

TRAFFIC COMMISSION

City of Findlay
October 21, 2019

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Safety Director Paul Schmelzer, Service Director/Acting City Engineer Brian Thomas, Police Chief John Dunbar, Fire Chief Josh Eberle.

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

GUESTS PRESENT:

OLD BUSINESS

1. Request to review pedestrian safety downtown Findlay.

6/17/2019

Councilman Grant Russel stated that a resident that was struck in a crosswalk recently downtown approached him with ideas to make downtown streets safer for pedestrians. A suggestion is to make all intersections in Downtown Findlay "No Turn on Red." Also, installing left turn lights on all traffic lights Downtown. DeMuth stated that plans are already in place for traffic light upgrades which will include left turn lights on all intersections that have left turn lanes in Downtown. Director Schmelzer stated that we can look at the Capital Plan, and in the interest of pedestrian safety downtown, we can move the request for signal upgrades up on the list to have them completed sooner.

Discussion regarding "No Turn on Red" during certain hours. Have not done research on other downtowns or how this affect the Uniform Traffic code. Used to be No Turn on Red prior to 2003. Director Schmelzer stated that it makes sense for special hours. May back up traffic. What do we want to do in the interest of pedestrian safety. See what introduction to no turn on red would make on stacking. Maybe not on Main Cross and Sandusky intersections, but all other intersections in downtown have the "No Turn On Red" designation. Have DGL take a look at. Demuth stated that if you can't see to turn right on red without entering into the crosswalk to see to turn, then it should be "No Turn On Red." Director Schmelzer stated this should be part of the criteria along with stacking. Director Schmelzer requested the Engineering Department to do a study on the intersections with the criteria and come back with a list of intersections and a map to determine where we want to introduce the No Turn On Red. If we don't have anything conclusive, then look at engaging DGL. Director Thomas will contact DGL for a cost to do the study, if needed.

Motion to review the Capital Plan as it relates to the traffic signal upgrades in Downtown to determine if those projects can be moved up in the schedule; have Engineering Department study each Main Street intersection in the Downtown using the two criteria for right turn on red: 1. Do you have to encroach into the crosswalk to make a decision as to whether or not it safe to move forward in your vehicle, and 2. Stacking, then bring it back for further discussion, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 4-0.

7/15/2019

Remains tabled.

8/19/2019

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

Director Thomas stated that they looked at the intersections downtown, looked at which intersections if you stop at the stop bar you can see and which ones you can't when you turn right. Director Thomas will be checking on pricing with DGL to do a model regarding stacking with data relative to traffic counts that we collected for the Downtown project, provide level of service projections for those intersections if those movements are restricted.

Motion to table request, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 5-0.

10/21/2019

Remains tabled.

2. Request of Jill Wagner, Wasbro Rental Property and The Sherman House, to change the direction of the one-way on Taylor Street from northbound to southbound.

7/15/2019

Ms. Wagner stated that they own rental property at 229 Center Street. When taking potential renters to this location to show the rental, they have to go past 210 Taylor Street. When renters see this property, they don't even want to stop to see the rental property at 229 Center Street because they do not want to live near 210 Taylor Street. Ms. Wagner also inquired as to why Taylor Street is one-way northbound. It is very difficult and dangerous to turn left on to and travel across Center Street. Making Taylor Street one-way going southbound might make it safer. Director Rasmussen stated that we have a couple open court cases on 210 Taylor Street regarding the condition of the property. Director Thomas stated that we will need to have consensus from the property owners on Taylor Street to change the one-way direction. Chief Eberle stated that we may want to delay any changes until a plan for the development of the 100 block of North Main Street is completed. It may change the look of the neighborhood. Chief Dunbar inquired how changing the direction of the one-way would affect Salvation Army. Ms. Wagner stated that she will talk with the property owners on Taylor Street for their thoughts on changing the one-way direction of Taylor Street from northbound to southbound. Once she has talked with the property owners, she will bring it back to Traffic Commission.

Motion to table item, by Director Thomas, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 3-0.

8/19/2019
Remains tabled.

9/16/2019
Remains tabled.

10/21/2019
Motion to lift from table by Director Schmelzer, second by Director Thomas. Motion passed 4-0. Jill Wagner stated in an email to the Traffic Commission that she wishes to withdraw her request. Changing the direction of the one-way road will not help the situation. Motion to deny request to change the direction of the one-way on Taylor Street due to lack of additional information by Director Schmelzer, second by Director Thomas. Motion passed 4-0.

3. Request of John DePuy, 3430 Crosshill Drive, to make the west side of Crosshill Drive from Hillshafer Drive north to dead end of Crosshill Drive.

7/15/2019
Concerns about vehicles parking in front of his mailbox as well as concerns about emergency vehicles being able to access his home. Motion to table request until signatures of property owners approving the change can be obtained, by Director Thomas, second by Chief Dunbar, Motion passed 3-0.

10/21/2019
Remains tabled.

