

# TRAFFIC COMMISSION

City of Findlay  
December 15, 2014

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## MINUTES

### **ATTENDANCE:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Service-Safety Director Paul Schmelzer, Fire Chief Tom Lonyo, Police Captain Sean Young, Councilman Ron Monday.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Don Rasmussen, Law Director, Matt Stoffel, Public Works Superintendent; Matt Traver, Fire Department; Kathy Launder, City Clerk; Holly Frische, City Council.

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Bill Hohenbrink, Sherri Haushalter, and Nate Aydt.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Request of George Scaife, 2326 Park Street, to post "No Thru Trucks" signs at Park Street and Sixth Street heading south and Park Street and Olive Street heading north.

09/15/2014

George Scaife stated that semi-trucks are travelling on Park Street and Washington Avenue from Sixth Street to Olive Street. He noticed it started happening this summer. He states that the semis are breaking up the street. He could not say how many semis per day, per week are travelling down these streets.

Director Schmelzer stated that Park Street and Washington Avenue can support semi traffic, not a large volume, and can support regular use by garbage trucks and delivery trucks, etc.

Chief Lonyo stated that if we were to post "No Thru Trucks" on Parks Street, we would also have to post it on Washington Avenue and Brookside Drive.

Director Schmelzer stated that the City will perform a traffic count on Park Street and Washington Avenue to determine the number of semis that are travelling down those streets.

Motion to table request until traffic counts can be performed on Park Street and Washington Avenue by Chief Horne, second by Director Schmelzer. Motion passed 4-0.

10/20/2014

Item remains tabled.

11/17/2014

Item remains tabled.

12/15/2014

Motion to lift item from table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Lonyo. Motion passed 4-0. Director Schmelzer stated that over that past couple months he has monitored traffic volume in the morning and afternoon on Park Street and there is very little semi-truck traffic on this street. The volume does not warrant a No Thru Trucks sign.

Motion to deny request to post "No Thru Trucks" signs at Park Street and Sixth Street heading south and Park Street and Olive Street heading north, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Lonyo. Motion passed 4-0.

2. Request of Bill Hohenbrink, Hohenbrink Building, LLC, 5975 Lugabill Road, Columbus Grove, Ohio, to appeal the decision of Service-Safety Director Schmelzer to deny a request for an additional curb cut at 1112 Sixth Street to allow for an additional drive access.

10/20/2014

Hohenbrink stated that there are six other houses on this street that have double access to their property. The homeowner has a handicapped child, and it would make maneuvering her vehicle a lot safer and easier for her.

The standard currently is one driveway access per lot. Councilman Monday stated that this is strictly an Engineering Department decision to make. Chief Lonyo stated that this is similar to the mid block crosswalk discussion. We need parameters for allowing additional driveway access points from

Engineering Department so we can make an informed decision. Director Rasmussen stated the Director Schmelzer did suggest an alternative that would allow for the safety of maneuvering a vehicle without having another driveway access.

Motion to table and to request the Engineering Department to develop parameters for allowing dual access drive in residential areas by Chief Lonyo, second by Councilman Monday. Motion passed 3-0.

11/17/2014

Motion to lift from table by Service-Safety Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Monday. Motion passed 3-0.

Director Schmelzer distributed a copy of Access Management Regulations for Hancock County dated March 23, 2006, with his comments that apply for the City of Findlay. Director Schmelzer discussed alterations to the document. This standard is to be reviewed by the Commission members and submit comments to Schmelzer. This request is for two curb cuts on a property on a secondary thoroughfare which is not permitted. Schmelzer stated that we have to look at the big picture when considering variances. The City appreciates the disability that the property owner faces, however, another option for a turnaround on the property is available as previously given by Director Schmelzer when the denial of the original request was made.

Councilman Monday stated that the request is valid. However, there is a solution to put a turnaround on the property off the driveway rather than the addition of a curb cut.

Motion to deny request by Councilman Monday, second by Director Schmelzer. Motion passed 3-0.

12/02/2014

City Council referred item back to Traffic Commission.

12/15/2014

Council referred this issue back to Traffic Commission for further discussion, but only two Council members (one being a member of Traffic Commission) were in attendance to participate in the discussion.

