

**MINUTES OF THE
TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Monday, December 7, 2015
City Hall, Room 207
5:30 pm**

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

EXCUSED: Victoria Kassab

OTHERS PRESENT: Ald. Jerry Wiezbiskie, Ald. David Nennig, Recording Secretary and Traffic Engineer David Hansen, and others

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Approval of the agenda.

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

2. Approval of the minutes from the November 16, 2015 Traffic Commission meeting.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by D. Theno, and carried to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2015 Traffic Commission meeting.

INITIAL REQUESTS

3. Request by Ald. Thomas De Wane to establish a 4-WAY STOP condition on Hillside Lane and Bader Street.

City Traffic Engineer David Hansen displayed an interactive map of the intersection. He stated that the intersection's traffic volumes likely have decreased since DPW modified Mason-Bader by restricting southbound left turns back in 2008. A crossing guard currently works the intersection during school begin and end times. This request was heard last by the Traffic Commission on Monday April 28, 2008, which at that time it was received and placed on file. Studies were conducted at the intersection in both 2000 and 2002. The intersection did not meet 4-WAY STOP warrants. He stated that the intersection is "blind" or "hidden" when traveling northbound from E Mason St, and showed photos of the condition. It is located just north of a large hill. Installing a STOP condition at such a location is not recommended as it likely would result in an increase in rear-end type crashes in the northbound direction, especially during the winter.

A discussion took place concerning the safety hazard of installing a STOP sign on the far side of a hill, especially on a busy street such as Bader St. A traffic count would be needed in order to evaluate the need of a 4-WAY STOP condition. Concerns of motorists sliding through the STOP in winter were made. Flashing beacons warning northbound motorists of the blind intersection ahead exist near the crest of the hill.

A motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by Ald. Steuer, and carried to receive and place on file the request to establish a 4-WAY STOP condition on Hillside Lane and Bader Street.

4. Request by Ald. Wery to move the southern limit of the 2-HOUR PARKING 7 AM and 4 PM SCHOOL DAYS signs in the 800-900 block of North Ridge Road south to Hickory Hill Drive.

Eng. Hansen displayed an interactive map of the area and photos. Sight distance exiting both driveways is compromised when vehicles are parked on the west side of the street due to the crest of a small hill near their driveways. He showed photos of the parked vehicles (presumed owned by Notre Dame Academy (NDA) students) from the perspective of exiting the northern driveway. Moving the signs south to Hickory Hill Dr should resolve the issue, at least temporarily. It may move the parking issue to other streets, which could create other issues. However, sight distance issues on N Ridge Rd are likely more severe than residents on other streets not wanting students park in front of their homes. He recommended approving the request.

A discussion took place about the capacity and past expansion of the NDA parking lot; the restricted and unrestricted parking zones on nearby streets; and that on-street parkers could find other streets to park on if the request is approved.

A motion was made by Ald. Steuer, seconded by D. Theno, and carried, that on a 90-day trial:

- A. To remove the 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 4 PM SCHOOL DAYS zone on the east side of Ridge Road from a point 60 feet south of Shirley Street to a point 680 feet south of Shirley Street.
- B. To remove the 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 4 PM SCHOOL DAYS zone on the west side of Ridge Road from a point 114 feet south of Shirley Street to a point 680 feet south of Shirley Street.
- C. To establish a 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 4 PM SCHOOL DAYS zone on the east side of Ridge Road from a point 60 feet south of Shirley Street to Hickory Hill Drive.
- D. To establish a 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 4 PM SCHOOL DAYS zone on the west side of Ridge Road from a point 114 feet south of Shirley Street to Hickory Hill Drive.

5. Request by Ald. Wery to flip the 2-WAY YIELD condition from Spence Street to Thorndale Street at the intersection.

Eng. Hansen displayed an interactive map of the intersection and photos. He presumed that traffic may be avoiding the traffic signals at Lombardi-Oneida and Lombardi-Ridge by using Thorndale St as a cut-through route. Flipping YIELD signs may reduce cut-through traffic but is likely to create some confusion from nearby residents familiar with the YIELD signs being placed on Spence St. It could create a higher probability that crashes will occur at an intersection that doesn't have a crash problem (review of 5-year crash history revealed no crashes). Volumes are so low on Thorndale St that deterring a percentage of an already small volume has little to no improvement or effect on traffic.

