staff, i.e., Monroe Ave, University Ave multi-use trail, etc. Typical section decisions are made by staff, then by the Improvement & Service Committee, and then ultimately by Council, not the Traffic Commission.

Lt. Ackermann stated that with a name change to the Traffic Commission, does now the Traffic Engineering Division of Public Works become the Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Engineering Division? Does Eng. Hansen's work title become the Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Engineer? He supports a name change, but is hesitant on putting bike and ped first as this Commission is not the be all, end all for bike and ped issues.

A motion was made by Ald. Steuer, seconded by B. Riordan, to change the Municipal Code 29.103, Traffic Commission to include the name change to "Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Commission", and to modify code text as proposed by staff to accommodate this name change.

A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Ald. Steuer, and B. Riordan. Nays: D. Theno, C. Karow, and Lt. Ackermann. Motion failed due to lack of majority vote.

A motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by C. Karow, to change the Municipal Code 29.103, Traffic Commission to include the name change to "Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission", and to modify code text as proposed by staff to accommodate this name change.

A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: D. Theno, C. Karow, Lt. Ackermann, Ald. Steuer, and B. Riordan. Nays: None. Motion carried.

There being no other items of discussion, a motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by Ald. Steuer, and carried to adjourn from the regular order of business. The meeting ended at 7:00 P.M.

The next Traffic Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 16, 2016, at 5:30 P.M. in Room 207.

29.103 TRAFFIC, BICYCLE, and PEDESTRIAN COMMISSION

(1) COMPOSITION AND TERMS. There is created and established a Commission of seven members to be known as the City-Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission. Five of the commissioners shall be civilian members and appointed by the Mayor, subject to confirmation by the Council, for three-year terms. One member shall be an alderman appointed by the Mayor, subject to confirmation by the Common Council, for the balance of his/her present term in office; and the other member shall be the Policy Department Operations Commander, or his/her assign, and shall serve as an ex-officio voting member.

(2) POWERS AND DUTIES.

(a) General. The Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission gives due consideration to both motorized and non-motorized traffic within the City. The Commission shall coordinate traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle activities; carry out educational activities in traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian matters; supervise the preparation and publication of traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian reports; reference existing transportation, pedestrian, and bicycle plans; receive complaints having to do with traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian matters; and recommend to the Council and other City officials ways and means for improving traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian conditions, including the acquisition of off-street parking and the administration and enforcement of traffic regulations.

(b) Temporary Regulations. To test proposed regulations under actual conditions, the City Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission may make temporary regulations governing traffic for trial periods not to exceed 90 days. If such trial periods are deemed successful by the Commission, it shall make its recommendations accordingly to the Council so the Council may consider legislation to make such temporary regulations permanent.

(c) Self-Government. The City-Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission shall make its own rules regarding meetings and procedures and may enact such rules for attendance as to declare any of the civilian offices on the Commission vacant because of violation thereof.

(d) Residential Parking Districts. Subject to Council approval, the Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission may promulgate regulations to implement and amend provisions relating to Residential Parking Districts as defined in Sec. 29.201(5), Green Bay Municipal Code. Such regulations shall become effective upon Common Council approval.