



TRANSPORTATION SAFETY & ADVISORY COMMISSION
CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

TO: Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission Members

FROM: Ian Pike, Transportation Systems Specialist

DATE: Wednesday February 15, 2017

RE: Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission Summary for Wednesday, February 8, 2017

The Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission met on **February 8, 2017 at 8:30AM in Room 011 of City Hall, 409 S Main St.**

Commission Members present included: Bill Blessing, Len VanWyk, Cpl Wayne Westfall

Advisory Members and Guests present included: Jim Baker, Mike Brady, Lee Eshelman, Tom Hartman, Ian Pike, Doug Stader, Erin Yancey

Commission meetings are open to the public and citizens are provided the opportunity to voice their views/concerns about any item before the Commission. It is the policy of the Commission to move relevant agenda items to the beginning of the meeting when citizens are in attendance to avoid detaining them for the entire meeting.

Welcome

Business

1. Speeding on Stone Spring Rd

Mr. Pike explained that Public Works received a complaint through City Council about speeding on Stone Spring Rd near Manor Dr. The citizen requested that the speed limit be lowered and for HPD to periodically place the speed trailer along that stretch of road. This area had been discussed at a the October 2015 meeting when the Commission decided to raise the speed limit from 35 mph to 40 mph from Ramblewood Rd east to the city limits.

Mr. Hartman also noted that the study showed that the 40 mph speed limit would be acceptable there due to the available sight distance. It is believed that this citizen might be having trouble finding an appropriate gap in traffic in order to turn onto Stone Spring Rd. This is the first complaint that Public Works has received since increasing the speed limit.

Since there are no other concerns and this section has been looked at within the last two years, the Commission recommends no action at this time.

2. Krispy Kreme Traffic Concerns

Cpl Westfall explained several of the concerns and temporary solutions that were used during the opening of Krispy Kreme. During the first week, the right-in/right-out entrance onto Burgess Rd was closed off due to the volume of traffic queuing for the drive-thru. This cut off access to the other businesses in the development. Vehicles turning left from westbound E Market St onto Burgess Rd were queuing through the intersection, effectively blocking the eastbound traffic from proceeding, cause backups onto the interstate. To counteract this, the two left turn lanes on westbound E Market St were reduced to one lane during periods of high volume and the interstate ramp was closed temporarily until traffic could clear out. The traffic volume has since reduced dramatically so these countermeasures are no longer needed.

Mr. Hartman noted that there is also an issue of vehicles turning left out of the right-in/right-out entrance. A “No Left Turn” sign will be placed there so law enforcement can better enforce that movement.

Mr. Blessing asked if the backup on eastbound E Market St and onto I-81 was also due to vehicles merging across several lanes to turn left onto Linda Ln to head to Lowe's and further. Cpl Westfall explained that the backup was indeed from vehicles queuing for Krispy Kreme. There was also construction equipment blocking part of the parking lot, making internal queuing more difficult.

Mr. Hartman explained that one idea was to tear down the existing building containing Domino's, Sweet Frog, etc, build a new entrance to align with the entrance to Market Square East, and then rebuild for those businesses to return. This could have provided more internal space for queuing for the Krispy Kreme drive-thru. However, the existing businesses were not interested.

The road improvements – building the second signal and creating the right-in/right-out entrance – came from the TIA that planned for approximately 150 vehicles during the peak hours. The average volumes during the peak hours in the first week were approximately 200 vehicles.

Mr. Blessing suggested monitoring traffic volumes for several more months to see if they level out to what was planned.

Mr. VanWyk asked if the construction equipment and pods in the parking lot could be moved to help with internal queuing. Mr. Hartman suggested checking with Community Development about enforcing the parking requirements, if that is the issue.

3. Bike/Ped Plan Presentation

Ms. Yancey explained that there were a few minor changes made since the joint meeting with the Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee in October. There was a public meeting in November that had around 30-40 people in attendance, followed by a month-long public comment period. The comments were compiled by Public Works and will be available online with their respective response from Public Works. The few changes made included adding a strategy to study on/off-road lighting for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, adding a strategy to consider road markings or etiquette signs on shared-use paths at potential conflict points with vehicles, and adding a new bicycle

segment project on W Market from the western city limits to Liberty St (this new project scored in the middle of the list and did not affect the scoring of any other projects).

Ms. Yancey also noted that there has continued to be great discussion around the individual factor weighting in the scoring process. Several members of the public and the subcommittee argued that connectivity and equity should be weighted higher and that constraints should be weighted lower. Public Works staff felt strongly that constraints should remain a major factor. Ultimately, the scoring criteria were not changed for this plan.

Mr. Hartman explained another change included expanding language on maintenance funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects since there is no state funding for them.

The commission unanimously approved the plan. The next step is to present to the Planning Commission in March and, if approved there, to present to City Council in April.

Other Business/ Announcements

Sight Distance Concerns

Mr. Blessing mentioned a specific concern with the parking lot in the NW corner of E Bruce St and S Mason St. Several parking spots are meant to be blocked off to allow for adequate sight distance, though it appears that is no longer the case. Mr. Blessing also asked the Commission to be aware of potential problem intersections as the bushes and trees start blooming.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Mr. Hartman explained that Public Works will be starting work on the Transportation chapter in the next week. This chapter is another layer, along with the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan and the Street Improvement Plan, that helps to determine appropriate transportation-related projects. This chapter will be similar to the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan and will be brought to this commission for review over the summer.

Garbers Church Rd Shared-Use Path

Mr. VanWyk asked for an update after the recent Garbers Church Rd Shared-Use Path public Meeting. Mr. Hartman said there was a great turnout with over 70 people. Public Works compiled the comments which provided great information as far as prioritizing the project phasing. Based on the comments, the most important phase is the shared-use path from Garbers Church Rd into Hillandale Park, followed by the shared-use path section from the high school to the elementary then into the Wyndham Woods neighborhood, then finally the sidewalk along Garbers Church Rd south to Erickson Ave. The consultant for this project is developing a proposal to present to council in March. The expected completion is sometime in 2019 due to time needed to acquire right-of-way.

N Liberty St/W Washington St Intersection

A signal warrant study was done at this intersection at the request of City Council. The study found that this intersection does not meet any signal warrants. Mr. Baker will be presenting these findings at the next City Council meeting.

Adjourn