

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MINUTES
7:00 p.m., Monday, October 13, 2008
Public Safety Building, 401 E. Third Street, Newberg, OR

"Mission Statement: To give the citizens of Newberg a forum to voice traffic safety concerns, evaluate related issues, provide a liaison with the City and promote traffic safety within the community."

Members

Present:	Chair Michael Simpson	Dick Meyer	Doris Brandt
	Andrew Cookson	Jennifer Dawson	Bryce Jones
	Leland Parks	Ronald Sult	Lesley Woodruff

Staff

Present: Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer
Tim Weaver, Police Sergeant
Jennifer Nelson, Recording Secretary

Others

Present: Ray Pacini, Barbara Freeman, Stephen Freeman, Heather Denton, Arletta Schwantes, Aaron L. Robledo, Sylvia Robledo

CHAIR MICHAEL SIMPSON CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM.

A) Review and approve minutes of September 8, 2008

MOTION: Brandt/Jones to approve the Traffic Safety Commission Minutes for September 8, 2008 as amended. (9 Yes/0 No) Motion carried.
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COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

OLD BUSINESS

F) Howard-Fifth 4-way stop request: Completed (TSC-08-017)

Mr. Ray Pacini, City of Newberg Public Works Department, thanked the Traffic Safety Commission (TSC) for installing the 4-way stop at Howard and 5th Street. He was the citizen who requested this and participated in the installation. He informed the TSC there has been a lot of positive feedback. He also brought up another concern for the intersection at 4th Street and Howard Street where the new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulation ramps and sidewalk extensions were installed. He felt there should be a stop sign on 4th Street for the drivers turning onto Howard to prevent pedestrian/vehicle encounters.

Mr. Tim Weaver, Police Sergeant, agreed it was worth looking into a stop sign at this location considering the pedestrian traffic, heightened hazards with the ADA ramps, and use with the

entrance to the public safety building. He did not feel a 3-way stop would be warranted, but a stop sign at 4th Street would be appropriate.

Chair Simpson asked staff to look into the situation and report on the impact, benefits, and possible solutions.

Mr. Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer, asked if the crosswalks at this intersection were marked at all.

Mr. Pacini replied they were not marked, either by signage or street markings.

Mayor Andrews suggested exploring the possibility of placing a yield sign at 4th Street, rather than a stop sign.

D) Mountainview – College: Crosswalk was completed at the park. Traffic data and staff recommendation attached (TSC-08-014)

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report and showed pictures of the completed crosswalk. He also noted there were concerns for the traffic speed on Mountainview Road, after a traffic study he evaluated different solutions including less expensive narrowing of the road with paint and the most expensive requiring installation of landscape islands. He felt the islands would be more effective but there were no clear engineering remedies at this point (see official meeting packet for full report).

Chair Simpson asked staff if islands were more effective than speed humps. Staff felt speed humps would slow emergency vehicle response time.

Ms. Barbara Freeman stated her appreciation for the crosswalk installation and mentioned there was still a problem with a pick-up truck (previously referred to as a dump truck) parked in the area creating visibility problems from drivers.

Commissioner Andrew Cookson questioned if there was a lot of traffic flow backing up to go eastbound and wondered if a left turn lane would be appropriate or possible for discussion.

Ms. Freeman stated there is traffic backing up in the afternoons when A-dec, Inc. dismisses their employees and children are being let out of school.

Mr. Steve Freeman also offered thanks for the crosswalk, corrected the previous references to a parked dump truck which is actually a pick-up truck, and stated there were several newspaper articles discussing the development of this road into a major arterial; he wondered if that would be happening sooner than staff thought when questioned at the last hearing.

Chair Simpson questioned whether the crosswalk seemed to be on the correct side of the street and if drivers are stopping for pedestrians in the crosswalk.

Mr. Freeman agreed it was in the correct place for best visibility and drivers have been stopping. Ms. Heather Denton stated her relief at seeing the crosswalk and speed monitors; she stated she had not seen any police enforcement yet though.

Chair Simpson explained the decision to hold off increased police enforcement until after the traffic study was completed, so the statistics were not skewed.

