

- b) **Consider the recommendation from the TSC to deny the request to establish stop signs at the four traffic booth entrances on the Kansas University Campus. (TSC approved 4-3) The University of Kansas has made the request for the stop signs. The stop signs are necessary to improve student safety on the campus and comply with the MUTCD. The TSC did recommend denial of this request; however staff is recommending that the request for stop signs be approved.**
- c) **Consider approving the recommendation from the TSC to establish a mid-block marked crosswalk on Naismith Drive between 18<sup>th</sup> Street and 19<sup>th</sup> Street. (TSC approved 5-2)**

Chuck Soules, Public Works Director, presented the staff report. He said the first item was a request from the neighborhood to establish a pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of Louisiana and Dakota Street. He said during the agenda meeting Vice Mayor Chestnut requested information about the distances to 23<sup>rd</sup> Street which was 840 feet, from Dakota Street down to the next pedestrian island, the difference was about 800 feet, and down to the tunnel was 1800 feet.

The Traffic Safety Commission approved the pedestrian crosswalk unanimously, but staff wanted to make sure it was brought to the City Commission because there would be a slight cost which would be done in-house to put in a pedestrian refuge island. He said there were issues with the pedestrian refuge islands when those islands were installed on Louisiana. Staff had changed the design and the design would not be so abrupt, but staff wanted to make sure the City Commission was aware of this issue.

Vice Mayor Chestnut asked about the proposal for Dakota Street, and if the proposal included a pedestrian island.

Soules said yes.

Vice Mayor Chestnut said between Dakota and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street was about 1600 feet.

Soules said that was correct.

Commissioner Hack asked if the Bicycle Advisory Committee looked at this or commented on it.

Soules said he was not aware of any comment from the BAC.

Commissioner Hack said the e-mails she received dealt with bicycle safety and wondered if Soules had any information on those pedestrian islands.

David Woosley, Traffic Engineer, said some bicyclists had some concerns, but usually they were bicyclists who were less experienced because the ones who were more experienced knew it was a narrow lane and the bicyclist had the right of way and could claim that lane and move over. Louisiana did not have a marked lane for bicyclists, but was a bicycle route. The bicyclist could move over and claim that entire lane as their own when they were approaching one of those islands. The more experienced ones did not have much of a problem with it but the less experienced ones did because they were not that familiar and sometimes they were a little inattentive in traffic sometimes.

David Corliss, City Manager, said when those pedestrian refuge islands were installed on Louisiana, staff had significant conversations with members of the community about it. He said staff kept those islands at those locations, and were eventually modified on the signage and other things to try and make those islands more obvious to drivers, especially at night. One of his questions was

whether or not they knew where the street lighting was to make them visible at night time. He understood the interest in trying to improve pedestrian safety, but staff had to make sure they were notifying the traveling public and it could be seen because it was a major concern. If this proceeded, he was going to work with Soules and others to make sure they had a good plan to have drivers see this and have some type of phased approach.

Mayor Dever said as far as experience, he was more concerned about less experienced drivers, than less experienced bikers because those two met often. He said he considered himself a fairly experienced rider, but sometimes a person could run into a situation where the car tried to pass a biker as opposed to a biker passing a car. He said in his opinion it was a conflict of two modes of transportation and often times there was no room and it ended with a problem.

Mayor Dever called for public comment.

Sharla True said one word, stop signs. Those roundabouts or walk through areas were costing tremendous amount of money and upkeep. It was difficult for women with strollers on roundabouts and walk through areas. She said it was just mentioned that this was a terrible insult to bicyclers and it narrowed the road and bicyclists would jump the curb if they saw a car coming. She said they were talking about high school and junior high drivers, buses and City buses to contend with. Due to the roundabouts, buses would not let you off as close to the corner as a person needed to get off. It did not calm the traffic, but impedes the traffic. It was very unsafe and every driver she had been hit by

had been a high school person or college student and was very well traveled by both.

Michael Pomes, President of the Parkhill Neighborhood Association, said he came in support of the pedestrian refuge island. He said mostly because he drove by there every day and part of the neighborhood both on the east side, which was the Parkhill Neighborhood Association and on the west side was the Belle Haven Neighborhood, what he saw over and over again were a lot of pedestrians that were attempting to go from one side to the other side. So far they had not had the climate to walk around, but as the weather started to get nicer, he saw a lot of activity going from the Westlake area or to the Checkers area. There was a lot of traffic and he slowed down many times to give the pedestrians the respect and courage to walk in the neighborhoods. He hoped the City Commission would support having a refuge island so that at least in their case, residents, especially elderly residents, would have a place to stop and if there was a lot of traffic especially during the 5:00 rush hour there was a lot of traffic going through that area. He said he had been cycling for a number of years and had to ride defensively because the traffic was increasing.

