

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MINUTES
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 11, 2011
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.”

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Members

Present: Neal Klein Lesley Woodruff Doris Brandt Karl Birky
 Shannon Eoff Ron Johns James Oravetz Josi Fettig

Members

Absent: Dianna Cotter (excused) Ronald Sult (unexcused)

Staff

Present: Brian Casey, Police Chief Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer
 Mary Newell, Support Services Manager Jennifer Nelson, Recording Secretary

Ex Officio

Present: Mayor Bob Andrews

Others

Present: Jadene Stensland

CHAIR NEAL KLEIN CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 7:06 PM.

A) Oath of Offices

Mayor Andrews conducted the Oath of Offices.

B) Nomination and election of Chairperson of the Traffic Safety Commission

See motion #1 below.

C) Nomination and election of Vice-Chair for the Traffic Safety Commission

MOTION #1: Brandt/Johns to retain the present officers with Commissioner Neal Klein as the Chairperson and Commissioner Lesley Woodruff as the Vice-Chair. (7 Yes/0 No/2 Absent [Cotter, Sult]) Motion carried.

D) Review and approve minutes of November 8, 2010.

MOTION #2: Brandt/Johns to approve the Traffic Safety Commission Minutes for November 8, 2010. (7 Yes/0 No/2 Absent [Cotter, Sult]) Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Councilor Ryan Howard reported updates on the 2010-11 Bicycle Safety Mini-Grant received by the Alliance for Community Traffic Safety in Oregon.

NEW BUSINESS

A) TSC-11-001: Crestview Drive at Hoskins Street **TIME – 7:30 PM**

Mr. Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer, presented the staff report and passed out additional photos of the area (see official meeting packet for full report).

Mayor Bob Andrews referred to the stop sign at the intersection being a nuisance before because it is set way back and he wondered how a crosswalk would line up with that. Mr. Chiu replied the stop sign would have to be relocated further east. Mayor Andrews wondered how this would impact the administration of traffic laws for drivers stopping there.

Mr. Brian Casey, Police Chief, replied it does not impact enforcement.

Ms. Jadene Stensland spoke of her kids using this crosswalk to get to school and there being a crossing guard on payroll to walk kids to Center Street and Crestview Drive; however, because more kids go to west side than east the guards go with the majority. Six kids have to travel to the east without a crossing guard and it would be safer to have markers there. There are additional benefits to having the crosswalks marked because Northside Community Church is on the southeast corner and one of the designated parking spots is for the soccer field; a lot of venues will be using that area soon and would benefit from this. As a professional engineer she is aware there are utility conflicts on the southwest corner, she also recommends suggesting sidewalks as a condition to George Fox University (GFU) when they make their improvements. She spoke of the safe routes to school application process and how Mabel Rush Elementary is the only school receiving funds from this; she would like to see Newberg get more of this funding. She had several photographs on a slideshow that she brought with her and showed them during her report (see official meeting packet for full report).

Commissioner Ron Johns agreed this is not the greatest intersection. He did not think it was safe to put a crosswalk on the east side because it would be midblock and there could be dangerous situations, especially with two houses that both have business truck there blocking views. He felt the southwest corner would be better and a sidewalk would definitely be needed.

Ms. Stensland suggested a diagonal placement of the crosswalk. Mr. Chiu was concerned this would increase the distance.

Commissioner Shannon Eoff spoke of the neighbors being sensitive about having less parking, but felt installing the crosswalks would help with increased foot traffic and would be proactive.

Commissioner Ron Johns spoke of the area between the sidewalk and the street having soil, not grass, and if it would be necessary to put concrete in there. Mr. Chiu stated if the crosswalk ends in the planter strip then some sort of all weather walking surface would need to be provided, concrete is typically used.

Commissioner Karl Birky asked about public right of way in the area and if the city allows people to park in an intersection. Mr. Chiu replied there is fifty-seven feet of right of way on the east side, and fifty feet on the other and that parking in that area of a “T” intersection is okay.

Mayor Andrews asked about the placement of school zone signs in this area and thought they may want to discuss this with the school district. He also wondered if the crosswalk had to be at an intersection or if it could be midblock. Mr. Chiu stated midblock crosswalks were undesirable.

Chair Klein asked about the budget and costs for a sidewalk on the south side of Crestview Drive. Mr. Chiu did not have an estimate, but he believed they would be substantial because of a large tree between Meridian Street and Hoskins Street as well as other utilities; they would also need to acquire additional right-of-way around the corner. Chair Klein spoke of the increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic that will come with the football and soccer fields and felt it may behoove the city to make improvements now, especially with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements; he felt approaching GFU as a partner may be a good start.

Commissioner James Oravetz stated he needed more information before he would be ready to make a decision.

