

Traffic Safety Committee, Meeting Minutes, August 18, 2023

Chief Kilcullen called the meeting to order at 9:02 hours

Members Present: Chief Kilcullen, Commander Whitehead, Jim Rotondo and John McCann

Members Absent: Ted Gillen and Bradley LaFaso of LaFaso Electric

Guest's Present: Patrick Griffin, Diane Alberts, Nancy Ketcham & Kendra

NEW BUSINESS

- 1) Request to designate the State Street/Hazel Street intersection as a four way stop. The Hazel Street intersection is at the top of the hill and drivers from both the West and East have poor sight distance. VTrans Standard B-71 recommends a minimum intersection sight distance of 335 ft. for a 30 mph road – Patrick Griffin

Patrick Griffin stated that he's not saying that he has the solution but he sees the poor sight distance. He feels it would be beneficial to have a traffic device here. He has read through the MUTCD manual and it doesn't help having the poor sight distance and that there isn't a sidewalk here. Chief Kilcullen stated that there is a Yield sign on the North side of the street. Patrick feels that a Stop sign would be proper, here. We will be replacing the Yield sign with a Stop sign at this location. We have been trying to do that, where appropriate.

Jim Rotondo stated that it takes a lot to make a 4 way intersection and it's not an appropriate tool to use. He doesn't feel that we meet the threshold to be one. Sidewalks are to keep pedestrians where they should be. Patrick Griffin mentioned that the MUTCD manual is just federal guidelines. This is just subject to local. It would be the same as intersections like Baxter Street/Crescent Street, Baxter Street/Library Avenue. I don't see the volume at our location to be any different than these locations. Think about our community, the local.

Jim asked, When you look at State Street, how do you pick Hazel Street and not the rest? Patrick replied with "Poor sight distance, where road user can't see traffic and less conflicting traffic to stop. Jim stated that State Street is like a Main arterie. Hazel Street is a side street. What if we were to use this weaker criteria around the City? Patrick asked if the other intersections are wrong? Jim stated that he wouldn't comment on these other intersections without backup data. Nancy Ketcham asked what it takes to get a traffic study for Cramton Avenue, State Street, Columbian Avenue. She stated she lives on Watkins Avenue. Jim mentioned that we currently have a Traffic Study going on right now on Main Street. You have to have funds to do a Traffic Study, a traffic consultant to do it and it won't happen in a week. There are a lot of streets off of State Street. Stop signs aren't the proper tool to correct this area.

John McCann mentioned how he had requested a four way stop at Lincoln Avenue a short time ago, because people were using Lincoln Avenue as a cut through. It was a very similar discussion to this and that a four way stop isn't appropriate for this location. John stated that he later Googled it and he thinks that people feel stop signs are to control traffic. It happens

everywhere. Maybe we need to take a broader look. There has to be some traffic calming that we can put in. Is there something else, maybe speed humps, narrower roads, diagonal inverter? We would like neighborhoods to not be highways.

It was stated that the signs at Columbian Avenue are further away than they should be and someone was almost t-boned here. Motion cameras would be beneficial. It would be beneficial to pull the police records to see how many accidents were here. Jim Rotondo stated that anytime we do street renovations, we look at curb cuts. We're trying to work with sights that were allowed to develop in a particular manner. We can talk with the property owner. Diane asked, what about a light? Jim said that when we're talking about a light, we're talking like 100's of thousands of dollars. Nancy Ketcham mentioned that the tree trimming that was done at this location was only for 2 signs and the tree trimming needs more vigorous exercise. There is a giant bush on Pierpoint Avenue, trees in the jail area that block view and sprouts at the sign near flower shop. She thinks the truck is the husband of the flower shop owner that parks there. A lot of things are happening here. Kendra, so I hear traffic study and money. Can we get something started in this neighborhood? This is an Official request, to start a traffic study.

Chief Kilcullen stated that it starts at budget process. If particular department requests a budget item, it goes to the Mayor, then to the Board of Alderman. John McCann, who is also on the Board of Alderman can be your advocate. You need to identify all needs. Jim asked how do you prioritize one neighborhood over another. During Covid, we were doing proactive steps. We don't recall any crash hot spots in that area. Kendra stated that she doesn't want her child to get hit. Nancy Ketcham stated that's why my suggestion for cameras would be beneficial. Jim mentioned that unless you're doing live camera, watching and monitoring, isn't always the answer. Kendra inquired if we were also concerned with speed & traffic count? I hear you, Chief. She stated that she would love to see a traffic study. Would like to somehow capture data too.

