



City of Racine

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

Meeting Minutes - Final Traffic Commission

Chairman Sandy Weidne
Co-Chairman Martin DeFatte
Atty. Nicole Loop
Charles French
John Heckenlively
Lt. Chuck Weitzel
Mark Yehlen

Monday, June 18, 2012

5:15 PM

City Hall, Room 301

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 P.M.

PRESENT: 6 - Nicole Loop, Martin DeFatte, John Heckenlively, Lt. Chuck Weitzel, Chairman Weidner and Mark Yehlen

EXCUSED: 1 - Charles French

Also Present: John Rooney, Alderman Kaprelian-Becker, Alderman Kaplan, Christi Beerntsen, Pamela Damm, Sarah McKellips, James McKellips, David Fiskum, Dean Fiskum, Karen Fiskum, Richard Meinert, Donna Meinert, Dianne Niesen, Darrell Forsyth, Stefan Michajlak, Michael Reschke, Ellen Cruz

Approval of Minutes for the May 21, 2012 Meeting

The minutes of the May 21, 2012 meeting were approved as printed. Passed unanimously.

New Business

1. [12-7774](#) **Subject:** Communication from the Alderman of the 4th District, on behalf of Robert Michiels (1632 Michigan Blvd), requesting a 3-way stop at the intersection of High Street and Michigan Blvd.

Recommendation of the Traffic Commission on 06-18-12: Receive and file.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Alderman Kaplan appeared before the Commission and explained the request by his constituent for stop signs. He indicated there were higher speeds on Michigan Boulevard viewed by his constituent and he was looking for some increased safety in crossing that intersection.

In response to a question by John Heckenlively, John Rooney noted no studies for all-way stops have been performed at this intersection. He highly doubted warrants

would be met at this location. He noted he did speak with Lt. Weitzel about the intersection as it related to accidents or crash history and it didn't appear there were any issues. He noted reasons for installing traffic control, such as all-way stops, is to mitigate a crash history or to provide gaps in traffic due to heavy delay on all of the approaches. He indicated neither one appears to exist and feels that a study done to show that would demonstrate that he didn't feel a study would show any different type of control than what is in existence at this time.

Mark Yehlen indicated that stop signs are not meant to control speed, it is not their intended use, and they are there to assign right-of-way.

Lt. Weitzel noted the speed trailer was deployed in the area and that he would review the data on that and find out if any speed enforcement is needed in that area and would contact the different shift patrol commanders if that is required.

After further discussion, a motion was made by Yehlen, seconded by Weitzel to receive and file. Passed unanimously.

Recommended to be Received and Filed

2. [12-7775](#)

Subject: Communication from the Alderman of the 4th District, requesting a Right Turn Only from Hoffert Drive onto Michigan Blvd, directing traffic to the north.

Recommendation of the Traffic Commission on 06-18-12: Defer

Alderman Kaplan noted many of his constituents, that were in attendance at the meeting, were concerned about the traffic in the area scooping the loop, coming up from Hoffert Drive, taking that left turn going back southbound on Michigan Boulevard back to Barker Street. He also noted the constant flow of traffic and noise complaints from vehicles, stereos and motorists in their vehicles.

Alderman Kaprelian-Becker was in attendance and noted she was here to listen to some of the issues as part of this area is in her district.

John Rooney went over some overheads showing the existing roadway system down by the North Beach prior to the construction of Lake Michigan Pathway Phase II. He noted prior to 2005, Kewaunee Street extended down the hill to the North Beach to both parking lots. It was bi-directional traffic. He also noted Hoffert Drive, on the opposite approach of St. Patrick Street, was one-way and exited back up Hoffert Drive. He noted there was quite a bit of traffic that would go through the area through Barker, Kewaunee, Hoffert St. at St. Patrick and then up Hoffert St. at English St. He noted the configuration of the new Hoffert Drive that runs through the expanding parking lots at Kids Cove and over at the North Beach Oasis. He did note bi-directional traffic can leave the Oasis parking lot to go back south towards Barker Street. He noted all vehicles turning right out of the North Beach Oasis parking lot have to go northbound up Hoffert Drive.

In response to a question about bicyclists and pedestrian safety, John Rooney noted the Lake Michigan Pathway was built east of all the vehicular traffic to separate pedestrians and bicyclists from traffic in the area.

Christi Beerntsen submitted a petition with approximately 40 signatures for a right-turn only at Hoffert Drive opposite English Street where it meets Michigan Boulevard. She felt this would circumvent some of the scoop the looping that was occurring at that location. She also indicated a lot of the vehicles leaving Hoffert

Drive exit westbound on English Street. She indicated cars appear to back-up at that location, create delays at English Street at Main Street. She also inquired if it would not be approved for permanent installation, could it at least be looked at for a trial period.

