

TRAFFIC COMMISSION

City of Findlay
April 18, 2016

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Service-Safety Director Paul Schmelzer, Police Chief Greg Horne, Fire Chief Josh Eberle, City Engineer Brian Thomas, Councilman Ron Monday.

STAFF PRESENT: Matt Stoffel, Public Works Superintendent; Kathy Launder, Mayor's Office.

GUESTS PRESENT: Ginny Clymer.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Request of The University of Findlay, 1000 North Main Street, for a pedestrian activated light across North Main Street from new admissions office to the campus.

04/18/2016

Item remains tabled.

2. Request for additional signals at Sandusky Street and Main Street.

04/18/2016

Item remains tabled.

3. Request of Marathon Petroleum Company to install a crosswalk across East Sandusky Street at Beech.

02/15/2016

Smith stated that Marathon employees are using Beech Street to cross East Sandusky Street primarily at lunch and for after hours meetings/events.

Schmelzer stated that the intersection of Beech Street and East Sandusky Street is unsignalized. This request is looked at like a midblock crossing. If a crosswalk was installed, it would give pedestrians a false sense of security. It would definitely need to be signalized. Monday agrees with Schmelzer. Monday is opposed to midblock crossings. This intersection would need to have warning signs or signals. Schmelzer stated that the City's Engineering Department can take a look at vehicle and pedestrian traffic counts at this intersection and compare the results to the criteria in the Midblock Crossing Policy to see if it warrants a crosswalk. Schmelzer questioned as to whether an RRFB signal is permitted at intersections. Schmelzer stated that if the counts meet the midblock crossing requirements, then we will figure out how to signalize it. Stoffel stated that there could potentially be an issue with visibility of the signals due to onstreet parking in the area of the intersection. Stone stated that if you make the crosswalk on the west side of the intersection, there is better visibility for the signals/signs due to no parking in that area.

Motion to table request until Engineering Department can make an examination of the vehicle and pedestrian counts at the intersection of Beech Street and East Sandusky Street against the Midblock Crossing Policy.

4/18/2016

Motion to lift from table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Eberle. Motion passed 5-0. Due to the temporary nature of pedestrians in the area, rather than have this item linger on the agenda, lift from table and make a decision. After the parking garage is finished, Marathon Petroleum Company can bring back the request, if needed.

Motion to deny request, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Monday. Motion passed 5-0.

4. Request of Councilman Tom Klein to review speed limit and signage on West Bigelow Avenue from North Main Street to Broad Avenue.

3/21/2016

Stoffel reported in an email that in the early 1970s, a request came before the Traffic Commission to make the speed limit 20 MPH. It is assumed that it was made 20 MPH when there was no traffic light, only a crosswalk, for the school on Hillcrest Avenue. Chief Horne reported in an email that it was his understanding that it was near a school and children walked that way to get to the neighborhood south of Bigelow Avenue. There is no longer a need for the 20 MPH speed limit sign or for it to be marked as a school

zone in that area. Discussion ensued regarding amount of pedestrian traffic across Bigelow. Motion to table by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Eberle. Motion dies for lack of vote.

Monday stated that we should check on the legal requirements for a 20 MPH speed limit with restricted hours school zone. Monday stated that he understands why it was made 20 MPH. Mayor Mihalik stated that Bigelow Hill School is a pretty good sized school. They have a lot of walkers. It's a very populated neighborhood. Mayor suggested to contact the principal at the school to see how many walkers they have.

Monday read from ORC 4511.21(c). Schmelzer stated that based on ORC 4511.21(C), the area on Bigelow is too far from the actual school to be construed as a school zone. He is guessing that is why Traffic Commission, at that time, made the speed limit 20 MPH in the area. They wanted to create the safety of the school zone functionality. They knew that making it a school zone with 20 MPH during restricted hours was not enforceable for that section. Monday stated that he is not opposed to leaving it a 20 MPH speed limit for the safety of the kids. He believes it is just an unenforceable sign.

Motion to leave it a 20 MPH speed limit, by Schmelzer. Motion dies for lack of second.

Based on the City's inability to make it a restricted hour zone, motion to leave the 20 MPH speed limit zone because of the number of pedestrians and kids that use the crossing point, by Schmelzer, second by Councilman Monday. Discussion: Mayor stated that we should have the Law Director check the enforceability/legality of the 20 MPH speed limit. Motion denied 4-0.

Motion to have the Law Director look at the language in the ORC and give us a determination whether the restricted hours sign would be enforceable, by Chief Eberle, second by Director Schmelzer. Motion passed 4-0.

4/18/2016

Motion to lift from table, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Monday. Motion passed 5-0.

This area is not a school zone, so it cannot have the designation of restricted hours for a speed limit. The speed limit of 20 miles per hour (MPH) is a 24 hour speed limit.

A light currently exists at the crosswalk. Cannot do restricted hours. Concern for kids crossing that's why it was originally changed to 20 MPH. Stoffel stated that there are other schools in Findlay that are a block or two off a four-lane road and the speed limit is not reduced.

Motion to change the speed limit from 20 MPH to 35 MPH on West Bigelow Avenue from North Main Street to Broad Avenue and change signage barring any significant reason from Findlay City Schools to keep it as 20 MPH, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Monday. Motion passed 5-0.

Schmelzer stated that there is nothing legally that requires the City to keep it a 20 MPH, and there is no recent history explaining why it should remain 20 MPH.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Request of John Snyder to make Clinton Street one way going south from Cherry Street to Center Street and allow parking on both sides of the street.

Mr. Snyder had come before the Traffic Commission May 2010 requesting that Clinton Street be made one way. In June 2010 the Traffic Commission decided to eliminate parking on one side of the street rather than make it one way for easier access of emergency personnel and snow plowing personnel. The Commission is not in favor of making the change to one way unless signatures of residents in the area in favor of the change are obtained and forwarded to the Commission.

Motion to deny request, by Chief Eberle, second by Director Schmelzer. Motion passed 5-0.

2. Request of Bob Fraley for review of the area of 18th Street at Flowers Avenue at Glenwood School driveway for traffic control signage.

Stoffel stated that there is a stop sign at the driveway exiting Glenwood School. There is a continuous flow from Flowers Avenue into 18th Street that does not require a stop sign. No action taken.

3. Request of Tracie Brutsche, 110 ½ West Sandusky Street, to review the wording on the “2 Hour Parking” signs downtown to add the wording “Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm”.

Schmelzer stated that changing the signage of the 2 Hour Parking would not change the enforcement of it. Resident needs to explore alternatives for posting of private parking lot with landlord and towing company.

Motion to deny request, by Director Schmelzer, second by Horne. Motion passed 5-0.

4. Request of Ginny Clymer, 1600 Blanchard Avenue, for a 4-way stop sign at the intersection of Amelia Avenue and Connell Avenue.

Mrs. Clymer stated that there are more and more children in the neighborhood. Traffic moves quickly through on Connell Avenue. Mrs. Clymer obtained signatures of most of the residents that live in this area. Chief Eberle stated that it is an easy turn on to Connell Avenue from Blanchard Avenue that a driver can maintain speed and easily pick up speed.

Motion to make the intersection of Amelia Avenue and Connell Avenue a 4-way stop, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Eberle. Motion passed 5-0.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting of the City of Findlay Traffic Commission will be held on May 16, 2016, at 2:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy K. Launder
City Clerk