

JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION/ TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MINUTES
April 11, 2013, 7 p.m. Regular Meeting
Newberg Public Safety Building
401 E. Third Street

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Cathy Stuhr opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL - PLANNING COMMISSION & TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION

Members Present:	Cathy Stuhr, PC Chair	Art Smith, Vice Chair	Philip Smith
	Jason Dale	Antonio Saavedra, Student PC	
	Mayor Bob Andrews, Ex-Officio	Neal Klein, TSC Chair	Karl Birky
	Doris Brandt	Dianna Cotter	Shannon Eoff
	Kari Lawson		

Members Absent: Gary Bliss (excused), Ron Johns (un-excused), Allyn Edwards (excused), Greg Martin (un-excused), Hannah Kinney, Student Commissioner (excused)

Staff Present: Barton Brierley, Planning and Building Director
Mary Newell, Support Services Manager
Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer
Steve Olson, Associate Planner Mandy Dillman, Minutes Recorder

Others Present: Lesley Woodruff, City Councilor

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of March 14, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

MOTION: P SMITH/A SMITH approving the Consent Calendar including the Planning Commission minutes for March 14, 2013. Motion carried (4 Yes/0 No/2 Absent[Bliss, Edwards]/1 Vacant).
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IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No items were brought forward.

V. WORKSHOP: JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION/TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION DISCUSSION REGARDING:

1. Traffic Calming

Chair Neil Klein began the discussion by explaining how the new traffic calming table will work and expressing desire for it to become the new standard for decision making.

Commissioner Phil Smith asked for clarification on the wording “caution” in the table and the process a citizen would need to take in order to learn more about a “cautioned” item. Chair Klein explained not all “cautions” have descriptions; however the citizen would go to Traffic Safety Commission (TSC) or Planning Commission (PC) and the commission would make a decision based on their knowledge. Commissioner Phil Smith feels they need to have more solid explanations of each type of device so it is not confusing.

Commissioner Dianna Cotter mentioned there is a manual of uniform traffic control devices and she assumes the manual would be consulted in decision making processes to determine if a citizen’s request was warranted.

Commissioner Stuhr feels the clearer this document can be for users looking at it, the easier it might be to use it. If they choose a cautioned item they could then turn to the commissions to help make the decision, or they may decide on an allowed calming device in order to avoid the commission process.

Mr. Paul Chiu, senior engineer, gave a few examples of what conditions would be considered cautioned, such as a windy road, steep slope, or intersections too close to a driveway. Mr. Chiu explained the document is not intended to be exact, but more of a guideline.

Commissioner Karl Birky said the amount of ambiguity from engineering provides a service to the PC. He explained there is no firm code to follow with these guidelines and the commissioners can use judgment for decision making.

Commissioner Art Smith asked what would happen if a user brought forth a request for a not-recommended item to be installed. He also inquired about a situation where the item was allowed, but staff said it could not be used in that area. Mr. Chiu replied staff would be open to the request, but ultimately would make the decision based on their knowledge.

Chair Klein explained part of their goal is to be proactive city wide and to not find themselves in situations where they are spending money retroactively. The document does not answer all the questions, because it is the decision makers job to bring expertise and knowledge to the decision. They looked at other cities documents and they were very detailed and confusing, and that is not the goal of this document.

Commissioner Stuhr mentioned TSC gets to be more creative in decisions and PC’s decisions are much more black and white. She asked if they created this document originally. Chair Klein explained this idea grew from the traffic calming device request from the residents behind Fred Meyers. They formed a sub-committee to look at this and they found a document which had been made several years ago and revised it to create the current one.

Chair Stuhr said PC will take a look at the document and come back with comments at a later date.

2. Complete Streets

Councilor Lesley Woodruff presented the staff report accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation (see official meeting packet for full report).

Chair Stuhr mentioned the pedestrian crossing light on highway 219 and how she saw a pedestrian attempting to cross the other day and cars were not stopping. She asked if this particular traffic calming device is not working for this area then what should happen, and what did others think about this situation. Chair Klein agreed with

the issues Chair Stuhr mentioned, and suggested they do more public education on the usage of the pedestrian crossing light.

Commissioner Cotter said the improvements on 2nd Street are about more than just the usability of the street. Installing these simple engineering tactics also increased property values and made areas safer, which improves the quality of lives.

Chair Stuhr asked how this program is funded. Councilor Woodruff explained they have not looked into it yet, however she is sure there are grants and other opportunities.

