

# TRAFFIC COMMISSION

City of Findlay  
January 19, 2021

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## MINUTES

### **ATTENDANCE:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Safety Director Paul Schmelzer, City Engineer Brian Thomas, Police Chief Robert Ring, Councilman Jim Slough.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Matt Stoffel, Public Works Superintendent; Tom DeMuth, Traffic Signal Supervisor; Kathy Launder, City Clerk.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Request of Tom DeMuth, Traffic Signal Supervisor, to make the alley at the east side of the intersection of South Main Street and Baldwin Avenue one way heading eastbound due to low vehicle usage; signal upgrade at this intersection is being considered and need to know if signalizing the alley is still warranted.

10/19/2020

Rayle stated that the Traffic Signal Department is looking to upgrade the traffic signals at the intersection of Baldwin and Main. The traffic signal for the alley is not MUTCD compliant. It only has one signal for the alley and we are required to have two signals. The alley is not wide enough for two-way traffic, so looking to make it a one way eastbound away from Main Street. The City would save money on the upgrade of the intersection removing the signals and the poles that we would need to make it compliant. To make compliant would need to have two signals on separate poles, a minimum of eight feet apart. To make compliant we would have to add a pole to the left of the existing signal. Suggest make alley one way going east to first alley intersection and remove signal. Impact to neighborhood minimal. City will save money. Director Schmelzer stated the only negative is if you went straight west across Main Street. Assuming, the majority of the traffic will be heading north or south onto Main Street.

Motion that because it would appear that the impact to the neighborhood would be minimal and the City would save installation and long term maintenance costs on signalization that the alley be made one way going east to first north/south alley intersection, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. Discussion: A letter will be sent to residents in the first block of this alley to get their feedback. Motion passed 5-0.

11/16/2020

Motion to lift item from table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Thomas. Motion passed 5-0.

Director Schmelzer stated that letters went out to residents in the first block of the alley to get feedback. The City heard from two residents on S. Main Street on either side of the alley. Both stated that the traffic signal is used frequently and that changing the alley to a one way going east and removing the signal would cause hardship. DeMuth stated he does not have a preference either way, he just need to know what to do with intersection. If residents want it and use it then he has no problem replacing the signal. Director Schmelzer stated that if people are using it, then no problem with signal. Director Schmelzer would like to review the usage of the intersection prior to making a final decision.

Motion to table request until video evidence of alley usage as well as the block both directions from 7am-10am and 2:30pm-4:30pm can be gathered and reviewed, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Eberle. Motion passed 5-0.

1/19/2021

Motion to lift item off table, by Councilman Slough, second by Thomas. Motion passed 4-0.

Cameras were set up to review traffic during peak times. Director Schmelzer stated that based on the data on the videos of the traffic, do not see a significant issue at Second Street getting on Main Street. Also, alley data shows one car enter and one car exit over course of five days at peak times. Don't see alley being used and don't see major inconvenience at either of cross streets. Not wanting to spend money

without necessity, Director Schmelzer is inclined to go back to original recommendation to make the alley one way eastbound off Main Street. DeMuth stated that there are a dozen cars a day using the alley. In the morning they were coming out of alley and the evening they were going into it. One resident on the south side of the alley uses it every day. Watching cars come down alley, but could use Second Street. Didn't see issue with getting out onto Main Street from Second Street. The alley as is is most inconvenient for the residents on either side of the alley. There is a safety issue of allowing two-way traffic in an alley that isn't wide enough. If we don't signalize the intersection, we should make the alley one way. Obviously, there are other alleys in the City that we don't make one way coming off a street. So we are not treating this the same way, but they are not all offset a signalized intersection either. DeMuth stated that Walnut and Main is the same way and the alley is a one way. Chief Ring only affects their commute out. Director Schmelzer stated that 12 cars per day is 12 movements per day, and 6 of them will still be permitted. DeMuth stated most of the cars coming out of alley were making a right hand turn.

Motion to make alley at the east side of the intersection of South Main Street and Baldwin Avenue one way eastbound from Main Street east to the first alley intersection and remove signalization, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Ring. Motion passed 4-0.

