



TRANSPORTATION SAFETY & ADVISORY COMMISSION

CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

TO: Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission Members, Council members, City Manager Kurt Hodgen

FROM: Brad Reed, Transportation Planner

DATE: June 9, 2011

RE: Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission Summary from June 2, 2011 Meeting

The Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission met on Thursday June 2, 2011 at 9:00AM in City Council Chambers at the Community Development Building, 409 South Main Street.

Members and Advisory Members present included: Bill Blessing (Chair), Brad Reed (Public Works), Thanh Dang (Public Works), Drew Williams (Public Works), Len Van Wyk (citizen member), Russell Presnell (citizen member), MPO Greg Deeds (Police member), Sgt. Roger Knott (Police), Off. Paul Helmuth (Fire), Reggie Smith (Public Transportation), Doug Stader (DMV), Sgt. Andy Muncy (Rockingham County Sherriff's Office)

Guests Present: None

Citizens are always provided the opportunity to voice their views/concerns about any item before the commission. It is the policy of the Commission to move the agenda item to the beginning of the meeting when citizens attend Commission meetings to avoid detaining citizens for the entire meeting. However, any citizen is welcome to stay for the entire meeting.

Welcome

New Business

1. Reservoir Street & S Carlton Street intersection review

Mr. Reed explained that a citizen concern was received by Mayor Baugh regarding a perceived high incidence of crashes at the intersection of Reservoir Street & S Carlton Street. City staff researched the accident history and found that four accidents have occurred in the past two years due to drivers failing to yield when turning left off of S. Carlton Street onto Reservoir

Street. There have been past citizen complaints by drivers that are delayed by the heavy traffic on Reservoir Street making it difficult to find gaps in traffic, which may have some correlation to the conditions surrounding these accidents, all of which occurred during the day when traffic would have been heavier. Two other reported accidents were found during the two year time period, but were dismissed because they were caused by driver distraction or error unrelated to the characteristics of the intersection.

Public Works staff recommended that improvements to the intersection be considered, as the current method of traffic control (stop signs) may be insufficient for the volume of traffic. While the number of accidents was found to be too few to necessarily warrant a significant intersection change in its own right, it is evident that delays and safety could be enhanced through physical improvements. Since no short term, minor improvements could be identified to resolve these issues, Public Works staff went on to recommend that staff research the feasibility of a roundabout at this intersection, as is shown on the 2011 Comprehensive Plan. Roundabouts have been proven to eliminate angle collisions and reduce delays when compared to a conventional traffic signal. Since S Carlton Street is between a commercial area to the south on Reservoir Street and a residential area to the north, a roundabout could provide a logical separation between land uses while also reducing speeds on Reservoir Street.

The Commission agreed with this recommendation and added that a roundabout is favorable when compared to a traffic signal and would provide safer, more efficient traffic control. A letter will be submitted by Mr. Blessing to the City Manager to request that City Council support Public Works in moving forward with design work to determine the feasibility of a roundabout and to support a future intersection improvement through the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) process.

2. Path on Chicago Avenue and Mount Clinton Pike shoulder work

Mr. Williams explained that City staff are considering a breakout project for the Chicago Avenue Corridor Study to create a 4-5 foot variable width pedestrian & bicycle path on the west side of Chicago Avenue from Mt. Clinton Pike to the shared use path at Greystone Street. Also included, is a widening of the shoulder and striped edge line on the south side of Mt. Clinton Pike between the existing shoulder at Christian Light Publications and the entrance to the Gift &

Thrift strip mall. These improvements would be temporary until the City would be able to build a standard sidewalk and add bicycle lanes on Chicago Avenue, provided that Right-of-Way and funding would be available for such a project.

Mr. Van Wyk suggested that signage be considered on Shenandoah Street to warn motorists of bicyclists approaching on Chicago Avenue from both directions on the shoulder, as motorists would typically expect bicyclists to only be moving with traffic.

Mr. Williams requested the Commission's endorsement of these improvements and the Commission agreed, adding that the project would be beneficial for pedestrians and bicycles in need of a refuge from vehicles.

Additional information regarding the Chicago Avenue Corridor Study can be found at <http://www.chicagoavenue.org/>.

Old Business

3. Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program – Pleasant Hill Acres

Ms. Dang shared with the Commission that the neighborhood traffic calming meeting for Pleasant Hill Acres will take place on Thursday June 9th at 6 PM at Keister Elementary School. City staff sent out a neighborhood survey to better understand citizen concerns and suggestions and will review the results and present them to the neighborhood at the meeting.

Sgt. Knott mentioned that the police department recently conducted a checkpoint at the intersection of Central Avenue & Emery Street for the Click It or Ticket campaign.

Other Business/ Announcements

4. Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee meeting update

Ms. Dang announced that Carl Droms, the newly elected citizen member of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee, attended his first meeting on May 23rd. The Commission had no questions regarding the summary from that meeting. The Subcommittee meeting summary is available for review at: <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/index.php?id=1088>.

5. Safe Routes to School – Keister Elementary School project dedication

Ms. Dang announced that a dedication ceremony will be held to commemorate the completion of the Safe Routes to School grant project for Keister Elementary School at 8:45 AM on June 3rd.

A final project punch list is the only item that remains to be completed before the improvements are accepted into the City's infrastructure system.

Adjourn