A brief discussion took place about concern of increasing crashes if the YIELDS were flipped; and that no STOPS or YIELDS exist on Thorndale St between Oneida St and Ridge Rd.

A motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by C. Karow, and carried to receive and place on file the request to flip the 2-WAY YIELD condition from Spence Street to Thorndale Street at the intersection.

REFERRED BACK FROM STUDY

6. To refer to staff for study for a possible 4-WAY STOP condition at the intersection of Parkwood Drive and South Point Road.

Eng. Hansen presented a summary and the results of the multi-way STOP study, which also included a speed study. Speeds have decreased slightly since the 2013 survey, likely due to recent speed enforcement efforts which took place during 2 days of the study. All warrants as defined in the current edition of the State and Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) were evaluated. None of the criteria plus other engineering measures was met or exceeded. He has safety concerns if an unwarranted STOP condition was established (won't control midblock speeds and may actually increase speeds; poor STOP compliance; higher operating, vehicular, and environmental costs; decreased ped/bike safety, and increased neighborhood noise). He evaluated what the posted speed limit should be based on engineering factors, and that it should be posted 30 mph, not 25. He stated the existing lane widths are too wide, and summarized studies that concluded wider lanes increase motorists' speeds and that narrow lane widths do not decrease safety. Due to the documented speeding problem, the presence of bike traffic, and the presence of truck traffic on a non-truck route, he recommended narrowing the travel lanes to 10 ft wide each, adding bike lanes, and narrowing the parking lanes using only pavement markings, working within the existing width of South Point Rd. This is a low cost solution. He stated that there is a local example of this type of road section in the Village of Howard. He showed this example, Memorial Dr, using photos and a testimonial from Howard DPW Director Geoff Farr who spoke in favor of this road configuration, and that their residents were happy with the results. Eng. Hansen recommended keeping the 2-WAY STOP in lieu of a 4-WAY STOP, restriping South Point Rd as described, continued speed enforcement, and consideration of expanding the bike lane section north to West Point Rd.

A discussion took place that the proposed solution is likely to solve a multitude of ongoing traffic issues and concerns from both residents and staff on South Point Rd, and that this project is very low cost and can be completed once the weather warms up.

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

Maurey Steffel (2084 South Point Rd) stated he hit a motorist backing out of his driveway. He stated that the cones on each side of the road counter tubes slowed traffic down. He stated that many pedestrians don't walk on sidewalks even when sidewalks exist on the street.

Barb Moss (1981 South Point Rd) stated there needs to be a safe way to cross South Point Rd. She requested YIELD signs and crosswalks on South Point Rd at side streets. She questioned why the NO LEFT TURN sign exiting the Casino onto South Point Rd was removed a few years back. She has lived there for 40 years, and what was once a family-type atmosphere near a park, school, and church has changed into the opposite with fast cars near a casino and now connects to a state highway. She thinks a STOP sign at Oakwood Dr and lane designation signs like on Cormier Rd are good ideas. Kids like to cross at Oakwood Dr to get to the sidewalk on the west side of South Point Rd.

Steven Apfel (2087 South Point Rd) stated that he likes in-street pedestrian signs and thinks they slow down traffic speeds. He also mentioned that the NO LEFT TURN sign exiting the Casino onto South Point Rd was removed a few years back, and thinks now more traffic drives South Point Rd because of it. He requested the pavement marking project start before winter.

Chuck Moss (1981 South Point Rd) stated that he would like to see crosswalks painted at intersections with South Point Rd.

Eng. Hansen responded that sidewalks and curb ramps are needed before crosswalks can be painted. No sidewalks or curb ramps exist along South Point Rd or its intersecting roads.