Pamela Damm indicated with the increased use of the North Beach park area, there is more parking required in the area, there is more pedestrian traffic coming from the inner City with children crossing and also noted additional vehicles using the area from delivery trucks to Public Works vehicles.

Steve Michajlak indicated the scoop the loop traffic pattern needs to be stopped. He feels Hoffert Drive should be removed completely and the area should return to a park area and didn't feel both bikes and pedestrians belonged on the multi-use path that was built in 2005 and 2006.

Ellen Cruz indicated she loves the beach front and its popularity, but noted there is a traffic problem and she feels the right-turn only is the only way to solve it and perhaps it should only be in effect on weekends and holidays.

Sarah McKellips believes there is a crash history at English and Main from additional traffic vehicles coming up from Hoffert Drive.

Donna Meinert repeated some of the problems with the scoop the loop looping of traffic. She indicated a lot of these people are not even looking for parking. She noted they are just cruising the area looking for friends or other things to do.

Dianne Niesen was upset the street was approved for assessable paving in 2013 and believes a lot of the excess traffic is the reason English Street deteriorated so quickly.

Michael Reschke indicated his biggest concern was noise, particularly from motorcycles and vehicles that travel through the area.

Mark Yehlen commented he believes this is a seasonal issue and impacts the area 30 - 40 days a year, mostly on weekends and holidays. He noted requiring the right-turn only will just move motorists to Yout Street, although most people indicated they felt they would go up to the intersection of Goold and use the signalized intersection.

In response to a question by Alderman Kaplan, John Rooney noted one-way pairs, as desired by Alderman Kaplan in the area, would really be intrusive on the rest of the neighborhood, particularly for those residents living north of Yout Street on Chatham Street. He indicated the alleys are "Do No Enter" from Michigan Boulevard and Main Street, and then they would only have one-way on Yout Street to get into their property. John Rooney also noted that he believes the traffic for those who actually obey the right-turn only sign will simply move to Yout Street, and if they want to scoop the loop they would simply take a left on Chatham Street, go back to English Street and head southbound on Michigan Boulevard again.

Mark Yehlen noted the problem may be moved over to Chatham Street, where there are residents on both sides of the street as opposed to on one side on Michigan Boulevard. He also commented that one way to eliminate the scoop the loop would be to cul-de-sac off the south end of Hoffert Drive, just north of the Oasis parking lot although that would be detrimental to parking.

John Rooney noted that parking is allowed on both sides of the street going up Hoffert Drive because of the one-way traffic. With two-way traffic, one side of the

street would have to be removed for parking.

Lt. Weitzel believes this is a quality of life problem, not a traffic issue. He noted most of the complaints he hears about are speed and noise and it amounts to an enforcement issue. He noted there is extra patrols in the beach area during the summertime and felt enforcement is the best way to mitigate the problem.

John Rooney cautioned the Traffic Commission members that installing a right-turn only sign may only wind up moving the problem on English Street over to Yout Street and also moving the scoop the loop movement on to Chatham Street, as well, and wanted to reinforce that for every action the Traffic Commission takes, there may be an equal and opposite reaction to it. He did not endorse the right-turn only installation at the east approach of Hoffert Drive and Michigan Boulevard.

Dean Fiskum also commented on English Street. He feels he has a difficult time even getting out of his driveway with the increased traffic westbound from all the traffic coming up from Hoeffert Drive.

After further discussion, a motion was made by Weidner, seconded by Heckenlively to install a right-turn only sign, from April 1st to December 1st. After further discussion on the motion, on a roll call vote, members voting aye: Weidner, Heckenlively. Members vote naye: Weitzel, Loop, Yehlen. Motion failed: 2:3

Nicole Loop wanted the Commission to consider the temporary installation for a trial period and suggested 30 days. Lt. Weitzel noted this shouldn't be done prior to the 4th of July if the trial period were to be approved.

John Rooney noted that any action taken by the Traffic Commission would not go into effect until after the 4th of July because of the next Common Council meeting. He also suggested perhaps a 60-day trial period to get through the summer. He noted the temporary signs can be put up after the 4th of July. He also noted traffic counts can be taken if the traffic, in fact, is going right on Michigan or continuing westbound or turning left. He noted traffic counts can be taken at this time in the existing condition and then taken during the trial period to see if the problem is shifting to another area.

Motion made by Loop, seconded by Heckenlively to defer the item for a 60-day trial period to install a right-turn only movement on the east approach of Hoffert Drive and Michigan Boulevard. Passed unanimously.

Deferred

Next Meeting Date

The next Traffic Commission meeting will be July 16, 2012 at 5:15 PM in Room 301 at City Hall.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

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.

