



City of Racine

Meeting Minutes

Traffic Commission

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

*Chairman Martin DeFatte, Alderman Ronald D. Hart
Atty. Scott Letteney, Commissioner Richard Jones
Deputy Chief Steven Hurley, Jarvis Finley, Charles French*

Monday, February 19, 2007

5:15 PM

Room 301 - City Hall

Call To Order

Meeting called to order at 5:15 PM

Also Present: John Rooney, Sgt. Steve Wagner attended on behalf of Deputy Chief Hurley

Approval of Minutes for the January 15, 2007 Meeting

Motion made by Jones, seconded by French to approve the minutes as printed.

New Business

1. [06-3053](#) **Subject:** Communication from the Asst. Commissioner of Public Works/Engineering requesting that Section 94-311 of the Municipal Code be amended to delete: 13th Street, from Valley Drive to South Memorial Drive; and Valley Drive from Washington Avenue to 13th Street, from the designation of Truck and Heavy Traffic Routes.

Recommendation: The request to remove Valley Drive and 13th Street from the truck and heavy traffic routes be granted.

Further recommends that Section 94-311 relating to "Operation of heavy vehicles; designation of heavy traffic routes", be amended to delete; Valley Drive from Washington Avenue to 13th Street.

Further recommends that Section 94-311 relating to "Operation of heavy vehicles; designation of heavy traffic routes", be amended to delete; 13th Street from Valley Drive to South Memorial Drive.

Fiscal Note: There will be a nominal cost to remove signs at these locations.

John Rooney described the resurfacing project on Valley Drive from Washington Avenue to Thirteenth Street. He noted the high accident rate at the intersection of Valley Drive and Thirteenth Street and indicated the accident rate at that intersection was ranked 11th out of nearly 1,800 intersections in the City of Racine. He noted during this construction project geometric changes were needed to decrease the accident rate. He noted the best option to do this was to create an oval round-about at this location. He noted the round-about would function properly; however, it would prohibit westbound to southbound movement of trucks on Thirteenth Street to Valley Drive. He noted this route was

designated a heavy traffic route in the City Ordinances and asked that this heavy traffic route be removed. He noted emergency vehicles could get through this intersection, but the tractor trailers could not. He noted there are alternative routes for heavy traffic to use. He noted those vehicles use South Memorial to Sixteenth Street and back up to Washington Avenue via Phillips. Rooney noted the request to remove the heavy traffic route was needed; however, this route would remain on the snow emergency route because of the steep grades.

A motion was made by Hart, seconded by Letteney to approve the deletion of Thirteenth Street from Valley Drive to South Memorial Drive and Valley Drive from Washington Avenue to Thirteenth Street from the designation of heavy truck and heavy traffic routes.

Recommended For Acceptance

2. [07-0044](#)

Subject: Communication from the Mayor wishing to discuss the changing of one-way streets back to two-way. Austin and Mertens Avenue from 16th to 17th Streets. Wilson, Garfield, and Peck Avenues from State to West Streets.

Recommendation: Defer

Mayor Becker asked that several streets be converted from one-way to two streets. The first group of streets were Wilson, Garfield, and Peck Avenue between State Street and West Street.

John Rooney noted these were all 40 foot right-of-ways with narrow pavement widths of 28 - 29 feet. He noted the narrow width doesn't provide standard lane widths for bi-directional flow, therefore the Department of Public Works and the Engineering Department recommend one-way streets on narrower than typical streets.

Rick Jones also read a memo to the Mayor regarding snowplowing efforts and the needs to provide minimum lane width.

Mayor Becker believed, because of low traffic counts, there wouldn't be an issue with two-way traffic. He also indicated two-way traffic, in his opinion, slows down traffic and is good for neighborhood circulation.

Charlie French questioned the ability of emergency vehicles to get down the street with two-way traffic and expressed concern for that.

Mayor Becker indicated this was his personal request. He had not contacted the Aldermen of the district or the residents.

