



Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission
City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

TO: Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission Members

FROM: Ian Pike, Transportation Systems Specialist

DATE: Wednesday, January 3, 2018

RE: Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission Agenda for Wednesday, December 13, 2017

The Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission met on **December 13, 2017 at 8:30AM in Room 011 of City Hall, 409 S Main St.**

Commission members: Bill Blessing, Chance Ebersold, Marian Lebherz, Leonard Van Wyk, Jim Baker, Cpl Wayne Westfall

Advisory members and guests: Mike Brady, MPO Greg Deeds, Paul Helmuth, Ian Pike, Anthony Riddle, Doug Strader, 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. Updates on Previous Items
a. Queuing on Stone Spring Rd

A full study is being conducted on S Main St from Mosby Rd to MLK Jr Way. Turning movement counts have been collected as well as speed and volume data. This will be reviewed and analyzed over the next month or so.

b. Garbers Church Rd at Erickson Ave

The lane configuration for southbound Garbers Church Rd at Erickson Ave has been changed. Public Works will continue monitoring the intersection to see if further improvements should be made.

c. Yield to Pedestrian Signs

The data collected by JMU has been reviewed, but there was no conclusion based on simply the number of vehicles and pedestrians; other factors, such as intersection geometry and surrounding land use, continued to play a role. It was decided to do place one sign on the northern crosswalk on S Mason St at Water St and one sign on the southern crosswalk on S Mason St at Franklin St. This area of S Mason St is more commercialized and saw more crossing pedestrians. It was decided to only place them at these two locations to avoid sign clutter and because it would give a sense of the area being more active for pedestrians, not just the single intersection or crosswalk.

With this being the first instance in the city of using the signs, the group asked if there would be any educational campaign before installation. Staff agreed that education would be important as it would be an opportunity to remind drivers and pedestrians of their respective right-of-way responsibilities. It was noted that JMU should also be informed in order to disseminate the information to their students.

Cpl Westfall noted that there is a pedestrian enforcement grant for pedestrian and driver safety that could be used to purchase more signs if these locations are successful.

2. Appoint New Members to Bike/Ped Subcommittee.

Ms. Yancey announced the two recommendations to serve on the Bike/Pedestrian Subcommittee – John Mar, who has served two terms on the Parks & Recreation committee, and Marci Frederick, who has previous experience working on bike advocacy projects. The two were unanimously approved by Commission members. Their 3-year terms will start on January 1, 2018.

3. Sight Distance at S Mason St and E Water St

There have been several complaints about sight distance when turning off of E Water St onto S Mason St due to illegally parked cars too close to the intersection. Cpl Westfall noted that HPD regularly tickets the spot in front of the restaurants. Mr. Baker explained that previously there had been no parking along this section of S Mason St but as development grew in this area, there had been pressure to add more parking.

The group discussed the balance between available parking downtown and traffic safety, for drivers and pedestrians. This intersection had previously been discussed due to pedestrian concerns crossing S Mason St. The group discussed removing all the parking spots, 2 in front of the restaurants and 3 in front of the lawyer's office to the south, but there were concerns expressed due to the inherent traffic calming effect of on-street parking. There group also discussed changing the time limit on the existing spots from 2 hours to 30 minutes. This would encourage turnover, and possibly open the spots up more often for better sight distance. Bump-outs on the east side of S Mason St, a long-term solution, were also discussed.

For immediate action, the group decided to change the time limits on the available parking and to mark off the illegal spot in front of the restaurants that is frequently ticketed. This will act as a more visual cue that it is not a legal parking space. For more long-term action, Public Works will evaluate

the parking in front of the lawyer's office for sight distance concerns and will consider adding bump-outs on the east side of S Mason St.

4. Speeding and Cut-through Traffic on Springfield Dr

The assumption is that cut-through traffic is coming in through Fieldale Pl, a road that is in the county and the city, to avoid Stone Spring Rd to get to Port Republic Rd and eventually to JMU. In the county, Fieldale Pl ends at Reservoir St and lines up with an entrance to a new student apartment complex. Since that apartment complex opened, several city citizens on Springfield Dr have noted an increase in volume, speeding, and non-compliance with neighborhood stop signs. The neighborhood has asked to close off Fieldale Pl at the city/county line, forcing traffic to use the larger arterial roads.

The group discussed closing the road, but it would have to involve VDOT and it would be difficult to justify without a noted safety issue. Putting up "No Thru Traffic" was also discussed, but that puts all the pressure on HPD to be out there to enforce it. The group then discussed placing speed bumps, similar to Old Town, which would have to come out of the city's Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.

Cpl Westfall noted that he will place the HPD speed trailer on Fieldale Pl during JMU's winter break to get a baseline for traffic volumes and speed when most of the students are gone. He will then place it once JMU returns for the semester and compare the results. The group also encouraged the neighborhood to enroll in the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.

5. Bus Crash at W Rock St and N Main St

There was a recent crash involving an EB vehicle stopped on Rock St and a bus traveling NB on N Main St. There is a fence around the southwest corner that belongs to the Lineweaver Apartments that has been discussed in the past as being a sight distance impediment. However, the details of this crash suggest the cause was not related to sight distance.

The group discussed similar solutions as at S Mason St and E Water St, such as bumpouts. It was also suggested to change the parking from the right side of the street to the left side and to move the lane markings closer to the center of the street.

The group eventually decided to continue to monitor the intersection and consider more long term solutions.

Other Business/ Announcements

Proposal to Change the Commission Meeting Frequency

Mr. Pike noted that during the last few years, the commission only met 7-8 times per year, falling short of the stated once-a-month schedule. This made it difficult for commission and advisory members to properly plan their schedules and often resulted in last minute cancellations. It was proposed to change the schedule to meet every other month in the even-numbered months (February, April, June, August, October, and December), still on the second Wednesday. By meeting on the even-numbered months, the commission will be available to discuss any necessary items that come up from the Bike/Ped subcommittee, which meet on the odd-numbered months.

The group agreed to this change. The city attorney will present recommended change to the city code that dictates the commission's schedule to reflect what was discussed and decided on at the next city council meeting.

Adjourn