Will send out a summary to residents stating we took video to take a look at turning movements and number of vehicles throughout a week and made determination that the traffic volume does not warrant the signalization of that alley and that we are going to treat it very similar to what we have done at Walnut Street and Main Street and other similar situations in the City and make it one way. If you would like to voice your opinion show up at the next Council meeting and voice your opinion. Give an opportunity for Council to take a look at it themselves.

Anticipating the question from Council, Director Schmelzer asked the cost of updating the intersection as it is currently signalized. DeMuth stated the cost of the new updated signal would be \$1500.00 plus pedestrian signal of \$1000 and maintenance. Chief Ring stated that he is still concerned about the width of the alley with traffic being permitted two-way. Right-of-way width and functional use of pavement is not there for two way traffic. 16' alley, needs to be a minimum of 22' for two way traffic.

## 2. Request of Rodney Blackburn to reconsider the parking restrictions on Seventh Street to allow parking on the street all day.

11/16/2020

Mr. Blackburn stated there is an issue with the no street parking on school days from 8am-10am and from 2pm-4pm. His neighborhood is mostly small to mid-sized homes with single lane driveways and one car garages. In talking to a few people in the neighborhood, he found several are having negative issues with the parking restriction. Several neighbors have parked in the school parking lot. When contractors come to work on a home in the neighborhood, residents have to park elsewhere (school and Kroger's parking lot) so that the contractors can park in the driveway so they don't get a ticket. The principal told Mrs. Blackburn that she has over twenty more employees than parking spaces. The principal was not aware of the no parking restriction around the whole block, and told us she needs street parking to make room for the school employees. After some of the employees received parking tickets, the employees started parking at Kroger and walking to school. The principal told us that now Kroger is calling the school and telling them to keep the employees from using their parking lot. So, if that is true, on any given day there could be twenty to thirty cars in the Kroger parking lot that are not Kroger shoppers.

Mr. Blackburn state that they have lived in their house for twenty years, and these houses and school have coexisted for at least sixty years. Don't understand why now street parking is an issue. Also do not understand why parking enforcement was parked on their street every school day morning for at least one hour, and every afternoon for the same amount of time.

Director Schmelzer explained that the traffic/parking situation around Jefferson School was discussed with Findlay City Schools and together came up with the current parking plan. He further stated that we will never find a perfect solution. In speaking with the parking officer regarding the current situation, he stated only thing to do is open parking on Seventh Street as long as there is no parking on the south side. Director Schmelzer spoke with the Superintendent of Findlay City Schools, and he is going to take the suggestion back to their operations people and report back.

Motion to table until additional information is received, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

1/19/2021

Motion to lift item from table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 4-0. Director Schmelzer stated that things improved especially the relieving of stacking on Sixth Street and freed up Seventh Street to busses.

Chase stated that parking could be reinstated on the north side of Seventh Street without significant issue. Director Schmelzer stated that based on City staff review and school staff review, he does not have an objection with allowing parking on the north side of Seventh Street. May bag the no parking signs on a temporary basis and determine feasibility. West of Maple Ave. intersection, leave No Parking. East of Maple Ave., bag signs and see what happens. Chief Ring inquired if traffic would increase after COVID restrictions lift. Teachers parking if an issue will park on Seventh Street. Will that cause issue. Big change is done and it is working so will not go back, but can tweak.

Motion to recommend the temporary replacement of parking on the north side of Seventh Street from Maple Ave. east to Washington Ave. to examine the impact of said parking through a period that would potentially get us through COVID to allow residents that may be working at home additional parking with recognition if parking enforcement and the school relay to the Safety Director that this reinstatement of parking has caused a significant issue then we will go back to no parking without coming back to Traffic Commission, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 4-0.

Discussion: Stoffel inquired how long the signs should be bagged. Director Schmelzer stated that after some months if there are no issues then we can remove the signs. Parking Enforcement will continue to monitor the area. Thomas inquired if we will create a standing issue on Seventh Street if we remove the no parking like we had before. Parking Enforcement will monitor standing issues as well.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting of the City of Findlay Traffic Commission will be held on Tuesday, February 16, 2021, at 2:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy K. Launder  
City Clerk