Commissioner Birky referred to the discussion of making the crosswalk bigger and taking away parking spots; he wondered why the city would be so concerned with inconveniencing someone parking on a city street in order to put in a crosswalk for safety.

Commissioner Klein recommended they table the matter until next month requesting staff to contact and invite representatives from GFU to talk of what they foresee the major transportation routes for people attending sports events before pushing forward on something without a big picture view. He also felt it would be helpful for the commissioners to see what the transportation plan for that area is as well. He felt proposing a limited decision at this point would create problems and he would rather get people together for discussions so everyone is on the same page before a formal hearing. He also requested staff to contact the school to have a representative at the next meeting as well.

B) Safe routes to school

This item was brought up by staff and was not on the agenda.

Mr. Chiu spoke of the Safe Routes to School application and the action plan Ms. Shannon Stueckle came up a little over a month ago. They consulted with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) for assistance and submitted a notice of intent last November which was accepted by the program managers. Since it is a federally funded program he is asking for the Traffic Safety Commission's support in letter form to include with the application and hopefully increase their chances of being awarded the funding.

MOTION #3: Brandt/Oravetz to fully support the joint application by the City of Newberg and Mabel Rush Elementary School for the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funding administered by ODOT to enhance safety and access for school children walking and bicycling between Mabel Rush and their homes. (7 Yes/0 No/2 Absent [Cotter, Sult]) Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

A) TSC-10-010: Sitka Avenue – north of Highway 99W

TIME – 8:25 PM

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report and reviewed the data from the traffic survey requested to be completed again while school is in session (see official meeting packet for full report).

Mayor Andrews asked about the comparison of the numbers when school is convening and when it is letting out. Mr. Chiu compared the July and December data and reported thirty more vehicles for southbound traffic and twenty more compared to when school is in session; overall the volume and speed are higher when school is in session. Staff recommended more police presence in that area at this time.

Chief Casey replied he would certainly share the data with his traffic team and consider more presence with the radar trailer again, as it had some impact previously.

Chair Klein also suggested using some sort of school resource, like the school newsletter, to communicate that increase during the school year and educate the students and parents driving in that area.

Chair Klein recessed at 8:33 PM and reconvened at 8:44 PM.

B) TSC-10-012: Foothills Drive at N College Street

TIME – 8:44 PM

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report stating the collected traffic data did not warrant a signal (see official meeting packet for full report).

STAFF REPORTS - GENERAL INFORMATION

A) Police Update

Chief Casey spoke of articles in The Graphic and an officer's recent involvement in a vehicular crash, the last accident when the department was at fault was in 2006; there were no injuries. Another article addressed the number of citations issued by the police department and a comment about Newberg being a speed trap; he addressed this by saying there are more complaints received that there are not enough citations being written than there are that they are writing too many.

B) Engineering Update

Mr. Chiu gave updates on funding received in the form of two grants from ODOT to install sidewalks and bike lanes at Hwy 219 and Everest as well as pedestrian crossings over three sets of railroad tracks on N. College Street. Another ODOT project is pedestrian activated crossings at Hwy. 219 and Everest. He also mentioned the upcoming training on January 15, 2011. Concerning the recent fatal accident there will be other changes in addition to the pedestrian activated crosswalks such as brighter street lights with longer arms to get light on the pavement and an elevated island on the southwest corner of the intersection.

C) Items from Commissioners

Ms. Mary Newell, Support Services Manager, showed new commissioners how to access their email accounts.

Mayor Andrews announced the newly created Mayor's Cabinet will be convening on Tuesday, January 25, 2011 at 7:30 AM at the Providence Newberg Medical Center.

Student Commissioner Josi Fettig added some additional information concerning speeds on Sitka Avenue stating that information can more easily distributed to the student body through the morning announcements, rather than the school newsletter as mentioned in earlier discussions.

Commissioner Lesley Woodruff suggested waiting to do all future traffic studies that are requested until the school year is in session since two recent ones were requested to be redone to get more appropriate numbers.

Chair Klein reminded the commission that a work session will be held prior to the next month's meeting starting at 5:30 PM. The major items intended for discussion will be professional etiquette as commissioners

and revising the ordinance that governs this body with the City Attorney. He also reminded anyone, including new members, to schedule their ride-along with a police officer as soon as possible, if they have not done so. Mr. Chiu spoke of a suggestion from a year ago to place articles on the city's website about traffic related news or practices.

Chief Casey added the traffic team has a program with The Graphic to print an article on hot topics every month, this could be added to the website as well.

Student Commissioner Fettig also suggested adding a link on the school's website to these updates on the city website as another means of getting the information out to students.

ADJOURN TO NEXT MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 PM until February 14, 2011.

Approved by the Newberg Traffic Safety Commission this 14th day of February, 2011.



Mary Newell
Recording Secretary Pro Tem



Neal S. Klein
Traffic Safety Commission Chair