A discussion ensued regarding the possibility of contacting the affected residents and the Alderman. The Committee elected to defer the item until that could be done.

The next set of streets were Austin and Morton Avenue from Sixteenth to Seventeenth Street.

John Rooney again noted the one-way configurations of Austin and Morton and Murray Avenue between Sixteenth Street and Seventeenth Street. He noted only Murray Avenue was a substandard street width. He noted that all the streets were on 60 foot right-of-ways with 36 foot pavements, with the exception of Murray which had a 30 foot pavement. Rooney noted the reason for the one-way street southbound on Morton

Avenue is most likely to take traffic away from the signalized intersection of Sixteenth Street and Taylor Avenue. He noted a similar configuration near Taylor and Durand Avenue where all lanes are one-way southbound away from the intersection to avoid additional vehicle conflicts.

A discussion ensued on the merits of going back to two-way streets in the area. Richard Jones suggested that a two-way was possible on Morton and Austin if a right turn only was allowed for northbound Morton Avenue. He indicated no left turns at that approach would keep additional conflicts away from the intersection of Taylor and Sixteenth Street. There was also some discussion about parking restrictions that would be needed by the Fire Station at the intersection near Sixteenth Street.

A motion made by Jones, seconded by French to approve the change of one-way streets to two-way streets with the no left turn at Morton and Sixteenth Street, subject to public notification of the changes.

A motion was made by Hart, seconded by Letteney to defer the items. Passed unanimously.

Deferred

3. [07-0184](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) Communication from the Mayor wishing to discuss the elimination of parking restrictions on Memorial Drive, north of State Street.

Recommendation: Defer

Mayor Becker indicated the parking restrictions on Memorial Drive north of State Street were unnecessary. He noted that if parking were allowed on the street during peak hours it would slow traffic down.

John Rooney commented the area is posted on the east side for the PM peak period and is posted on the west side for the AM peak period. He noted the traffic volumes in the peak hour justified these restrictions and they are consistent with other arterial streets in the City of Racine. He noted the other arterial streets have similar peak hour volumes and average daily traffic volumes. He noted the City of Racine follows Wisconsin Department of Transportation Facilities Development Manual and the Institute of Transportation Engineering Handbooks when considering warrants for parking prohibitions. He noted these warrants were met for the parking prohibitions and indicated the unsafe conditions that could occur if the parking restrictions were removed. He noted parking allowed in these hours would result in rear end or side swipe accidents if the City did not provide uninterrupted and continuous flow during the peak hour.

Mayor Becker commented that this is a neighborhood street and desired the parking to slow down traffic in the area.

John Rooney commented that Memorial Drive is an arterial street that is heavily used between Goold Street and Durand Avenue.

Chairman DeFatte asked the Mayor if the restrictions he was interested in were in the area of State Street to Albert or Hamilton.

Sgt. Wagner commented this is a busy arterial and with cars parked in the parking lanes during the peak hours, traffic will backup considerably.

Rick Jones noted this section of Memorial Drive is in the 5-year program for reconstruction. He asked the item be deferred while he and the Assistant Commissioner of Public Works/Engineering review possible lane width configurations that would occur on the reconstruction of that stretch of arterial road.

A motion was made by Jones, seconded by Letteney to defer. Passed unanimously.

Deferred

Miscellaneous

John Rooney informed the Traffic Commission that a communication was being submitted to the Public Works and Services Committee for the installation of traffic signals at the intersection of Ohio Street and Byrd Avenue and for the removal of the pedestrian bridge just north of the intersection. He noted that during design study for the reconstruction of Ohio Street, a traffic study was performed and warrants are met for signalization at that location. He indicated this was information only and no action was required.

Next Meeting Date

Next meeting date was set for Monday, March 19, 2007.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM

If you are disabled and have accessibility needs or need information interpreted for you, please contact the Engineering Department, 636-9166, at least 48 hours prior to this meeting.