Commissioner Jason Dale brought forth concern for how long it would take them to make back the money invested in something like this and they should keep the cost benefit in mind.

Chair Stuhr asked how Councilor Woodruff saw this concept moving forward. Councilor Woodruff said she would like to see Newberg change its code so new construction builds roads with the concept of Complete Streets in mind, and as old construction is updated they also revise roads to be welcoming and accessible for everyone.

Chair Stuhr mentioned they should try and consider this proposal from everyone's perspective, especially the developer who would have increased costs with this program.

Commissioner Phil Smith likes the idea of Complete Streets, and suggested they may need to make it code or have narrower streets to allow for alternative transportation space in order to allow for the developer to still build without a huge increase in cost.

Commissioner Cotter said part of what they want to achieve is to just start the discussion. If, as a community, they make a decision on what their overall idea is for the community and then make that a unified plan everyone agrees on, they can have more consistent results overall.

Chair Stuhr mentioned this is absolutely critical. When two people develop next to each other, they have to address the impact of their developments separately, the city gets a piecemeal look at traffic impacts.

Mr. Barton Brierley, Planning and Building Director, said they asked about grants and Oregon has several grant sources for planning and writing codes. Grants for infrastructure are much harder to find, however they have been successful in obtaining those for the 2nd Street and North College Street projects

Commissioner Art Smith asked how they make Newberg a safe walking community when so many streets do not have sidewalks. Commissioner Cotter explained the very idea of Complete Streets is to address this problem. She explained they cannot afford to go fix every problem right now, but if they need to do sewer work in an area, it would be the perfect opportunity to add improvements.

Commissioner Shannon Eoff said the overall thought behind this program steers development towards people rather than transportation.

3. Stop Signs – where and why?

Antonio Saavedra, student planning commissioner, explained to the commissioners there are several problem intersections in Newberg that do not have stop signs. He expressed concern that this could cause problems in the future. He recently spoke with the family whose son died crossing one of these streets and they asked Student Commissioner Saavedra to advocate and open the discussion on this subject. He asked for more information on regulations for stop signs so he could take it back to his community and for information on what the process is to get a stop sign installed.

Mr. Chiu explained the process that takes place when deciding to add a stop sign and how citizens can start the process to have a new stop sign installed.

Chair Klein said they were not entirely sure about putting in a stop sign on 4th Street and River Street, but it has turned out to be a good thing. However, the neighbors on Vittoria Road wanted stop signs and it has now dumped all the traffic onto Aquarius Lane. Sometimes the decision to put in a stop sign can increase risk in other areas if it just moves traffic, so they must consider many things when deciding to add a stop sign.

Student Commissioner Saavedra said they explained the information well and asked if he could send his list of intersections to Chair Klein for a traffic study and in return have a reply from him.

Commissioner Kari Lawson told Student Commissioner Saavedra that he is always welcome to come to any TSC and PC meetings that he likes as a citizen after his term is over and encouraged him to continue being proactive.

Commissioner Cotter mentioned he can invite friends and family as well to come to meetings and be involved in the decisions of the city

4. Coordinating development review processes

Staff and commissioners discussed how TSC and PC can be involved with each other better in the future and it was decided for the mayors cabinet to discuss and come up with a proposal for both groups to look over.

VII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

1. Update on Council items

Mr. Brierley said City Council has received a request to put a tourist oriented directional sign on a city street. State law says the state controls what tourist signs are put up on highways. The city does not allow business signs in the public right of way. City Council has directed PC to come up with a policy regarding these signs. Additionally they need to decide if non-tourist businesses can also use these signs. The second item needing to be discussed is the process of the city becoming a certified local government for historic preservation. In order to qualify the city has to have a local historic ordinance, inventory of historical properties, have to have a historic preservation commission, and a commitment to historic preservation. City council has asked PC to move forward on this and look at how to create this historic preservation program. Lastly, they have six applicants for the vacant PC member spot, however they will be filling the city council position first, and then the PC position.

2. Other reports, letters, or correspondence

Chair Stuhr said she would like it to be consistently mentioned in the minutes that before the hearing started they read the ORS statement and called for any bias, conflict of interests, or ex parte contacts that could influence the decision.

3. Next Planning Commission Meeting: June 13, 2013

VIII. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS

No items from commissioners.

IX. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Approved by the Newberg Planning Commission this 9th day of May, 2013.



Mandy Dillman
Minutes Recorder

Cathy Stuhr
Planning Commission Chair