Ms. Denton said she appreciated the speed study being conducted but was concerned for the solutions given. She felt there were soft solutions that may not work, even though they are more affordable and hard solutions, which are far too expensive. She would like to see an effect expenditure of any money needed. She spoke of the uncertainty of the major arterial status and potential development affecting this area negatively in regards to pedestrians and increased traffic speeds. She emphasized her desire to push for a combination of lower cost, soft solutions to send the message to drivers to slow down and mentioned extending the bicycle lanes past Joan Austin School or extending the school zone since kids ride their bikes home. She suggested yellow lights and speed zone signage denoting a residential area as well. She also argued that Melody Lane could be used by emergency vehicles because it is a straight street if speed bumps were used on Mountainview Drive, which is the most highly supported solution amongst neighbors. She also pointed out articles, which mentioned the future status of Mountainview Drive as a major arterial.

Mayor Andrews asked staff if the traffic count separated numbers for vehicles traveling westbound vs. eastbound. Staff replied the equipment did not differentiate direction, only speed.

Commissioner Cookson suggested taking away the left turn for eastbound traffic since it is an extremely wide road and uses the center area to make an island. He felt this would still leave enough room for emergency vehicles, but a physical barrier would be needed to slow traffic down. He stated that speed bumps would only create a situation where speeding vehicles become airborne.

Chair Simpson asked staff if extending the bicycle lanes all the way to Main Street would be a viable way to narrow the road and provide traffic calming. Staff felt it would be a logical solution but was unaware if it would provide the necessary results, he recommended combining the painting efforts with another County pavement-marking project during dryer weather.

Discussions followed as to the measurements of the road and the requirement of adding a bicycle lane while maintaining on-street parking. Staff would need to acquire road measurements to determine where parking could or could not be maintained.

Chair Simpson asked the neighborhood representatives how many cars parked on that street.

Mr. Freeman replied there were five or less vehicles parking on the street at a given time.

Sergeant Weaver mentioned there was no parking lot at the park as part of the consideration.

Chair Simpson requested staff return with the information discussed by the November meeting if possible, or January if necessary since there is not TSC meeting in December. He also asked if staff could provide a solution table listed in order of lowest to highest cost.

Mayor Andrews added a mountable meridian should also be considered so emergency vehicles could drive over top if necessary.

Commissioner Cookson agreed any physical barrier that gives the perception to the driver they may be physically harmed if they do not slow down is more effective than painted lines; extending the bicycle lanes would only be a short-period solution, not a permanent one.

E) Meridian-Ninth Street 3-way stop request. Traffic data and staff recommendation attached (TSC-08-016)

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report (see official meeting packet for full report).

Mayor Andrews asked if there was a private driveway south of 9th Street going into the condominiums. Staff could not confirm this and would need to research the answer.

Chair Simpson questioned the 118 MPH recorded speed. Staff explained this was erroneous information, which sometimes occurred because of a malfunction in the tubing of the speed recording apparatus.

Mr. Chiu continued with the report stating the data does not warrant a 3-way stop but other factors, such as the close proximity to the elementary school, does warrant some benefit would be gained for some kind of a crosswalk solution. The only downside is that it could be expensive because the curbs are not ADA compliant.

Chair Simpson asked what percentage of the City's sidewalks was ADA compliant. Staff recalled there were hundreds not in compliance within the City.

Ms. Arletta Schwantes provided a petition with over 30 signatures. She felt the crosswalk solution seemed more logical than the requested 3-way stop and the petition was signed with the crosswalk solution in mind. She referred to a pedestrian crosswalk study conducted by the U.S. Department of Transportation supporting this. She also mentioned there was a school bus stop on the east side of Meridian Street at the 9th Street intersection; the bus travels in a west bound direction. She also mentioned a utility pole that could be in the way.

Chair Simpson thought the crosswalk could be angled to avoid this. Staff did not suggest angling because it increases the number of steps needed to cross the street; the site would have to be studied to see which side of the street would be better for installing the crosswalk.

Mr. Aaron L. Robledo, Apartment Manager, still felt a 3-way stop would be the safest solution because the cars are going too fast with children around and added that another bus also went in the other direction as well.

Sergeant Weaver stated this was a valid concern because the streets are residential streets, in standard residential width, with parking on both sides of the street. Visibility is limited by the parked cars and 25 MPH can be a bit fast considering the congestion; the statistics do not show these other factors. It could be an effort to promote safety in this area.

Mr. Chiu argued that stop signs are not to be used as speed control devices; crosswalks would provide a safe area for pedestrian crossing and would be well-marked to caution drivers. Still it would be quite an effort to jackhammer the curb and rebuild the intersection to ADA standards, which could be costly.