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

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by D. Theno, and carried:

- A. To deny the request to establish a 4-WAY STOP condition on South Point Road at Parkwood Drive.
 - B. In the Spring of 2016, to stripe South Point Road with 1-10 foot travel lane, 1-5 foot bike, and 1-7 foot parking lane in each direction, from Cormier Road to Hazelwood Lane, with the goal of permanently reducing motorist speeds and attaining voluntary motorist speed compliance through the use of narrower lane widths.
 - C. To refer to staff for study the restriping of South Point Road from Hazelwood Lane to West Point Road.
 - D. For the Police Department to continue enforcing speeds on South Point Road near Parkwood Drive, and do so consistently, both before and after lane restriping, until the 85th percentile speeds are reduced to 30 mph or less.
7. To refer to DPW staff for a sidewalk study on South Point Road from Cormier Road to Hazelwood Lane.

Eng. Hansen presented a summary and the results of the sidewalk study. He stated that there are constructability and obstruction challenges including encroachments if sidewalk were installed along one or both sides of South Point Rd. There are more conflict areas on the east side of South Point Rd than the west. He showed photos of the multiple challenges to install sidewalk in this developed area. During a site visit at the time of school release at Lombardi Middle School, many student pedestrians were observed walking southbound on South Point Rd on the west sidewalk. Once pedestrians traveled south of Hazelwood Ln, where the sidewalk ends, they were forced to walk in the street. He stated that City zoning code, described in Chapter 14, 14-723 addresses the City's sidewalk ordinance. In this case, City ordinance requires sidewalks to be installed on Single-Family Residential (all densities) collector streets, and that installation on both sides is preferred, but at least one side is required. Sidewalk exists on South Point Rd north of the study area that connects to the West Point Rd sidewalk system, which leads into the City's downtown.

A discussion took place whether the current ordinance was passed prior to the reconstruction of South Point Rd; and if there are requirements to have sidewalks near schools and churches.

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

Tom VanVreede (2076 South Point Rd) stated that with the new striping, there will be more room for pedestrians. Doesn't see need to destroy the curb appeal for the homes along South Point Rd. Does not see the need for sidewalk.

Joan Steffel (2084 South Point Rd) stated that there is not one person in this room or along South Point Rd who wants sidewalk installed. Opposes installation.

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

A motion was made by C. Karow, and seconded by D. Theno, to refer to the Improvement & Service Committee to order in sidewalks on one or both sides (west side if the one side option is selected) of South Point Road from Cormier Road to Hazelwood Lane.

Motion was opposed by Lt. Ackermann and Ald. Steuer, and failed on a 2-2 vote.

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

Barb Moss (1981 South Point Rd) stated that sidewalks should be installed on Hazelwood Ln.

Steve Apfel (2087 South Point Rd) requested that residents are notified of the meeting of the Improvement and Service Committee (I&S) when sidewalks installation is determined.

Eng. Hansen stated that any motion tonight for referral to the next I&S meeting should include a notification to potentially impacted residents.

Maurey Steffel (2084 South Point Rd) stated that Parkwood Dr residents should get sidewalks because that's where the students live, and those streets in that neighborhood don't have sidewalks.

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

Discussion continued that the motion is to simply forward the recommendation to install sidewalks to I&S, who would ultimately either approve or deny of the recommendation. This should happen so that all residents can weigh in since some residents at the last meeting were in favor of sidewalks on South Point Rd. There were concerns about the cost of sidewalk installation plus tearing up the landscaping in front of these homes. D. Theno wanted to keep his second, not withdraw it, but only in order to obtain greater resident participation.

A motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by D. Theno, to refer to the Improvement & Service Committee to order in sidewalks on one or both sides (west side if the one side option is selected) of South Point Road from Cormier Road to Hazelwood Lane.

Motion carried on a 4-0 vote.