4. Request of Cathy Weygandt, 204 Greenlawn Avenue, for a traffic signal at Sixth Street and Washington Avenue due to concerns of pedestrian and cyclist trying to cross over Sixth Street.

8/19/2019
Lee Weygandt stated that it is difficult and dangerous to cross Sixth Street at Washington Avenue. Suggests installing a signal similar to the one at South Main Street and Baldwin Street, a traffic tripped light and a button to push for pedestrians. Some children cross there to get to Jefferson School. Would like a study done. Director Thomas stated that there are crosswalks there but no signal. Schmelzer wants to differentiate between how long you have to wait to cross a busy road and something we would put in place to actuate to stop traffic. Would take a look at adding a midblock crossing with signalization if a significant number of students cross there to get to Jefferson School. Would like to see what the changes look like around Jefferson School before making a decision. Will be doing additional monitoring in the area due to changes we are making around Jefferson School and will monitor this area as well. Motion to table request pending additional investigation and analysis of the proposed changes of traffic patterns around Jefferson School, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

9/16/2019
Remains tabled.

10/21/2019
Director Schmelzer requested Chief Dunbar to place the camera trailer near the intersection of Washington Avenue and Sixth Street to monitor the number of cars and pedestrians at this intersection, and bring back results.

5. Request of Sonja Huffman, Center Street Block Watch, to make the intersection of Center Street and Carnahan Street a four-way stop.

9/16/2019
Ms. Huffman stated that Findlay is growing and more people are going to Riverside Park. There are also more activities going on at Riverside Park than there used to be. Ms. Huffman stated that members of the block watch approve the intersection Center Street and Carnahan Street becoming a four-way stop. Director Thomas stated that the City does not install stop signs for speed control. Traffic warrants need to meet requirements for an intersection to become a four-way stop. Motion to obtain traffic counts for Center Street and bring back to Traffic Commission for consideration of a four-way stop at Center Street and Carnahan Street, by Chief Eberle, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 3-0.

10/21/2019
Director Thomas stated that there is some merit to activity of summer vs. non summer traffic. Traffic counts will be taken as soon as able to do so.

6. Request of Chad Richards, to add a turn lane at Flowers Avenue at 18th Street.

9/16/2019
Adding a left turn lane on Flowers Avenue at 18th Street would not make it safer. Adding a stop sign at that intersection would make it safer than adding a turn lane. Chief Dunbar stated that he can place an unmarked vehicle in the area to monitor traffic patterns during drop off and pick up of students. Motion to table request to look at the traffic patterns in the area to determine a solution, by Director Thomas, second by Chief Eberle. Motion passed 3-0.

10/21/2019
Chief Dunbar stated that he has a report from three days of surveillance. The recommendation is for a stop sign on Flowers at 18th Street. A yield sign or "cross traffic does not stop" sign are other suggestions. Since the construction of Glenwood School this area has been cause for concern.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Request of Brian McPherson for speed limit signs on the east end of Bluestone Drive.

Director Schmelzer stated that the City is not in the habit of putting up additional speed limit signs. There are currently speed limit signs on either end of Bluestone.

Motion to deny request for speed limit signs on the east end of Bluestone Drive, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 4-0.

Chief Dunbar stated that the Police Department will do some targeted enforcement in the area. Suggest a public information article be submitted to The Courier to draw attention to the speed limit laws in Findlay and include information from the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

2. Request of Kevin Russell request for stop sign on Bluestone Drive at Heatherstone Drive.

The City does not put up stop signs to control speed. Chief Dunbar will do some targeted enforcement in the area.

Motion to deny request for a stop sign on Bluestone Drive at Heatherstone Drive, by Director Schmelzer, second by Director Thomas. Motion passed 4-0.

3. Request of Jonathan Nye, McLane Company, for a directional sign to be placed on County Road 212 directing drivers to their facility and possibly other facilities in the area.

Director Schmelzer is in favor of installing directional signage if McLane pays for the sign.

Motion to approve request to install a directional sign to be placed on County Road 212 near McLane Drive with cost to be paid by McLane Company with design approved by the City of Findlay, by Director Schmelzer, second by Chief Dunbar. Motion passed 4-0.

4. Request for 25 MPH signs on Main Street between Lima Avenue and Center Street.

Director Thomas stated that he looked at photos from before the downtown project. There were speed limit signs posted in the downtown area prior to the downtown project. There are no requirements for speed limit signs. Director Schmelzer would like to check into investing in one or two portable digital speed limit signs that register motorists speed and display it.

Motion to use photo before the downtown project was done to examine locations to post 25 MPH signs and examine the purchase of one or two portable digital speed limit signs that register motorists speed and display it for utilization in the downtown and other places, by Director Schmelzer, second by Director Thomas. Motion passed 4-0. DeMuth will look into the purchasing the digital speed signs.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting of the City of Findlay Traffic Commission will be held on November 18, 2019, at 2:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy K. Launder
City Clerk