

# TRAFFIC COMMISSION

City of Findlay

July 20, 2020

---

## MINUTES

### **ATTENDANCE:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Safety Director Paul Schmelzer, Service Director/Acting City Engineer Brian Thomas, Police Chief Robert Ring, Councilman Jim Slough, Fire Chief Josh Eberle.

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

### **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.

7/20/2020

Remains tabled.

#### 2. 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.

11/18/2019  
Remains tabled.

12/16/2019  
Chief Dunbar stated that the camera trailer has been set at the intersection of Sixth Street and Washington Street to monitor pedestrian and bicycle traffic traveling Washington Street across Sixth Street. The trailer has not been up long enough to gather sufficient information. Will have a report at next month's meeting. Item remains tabled.

7/20/2020  
Item remains tabled.

3. 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.

7/20/2020  
Item remains tabled.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. Request of Bob Roberts, 514 Scott Avenue, for stop signs in north/south alley at 614 Winfield and 619 Winfield due to motorists not stopping when pulling out onto Winfield from the alley.

Director Thomas stated that Bernard, Winfield and Eben do not have stop signs; Scott, Hull, Central have stop signs. There are quite a few driveways on the alley. Chief Ring stated that there have been no crashes at this intersection.

Motion to deny request for stop signs in north/south alley at 614 Winfield and 619 Winfield based on the amount of traffic that uses both Winfield and the alley, by Chief Ring, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 4-0. (Chief Eberle not in attendance for this vote.)

2. Request of Randy Joseph, Ohio Stor N Lock, to allow directional signage to the self-storage facility located at 1744 Romick Parkway to be placed in the right-of-way area on Bright Road at Romick Parkway and Melrose Avenue and Keith Parkway.

Director Schmelzer stated as a general rule, the City of Findlay does not allow directional signage for private business in the right-of-way. Director Thomas noted that there are multiple ways to get to the storage units if someone misses their turn.

Motion to deny request to allow directional signage to the self-storage facility located at 1744 Romick Parkway to be placed in the right-of-way area on Bright Road at Romick Parkway and Melrose Avenue and Keith Parkway due to the City of Findlay not allowing directional signage for private business in the right-of-way, by Chief Ring, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

3. Request of Michael Krouse for a "No Outlet" sign at the entrance to Ithica Court off Remington Street.

This request does not need approval by Traffic Commission. The No Outlet sign has been installed.

4. Discussion of lane light replacement lights scope and cost. (midblock crossings and signalization)

Director Schmelzer stated that he reviewed video of the midblock crossings and the signalization for rate of failure. The failure rate of activation was relatively low while pedestrians were using the crosswalk. The issue is when no one is at the crosswalk and the lights go off. There are issues with the lights some lights not lighting up. The contractor and supplier are both debating whose responsibility it is that the

lights are failing. The City is continuing to pursue some warranty compensation from both the contractor

and supplier for the failing lights. Potential reason why lights are activating when no pedestrians are present is that the camera are infrared heat sensor cameras. The cameras may be detecting the heat from the black square pads on the sidewalk or the heat of the nearby mulch and activating the lights. Director Schmelzer stated that there is a five year warranty on the current lane lights. Director Thomas stated that in order to get the warranty, we would have to tear out the lane lights and reinstall. Discussion regarding options available such as leave as lane lights and install new ones; leave as is and install Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFB) with a button to activate; take out lane lights and stripe it with no signals; take the midblock crossing out altogether. Motion to install RRFB at each midblock crossing in Downtown Findlay, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

Next question is do we use push button or camera to activate the RRFB? Director Thomas stated Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) does not use black for the color in pedestrian pads any longer. They use red. The City can change out the black pads with red to help with the issue of camera malfunction due to the heat generated by the black pads. DeMuth stated that we can have two types of sensors. Director Schmelzer stated that we have a lot of false activation, then we can remove the cameras.

Motion to install a push button activation for the RRFB installation project and keep camera activated as well, by Chief Eberle, second by Councilman Slough. Motion passed 5-0.

5. Discussion of installing a guard rail on the south side of the 300 block of Center Street west of the railroad tracks.

Director Schmelzer stated that the residents on the south side of the 300 block of Center Street requested the City to look into a barrier in the right-of-way in front of their homes as a protection against errant motorists from crashing into their homes as has been done multiple times in the past and recently. Director Schmelzer met with residents and suggested placing guardrails or planting trees to serve as a barrier. The guardrail is not very aesthetic looking but all residents were in favor of it. Also requesting Shade Tree Commission suggest tree species that would grow appropriately in this right-of-way. The suggested plan is to install the guardrail and plant the trees. Once the trees were large enough, then take the guardrail out. The City would incur the cost of the installation and materials of the guardrail and trees. Waiting on confirmation of utilities in this right-of-way.

Motion to install guardrail on the south side of the 300 block of Center Street from 341-325 Center Street, by Councilman Slough, second by Director Schmelzer. Motion passed 5-0.

6. Discussion of speed bumps in alleys.

Director Schmelzer stated that in order for speed bumps in alleys to be considered, the alley has to be paved. Should have a general practice throughout the City regarding speed bumps. If we were to put a policy together it should consider traffic volume; may be more prudent at alley intersections to create a speed hump at alley intersections rather than a speed bump. See a lot of problems with speed bumps. Motion to deny request for speed bumps in a particular alley in the absence of a policy for speed bumps related to traffic volume, and if there are a significant number of requests for speed controls in alleys that we make a city-wide policy decision regarding the placement, by Director Schmelzer, second by Councilman Slough. 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 Monday, August 17, 2020, at 2:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room of the Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy K. Launder  
City Clerk