8. To refer to staff for a speed study of West Point Road from South Point Road to Packerland Drive.

Eng. Hansen presented the results of the West Point Rd speed study including displaying photos of the corridor. The speed survey resulted in an 85th percentile speed of 36 mph for the segment between South Point Rd and Baumgart Rd, and 35 mph for the segment between Baumgart Rd and Packerland Dr. Pace speeds are between 26 and 36 mph. Typically, the 85th percentile speed is at or near the upper limit of the pace, which it is in this study. So given the roadway has 12 foot travel lanes, is a straight roadway section, has a wide parking lane on

both sides of the street, and a low crash history, the 85th percentile speeds seem to correlate to the roadway and roadside characteristics. However, the nature of the request and the overall consensus of the residents are to slow the speeds of motorists closer to the posted speed limit given the predominant residential environment. Heavy police speed enforcement may be successful in achieving this goal. But given that roadway characteristics are conducive to speeds about 10 mph over the posted speed limit, and that police resources are limited to the continual monitoring of speeds on West Point Rd, changes in the physical features of the roadway would be the primary way to obtain the best compliance. A rational speed limit is one that is safe, that most people consider appropriate, that will protect the public, and can be enforced. Reducing lane widths on West Point Rd is likely the best, most cost effective and long-term option for slowing speeds closer to the posted speed limit of 25 mph. Eng. Hansen recommended the same lane markings and designation as he did on the South Point Rd item.

Discussion occurred about other areas in the City with bike lanes; support for staff's proposal; and consideration to use it in other areas of the City due to its low cost and the likelihood to reduce the frequency of police enforcement.

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

Jeffrey Bunker (2673 West Point Rd) stated that he likes the proposal, and wants to see long-term results. It's a good start. He supports a plan that includes engineering, education, and enforcement. He's still concerned that motorists will still pass on the right side. He recommended extending the bike lane section east to Hobart Dr. Most times he backs his vehicle into his driveway in order to have a safer entrance onto West Point Rd. He stated that speeds seem to increase over the weekends. He appreciated all of the efforts of staff and Commissioners.

A discussion took place that the number of right-side passers should decrease as the number of lane lines increase; and that a before-after speed study should occur to determine the effectiveness of lane widths on speed reduction.

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

A motion was made by Ald. Steuer, seconded by D. Theno and carried:

- A. To receive and place on file the documented speed study along West Point Road from South Point Road to Packerland Drive.
- B. In the Spring of 2016, to stripe West Point Road with 1-10 foot travel lane, 1-5 foot bike, and 1-7 foot parking lane in each direction, from South Point Road to Packerland Drive, with the goal of permanently reducing motorist speeds and attaining voluntary motorist speed compliance through the use of narrower lane widths.
- C. For the Police Department to continue enforcing speeds on West Point Road from South Point Road to Packerland Drive, and do so consistently, both before and after lane restriping, until the 85th percentile speeds are reduced to 30 mph or less.
- D. To refer to staff for study the restriping of West Point Road from a point 600 feet east of Hillcrest Drive to South Point Road.

- E. For staff to conduct a before-after speed study of West Point Road from South Point Road to Packerland Drive to determine the effectiveness of reduced lane widths on speed reduction.

TERMINATION OF TRIAL PERIODS

9. Remove the 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 7 PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY zone on the east side of Henry Street from a point 200 feet south of Morrow Street to Brook Street.

A motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by Ald. Steuer, and carried to remove the 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 7 PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY zone on the east side of Henry Street from a point 200 feet south of Morrow Street to Brook Street, and adopt by ordinance.

10. Establish a 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 7 PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY zone on the east side of Henry Street from a point 280 feet south of Morrow Street to Brook Street.

A motion was made by D. Theno, seconded by Ald. Steuer, and carried to establish a 2-HOUR 7 AM TO 7 PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY zone on the east side of Henry Street from a point 280 feet south of Morrow Street to Brook Street, and adopt by ordinance.

There being no other items of discussion, a motion was made by C. Karow, seconded by Ald. Steuer, and carried to adjourn from the regular order of business. The meeting ended at 7:26 P.M.

The next Traffic Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 11, 2015, at 5:30 P.M. in Room 207.