

TRAFFIC COMMISSION

City of Findlay
March 21, 2022

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Service-Safety Director Rob Martin, City Engineer Jeremy Kalb, Police Chief Robert Ring, Fire Chief Josh Eberle.

STAFF PRESENT: Matt Stoffel, Public Works Superintendent; Kathy Launder, City Clerk.

GUESTS PRESENT: None.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Request for review of the Center Street corridor as it relates to traffic flow, speed, barriers for safety as well as sound, and pedestrian crossings.

11/15/2021

Director Martin stated that a group of residents of the Center Street corridor requested a review of the corridor as it relates to traffic flow, speed, barriers for safety as well as sound, and pedestrian crossings.

Kalb stated that he has traffic counts from Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) for Center Street from railroad tracks to Main Street and Tiffin Avenue from Blanchard Street to the split. Currently getting counts for Center Street. Director Martin stated the plan is to get traffic counts and analyze the data. Then discuss what next steps are. Are there things we can do or do we hire an outside source to do a traffic study? Kalb stated that looking at traffic counts from ODOT, on Tiffin Avenue east of Blanchard Street was 18,000 cars per day, on Center Street between the railroad tracks and Main Street was 8,000 cars per day. Kalb is working on ideas, but waiting for traffic counts to come in first. Director Martin stated that the recommendation is to table the request until we are able to get the traffic counts in and analyze the data.

Motion to table request, by Councilman Slough, second by Kalb. Motion passed 5-0.

12/20/2021

Motion to lift item from table, by Councilman Slough, second by Kalb. Motion passed 4-0.

Kalb stated that traffic counts on Center Street from Tiffin Ave. to Blanchard Street westbound was 300 vehicles and eastbound was 800 vehicles. Looking at the safety of those travelling eastbound from S. Main St. and speeding over the railroad tracks to go straight to this area of Center St. Kalb drew up a sketch of what it would look like if a 90° turn was put in to enter onto Center Street at Tiffin Avenue rather than being able to drive straight through. There are no barriers available to slow people down in the area of the railroad tracks. The only thing to really do is to have a safety study done that will cost about \$100,000. Chief Ring suggested we try something more simple with signage that there is a curve ahead especially westbound. Kalb stated that traffic counts at Blanchard and Tiffin Avenue has 18,000 vehicles, and the railroad tracks to Main Street has 8000 vehicles. Director Martin asked if we should look at some signage before we make any significant changes. Kalb stated that in order to get any funding from the State to make changes, a safety study would have to be conducted.

Chief Ring stated that changing Center Street to a 90° turn will slow eastbound traffic, but will do nothing for westbound traffic where most of the issues occur with vehicles running into houses. Rayle asked if raising the pavement on the other side of the railroad tracks to make less of an incline over the tracks would help. Kalb stated that there is a lot of coordination with the railroad company that would need to be done. Kalb further stated that if that comes up in the safety study there is the potential to secure safety funds to pay for it. Director Martin stated that it all comes back around to a safety study. Kalb stated that it is a lot of money, but we collect a lot of data and are then eligible for safety funds.

Signage suggestions: dangerous curve sign with 25 MPH speed designation, chevrons on guardrails or reflectors.

Motion to install dangerous curve signs with railroad and a 25 MPH designation for both directions on either side of the railroad tracks on Center Street and to install chevrons on guardrails on Center Street near railroad tracks, by Chief Ring, second by Kalb. Motion passed 4-0.

Motion to table Center Street corridor discussion, by Chief Ring, second by Kalb. Motion passed 4-0.

2/22/2022

No action taken

3/21/2022

Kalb stated that a safety study is budgeted this year. The study is scheduled to be performed this fall.

2. Request of Jack Winans, We Serve, Coffee, located at 114 East Sandusky Street, to revisit the three 15 minute parking spaces on East Sandusky Street.

2/22/2022

Director Martin stated a letter was received from Jen Fulton, owner of Jen's Buggy Whip Cakery, in support of the 15 minute parking spaces. Her issue is the placement of the signs. Most folks do not notice the 15 minute parking sign.

Jack Winans stated that We Serve, Coffee has been at 114 East Sandusky Street for nine years. The issue is that We Serve, Coffee opens at 7am, and the other businesses on the street open at 11am. Customers are getting ticketed for parking in the 15 minute parking spaces. This limits number of parking spaces available for customers who will be longer than 15 minutes in his business. Suggests changing the parking restriction of 15 minutes to certain hours-possibly after 11am vs. all day. Jack Bs and Jen's Buggy Whip will be moving soon. There will be no need for the 15 minute parking spaces once these businesses leave.

Director Martin stated that letters have gone out to all businesses on the street to get feedback. At this time, we have not heard back from anyone, except from Jen's Buggy Whip. Would like additional feedback from businesses on the street prior to making a change. Councilman Grant Russel stated in an email that a broader study of downtown parking needs to be done.

City Engineer Kalb stated that he will have one of his employees go door to door to the businesses to get opinions of: 1. Remove 15 minute parking restriction; 2. Keep 15 minute parking restriction and number of 15 minute parking spaces to keep; 3. Have specific times designated for the 15 minute spaces: 7am-11am 2 hour parking, 11am-5pm 15 minute parking.

Motion to table by Director Martin, second by City Engineer Kalb. Motion passed 5-0.

3/21/2022

Motion to lift item from table, by Kalb, second by Chief Eberle. Motion passed 4-0. Kalb stated that representatives from the Engineering Department talked with business owners in the first couple blocks of East Sandusky Street. The businesses were 5-1 in favor of removing the three 15 minute parking spaces and replacing them with two-hour parking spaces. Buggy Whip was in favor of the 15 minute parking spaces because of the large cakes, etc. that customers have to carry to their vehicles.

Kalb made a suggestion to change the existing 15 minute parking spaces to 2 hour parking spaces and change the first parking space to the east of the first alley east of Main Street from a 2 hour parking space to a 15 minute parking space. There are a lot of pedestrians that cross Sandusky Street at that alley, and it would be less likely for them to be hidden by a car; trucks pulling into alley have a potential wider turning radius if no one is utilizing the space; and is still accommodating Buggy Whip's and other businesses' customers. Or do we change two of the existing 15 minute parking spaces to 2 hour and leave one existing 15 minute parking space to accommodate until we do a full parking study? Or change all three 15 minute parking spaces and make them 2 hour, since the businesses were 5-1 in favor of removing all 15 minute parking spaces. Martin stated that we also need to compose a letter/email to downtown business owners to request/remind employees to park off street so that parking is freed up for customers. Kalb stated that 2 hour parking would be utilized more than the 15 minute parking.

Motion to change the three 15 minute parking spaces on East Sandusky Street to 2 hour parking spaces, by Chief Eberle, second by Chief Ring. Motion passed 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Request of Matt Stoffel, Public Works Superintendent, to remove the Stop sign and the No Parking Any Time sign at Oler's restaurant drive at Western Avenue.

Stoffel stated that the stop sign and no parking any time sign are in the parking lot of Oler's restaurant. The signs are very faded and no longer serve a purpose. They are not enforceable signs.

Motion to remove stop sign and no parking any time sign from the parking lot at Oler's restaurant, by Kalb, second by Chief Ring. Motion passed 4-0.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting of the City of Findlay Traffic Commission will be held on April 18, 2022, at 2:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy K. Launder
City Clerk