A draft policy of Access Management Regulations was previously distributed to the Commission for review and comment. This policy will dictate the specifications for allowing a request for a second access on a property. Under this policy, this particular property does not meet the minimum specifications to allow a second access. Standards need to be developed for an appeal process for those requests that are denied.

The required driveway permit was applied for and denied. Right now under current policy there is no allowance to request a variance. An appeal process doesn't exist. Under current policy if the request is denied it is denied.

Councilperson Frische asked a few questions to get a better understanding of the situation.

Q: Did you purchase the house prior to the child developing the disability?

A: *Yes, but did not know that the child was going to develop the handicap. The house when purchased was not wheelchair accessible. Therefore, this house is being built to accommodate wheelchair.*

Q: Did you request the driveway at the time of the build?

A: *No, a driveway permit was not required until later.*

Q: The round driveway is already built. Can you use it as a turnaround if the variance is not permitted?

A: *Yes.*

Chief Lonyo stated that absent a policy to request a variance, the Traffic Commission cannot grant it.

Rasmussen stated that Traffic Commission does not have the authority to grant the variance at this time. An appeal process is needed. The only current process is based on City Engineer decision. Traffic Commission decides on traffic signs, speed limit changes, etc.

Councilwoman Frische stated that she will attempt to secure support to request legislation be presented at Council on January 6, 2015, to approve the request for the second drive access.

An ad hoc committee of Council should be formed to develop standards for this type of request to include an appeal process.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Request of Nate Aydt to increase the speed limit on Emma Street from 25 MPH to 35 MPH.

Director Schmelzer stated that the standard for speed limits for city streets is that any street less than one mile in length is required to be a 25 MPH speed limit.

Motion to deny request, by Councilman Monday, second by Captain Young. Motion passed 4-0.

2. Request of Mayor Lydia Mihalik for a crosswalk on East Sandusky Street at Hunters Creek Drive.

Motion to table request, by Director Schmelzer, second by Captain Young. Motion passed 4-0.

Councilman Monday, on behalf of the Traffic Commission, thanked Chief Tom Lonyo for his diligent service to the Traffic Commission.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting of the City of Findlay Traffic Commission will be held on **Tuesday**, January 20, at 2:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy K. Launder  
City Clerk

Old Business  
#2 Narrative

Issue is interesting. Should not be made by one individual, i.e. City Engineer.

Don't understand what go through

But the request is not compliant

Low volume drive to thoroughfare does not qualify

Low volume drive with low volume road may qualify

Sherri stated that the bus driver has to load and unload child on street holding up traffic.

Question was asked if the bus driver would be permitted to drive onto private property to load and unload child.

Required driveway permit was applied for and denied. Right now under current policy there is no allowance to request a variance. An appeal process doesn't exist. Under current policy if the request is denied it is denied.

Council referred back to Traffic Commission for further discussion, but only two Council members (one being a member of Traffic Commission) are here for further discussion.

Extenuating circumstance for School Board decision of handicapped child transportation.

Councilperson Frische asked a few questions to get a better understanding of the situation.

Did you purchase the house prior to the child developing the disability? *Yes, but did not know that the child was going to develop the handicap. The house when purchased was not wheelchair accessible. Therefore, this house is being built to accommodate wheelchair.*

Did you request the driveway at the time of the build? *No, a driveway permit was not required until later.*

The round driveway is already built. Can you use it as a turnaround if the variance is not permitted? *Yes.*

Sherri: From the last meeting attended, I had the impression that we could move forward with building the horseshoe driveway and that the variance would be approved. They can use it for parking.

Schmelzer specifically told Hohenbrink not to build the driveway until a decision was made.

Chief Lonyo stated that absent a policy to request a variance, the Traffic Commission cannot grant it.

Rasmussen stated that Traffic Commission does not have the authority to grant the variance at this time. An appeal process is needed. The only current process is based on City Engineer decision. Traffic Commission decides on traffic signs, speed limit changes, etc.

Councilwoman Frische stated that she will attempt to secure support to request legislation be presented at Council on January 6, 2015, to approve the request for the second drive access. Refer back to Council.

An ad hoc committee of Council should be formed to develop standards for this type of request to include an appeal process.