Commissioner Highberger said he understood the concerns of bicyclists, but he said they had a number of those islands and although there was concern, he did not have strong evidence of actual difficulties or accidents. He said on a street like Louisiana Street there should be a safe pedestrian crossing at least 600 feet. He said there was a gap in pedestrian accessibility and he would support the recommendation of the Traffic Safety Commission.

Vice Mayor Chestnut said he had to respectfully disagree with the Traffic Safety Commission, especially one of the concerns he had was with process. In reading the minutes, bicycles were not even in the discussion. There were basically two public comments one that the speaker did not expect the sidewalk to protect them from the traffic and the other that the crosswalk define the area where pedestrians should be crossing. He was not sure they were opposing the recommended solution that came up to it.

He was a little bit confused by several comments by Commissioners. One Commissioner said he was interested in seeing the kind of traffic they were walking in the area before they did anything. He was perplexed about that and was particularly concerned about bicyclists. Ultimately they had to make decisions between autos, bicycles and pedestrians. In this case, bicyclists were not even considered in the equation. He said he agreed with the map Soules brought that it might be appropriate to have some type of crossing but was concerned something was designed that did not meet the needs of one of the three groups that used that road and was not even really considered.

Commissioner Hack said she agreed with the Vice Mayor. She was usually hard pressed to go against a unanimous recommendation of the Traffic Safety Commission and was quite frankly unaware of the hazards of the bicycling public, but knew those pedestrian refuges and island had been a constant concern for folks. Louisiana in and of itself was pretty much a nightmare because it was too narrow for traffic with three schools and a lot of pedestrians. She was not sure this was the best solution to the problem.

Commissioner Amyx said along with what Vice Mayor Chestnut and Commissioner Hack spoke about, he really did not think much about what cyclists had brought into this discussion until the comments received in the last 48 hours. He said Corliss pointed out an important part that if the City Commission were to proceed, that proper lighting would need to be available. He said if the refuge island was the only thing that was being constructed he could not support that and did not feel safe placing people in those situations on that street. If the City Commission wanted to send this issue back to look at other types of crosswalks or something else that was going to protect that lane from narrowing down, he would look at that and along with the comments of the City Manager about the lighting. He wanted to make sure it was a safe situation for all involved. He felt comfortable sending it back to the Traffic Safety Commission to look at other alternatives.

Commissioner Hack asked if there were any other alternatives besides the refuge islands. A stop sign tells people what they were supposed to do and those in terms of yielding to the bicyclists, but were there other options for this or a raised crosswalk or something that would note that.

David Woosley, Traffic Engineer, said he was sure there were several different things that could be looked at and staff could work with the neighborhood to see if they would like to take a look at any other option available.

Commissioner Hack said she was not sure this created the safest situation for the pedestrian or bicyclist. Looking at other alternatives might be a good way to handle it.

Commissioner Amyx said rather going all the way against the TSC he would feel better sending it back to the TSC to receive additional information on what other types of safety crossing could be placed at that location.

Commissioner Highberger said if those crossing were as dangerous as everyone believed, those crossing should be ripped out.

Mayor Dever said this was a major bike route in and out of town for people going to and from high school. Plus, it was a designated bike route. He thought there was a majority that would like this issue to go back to the Traffic Safety Commission and make sure that there were bicyclists involved in the process and the designation because they had concerns with the current configuration, construction or location of the pedestrian refuges as they were.

**Moved by Amyx, seconded by Hack,** to refer the Traffic Safety Commission's recommendation to approve a marked crosswalk together with pedestrian refuge islands on Louisiana Street adjacent to Dakota Street back to the TSC to take into consideration the cycling public. Motion carried unanimously. **(20)**

Soules said the second item was a request from the University of Kansas. The University of Kansas maintained all their roads on campus and all their law enforcement on campus. In order to have any citations or violations enforced, there had to be an ordinance and process those through the municipal court. Currently, there were four locations where they had their security booths as you enter into campus and all were on