Chair Simpson asked if the City could not install the crosswalk unless the curbs are brought up to ADA compatibility. Staff said it could put the City in a difficult legal situation.

Commissioner Lesley Woodruff asked if the crosswalk just installed on Mountainview Drive at College Street brought the area up to ADA standards because the picture did not appear to show a ramp or yellow painting on the curb. She wondered why this issue did not come up then. Staff replied the City would be taking chances.

Chair Simpson spoke of the area experiencing a change in traffic density with the higher volume of residents and the on-street parking. He said there is more speeding and more kids and a perceived safe place to cross are not being provided. He felt crosswalks make drivers more aware and the money is not available to make the curbs ADA compliant at this time.

Commissioner Leland Parks asked if the crosswalk could be put into a future budget allowing the modifications to be made next year with the ADA access. Staff felt this could be possible but still was concerned with the legal implications of doing the work piecemeal rather than all at once.

Chair Simpson asked if there was any funding available to install the crosswalk and bring it up to ADA standards. Staff replied he would need to check with the maintenance budget.

Mayor Andrews stated the City Attorney would need to be consulted concerning the legal ramifications rather than placing a condition of whether funding is available or not. He felt there might be an action the attorney could suggest preventing liability.

Chair Simpson directed staff to discuss liability with the City Attorney to install the crosswalks without ADA standards and if money is currently available in the budget to complete this. He called for a recess at 8:38 PM and reconvened at 8:43 PM.

A) 2-Hour parking limit in front of 106 S Center Street – Completed (TSC-08-011)

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report (see official meeting packet for full report).

B) Crestview-Emery corner sign – going to provide 15 MPH speed (TSC-08-012)

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report (see official meeting packet for full report).

C) Crater-Oxford 4-way stop request: Speed study on parallel streets (at Main and Chehalem) will be available the week of 10/6/2008. Recommendation may be furnished at Traffic Safety Commission meeting (TSC-08-013)

Mr. Chiu submitted a memo from October 13th discussing the impact of a 4-way stop with parallel streets running the same direction as Crater. Based on the volume the 4-way stop is not warranted. He recommended the intersection remain as a 2-way stop (see official meeting packet for full report).

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Chiu stated there was a request for a 4-way stop with crosswalks at 4th Street and River made by Ms. Susan Lundquist. He felt it was a legitimate request but has not had the appropriate time to complete a traffic study. He will return with a report in January. There needs to be serious collision data at that intersection that may have been preventable. The file number will be **TSC-08-018**.

Chair Simpson received a request from a Mr. Bob Hereford concerning a bus stop by Colonial Village Apartments on 2nd Street by the Sportsman Airpark. People are parking in front of the bus stop even with posted signs, he is requesting curb painting and possibly making this a Yamhill County bus stop. Staff will look into the situation.

STAFF REPORTS - GENERAL INFORMATION

A) Police

Sergeant Weaver reported two officers graduated basic police training and two new hires are entering. Half of the patrol group is on probation for less than five years experience, challenging trainers, but good for the City. Two officers are on light duty due to injuries. Traffic enforcement will start on Mountainview now that study is completed; all schools areas are being monitored.

B) Engineering

Mr. Chiu updated on islands installed on Railroad and discussed the ODOT facilities building and frontage improvements.

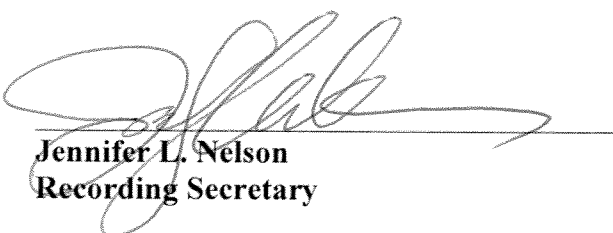
Chair Simpson asked when the new stop light on Hwy 219 would be activated. Staff did not have a date.

C) Items from Commissioners

Mayor Andrews thanked the commission and reminded those whose terms are expiring at the end of the year to re-apply for their seat if they wished to continue (Ronald Sult, Leland Parks, and Doris Brandt).

ADJOURN TO NEXT MEETING

MOTION: Brandt/Sult to adjourn at 9:20 PM until the next meeting on November 10, 2008. Motion carried.
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Jennifer L. Nelson
Recording Secretary



Michael R. Simpson
Traffic Safety Commission Chair