Jim stated that with the Traffic study that we're doing here, now, our intent initially was to get one for the whole city. We had to revise our scope. We felt that the most important areas to study right now are Main Street, West Street, Strongs Avenue and Allen Street. The fee for this traffic study was \$75,000.00. Jim mentioned that he has been with the City for 9 years, now and he has heard different neighborhoods for different years. One was Temple Street one year. It was asked if money is going to be allocated for a traffic study or are we going to have to apply for a grant. John McCann said that he feels that a concern has been brought by our Community. There is education, enforcement and engineering that go along with this. Is there a way we can bring the engineering component along?

Chief Kilcullen stated that for the Short Term, we can have a look at the neighborhood to see if there are other concerns to address here. Commander Whitehead asked if the people of the neighborhood were saying it's a Speed related issue. He asked if it was going West, going East, or both? Patrick Griffin replied with a Yes. Commander Whitehead stated that we can put a speed cart up there to capture speeds & data. It may give us an idea of what speeds are in this area. Chief mentioned that we have one to capture speed from both sides. John stated that the

speed cart will let people know we're checking on this. Nancy stated that she had a funding idea. She mentioned how the State was going to help with lights on West Street, will they be looking at Route 7? Jim Rotondo stated Yes. Nancy said that this Road is labeled as old Route 4. Could the State fund it? Jim stated that we would still have to apply for it. Nancy asked if it could be a partnership. Jim said that it doesn't really work that way.

2) Request for two short sections of sidewalk improvement – Patrick Griffin

Nancy asked if there was funding in the budget. Jim stated that we have a 1 Million dollar budget. We are doing a lot of replacement. There are so many in terrible shape. We are doing sidewalks. We did Maple Street, Robbins Street, East Center Street. We were thinking of replacing all sidewalks, initially. Trying to prioritize. Won't be done this year.

Nancy stated that at Evergreen & Emmett, she feels there's a Spring here, where the sidewalk may be. Jim said that he appreciates knowing this. Trying to react to these things. On Pierpoint, the kids had to walk further to get to the Crosswalk. We fixed this.

3) Request for a One-Way sign or no left turn sign on Cottage Street exiting the M & T Bank – Tony Romeo

There are 2 exits from the Bank. There is exiting done through the drive thru and exiting done through the Parking lot. The current "No Left Turn" sign is closer to the South side than to the parking lot Exit. Parking lot stripes on the exit/entrance but the arrows are somewhat faded. We are asking the Bank to place a sign on their property, "No Left Turn" & restripe their property. Commander Whitehead asked if it would be beneficial if we removed the existing sign to the Left? Chief Kilcullen stated that it's hard to decide where people will see it more.

Chief Kilcullen asked if there was any other new business.

John McCann mentioned that in an effort to understand the committees better, he asked if there is a central mission for this committee that gives you direction? Chief Kilcullen stated that we'll look and see what's laid out in the ordinances. We'll look at it next month. Patrick Griffin asked what the relevant committee is that the Board of Alderman would deal with to do with Traffic? Public Works. John McCann said that it would start with the full board. There would be a discussion of where it's most applicable then can be referred to a committee.

It was mentioned that Mr. Roy was talking about sidewalks, parking. Think it makes sense to go to the Board, through the City Clerk.

Jim Rotondo stated that if its something that is a new item to be put in, it could be as simple as calling DPW if we just need to fix something wrong. We are talking about closing Prospect Street Extension. The Public Works chair is Bill Gillam.

OLD BUSINESS

Overgrown bushes at the corner of Curtis Avenue & Muzzey Street – This was a request that the owners trim the overgrown bushes or remove them so that they don't cause an accident in this area. This was brought up at our June 16, 2023 meeting. Jim Rotondo gave an update that they talked with the owners and she agreed that the City could remove the bushes and correct the curb cut, here.

The City Forester has trimmed overgrowth at the intersection of Forest and Hickory Street, Deer and Temple Street and Pierpoint and State Street. Nancy asked how we get the arborist to do more trimming at Pierpoint Avenue, Columbian Avenue and State Street. Jim said that he will mention this to him.

The Eastern most "no parking" sign was located to the RR roadway.

West Street/Merchants Row Intersection - Easily, a month ago, sent email asking about no left turning lights at West Street/Merchants Row and Crescent St/North Main St.

Jim mentioned that the intersection of West Street/Merchants Row will be part of a paving project next year. We've been trying to change this intersection. When you come down West Street, we're going to do internally. We decided since the State is paving & putting up new signals, there will be through traffic in the right lane and a turn with left signal next year. Chief stated that as far as issue with Crescent Street, the current technology can't accommodate some of the different functions. John mentioned that one of the first Traffic Safety Committee meetings he attended, we were discussing the issues.

Meeting adjourned at 9:57 hours.

Submitted by Nora J. Moore, Records Clerk