

City of Lawrence
Traffic Safety Commission Agenda
October 6, 2008-7:00 PM
City Commission Room, City Hall

MEMBERS: Richard Heckler, Chair; Jim Woods, Vice-Chair; Robert Hagen; Dan Harden; Ken Miller; Jason Novotny; Robin Smith; and John Ziegelmeyer Jr.

Anyone who wishes to be notified when their item will be heard by the City Commission must provide their name and a telephone number or an e-mail address.

ITEM NO. 1: Review and approve the minutes of the Traffic Safety Commission meeting, September 8, 2008.

ITEM NO. 2: Presentation on the City's upcoming Sales Tax Election.

ITEM NO. 3: Consider request for a MARKED CROSSWALK on 19th Street at Alabama Street.

Facts:

1. The city recently constructed a continuous sidewalk along the north side of 19th Street from Louisiana Street to Alabama Street; there is not a sidewalk along the north side west of Alabama Street.
2. There is a continuous sidewalk along the south side of the street from Louisiana Street to Naismith Drive.
3. 19th Street is classified as a "minor arterial," is a two-lane street and carries approximately 11,000 vehicles per day.

4. Area crash reports show one pedestrian crash at 19th & Indiana in 2005.
5. A recent nationwide crosswalk study found that under similar conditions, a marked crosswalk does not provide any safety benefit.
6. This Commission and the City Commission recently approved a marked crosswalk on a similar street (Louisiana), but only in conjunction with a pedestrian refuge island.

ACTION: Provide recommendation to the City Commission.

ITEM NO. 4: Consider request for TRAFFIC-CALMING on 9th Street adjacent to Sunset Hills Elementary School.

Facts:

1. The City's *Traffic-Calming Policy* provides criteria for traffic calming devices.
2. 9th Street in this area is classified as a "collector" street.
3. The *Policy* permits traffic-calming on "collector" streets if the 85th percentile speed exceeds the speed limit by 5 mph or more; or, if the traffic volume exceeds 3000 vehicles per day.
4. Traffic data collected on September 10-11, 2008, found the 85th percentile speed to be approximately 37.6mph (the posted speed limit is 30mph) and the traffic volume to be approximately 7100 vehicles per day.
5. Therefore, this area does meet the minimum criteria for consideration of traffic-calming devices.
6. It should be pointed-out that a request for a pedestrian refuge at the school crossing at the intersection of 9th Street & Schwarz Road was approved by the City Commission on March 8, 2005, but has not yet been funded.

ACTION: Provide recommendation to the City Commission.

ITEM NO. 5: Consider request to establish NO PARKING along one side of Emerald Drive.

Facts:

1. Emerald Drive is a "local" street in a residential area paved 25 feet wide.
2. Parking is currently prohibited along the east side of the street from November 1 to March 31.
3. It has been the practice to establish NO PARKING in areas of this type when requested and supported by adjacent property owners and/or residents; or when needed for safety reasons.

ACTION: Provide recommendation to the City Commission.

ITEM NO. 6: Public Comment.

ITEM NO. 7: Commission Items.

ITEM NO. 8: Miscellaneous.

City Commission action on previous recommendations:

Concurred with the recommendation for a marked crosswalk and pedestrian refuge island on Louisiana Street at Dakota Street.

City of Lawrence
Traffic Safety Commission
October 6, 2008 Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Heckler, Chair; Jim Woods, Vice-Chair; Dan Harden; Ken Miller, Jason Novotny; Robin Smith; and John Ziegelmeyer Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Robert Hagen, Jason Novotny

STAFF PRESENT: David Woosley, Public Works Department; Charles Soules, Public Works Department; Casey Toomay, City Manager's Office

Chair Richard Heckler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the City Commission Room, City Hall, 6 E. 6th Street.

ITEM NO. 1:

Review and approve the minutes of the Traffic Safety Commission meeting, September 8, 2008.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER WOODS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SMITH, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING, SEPTEMBER 8, 2008; THE MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

ITEM NO. 2:

Presentation on the City's upcoming Sales Tax Election.

Charles Soules, Director of Public Works, and Casey Toomay, Budget Manager, presented information on the City's upcoming Sales Tax Election and answered questions from the Commission.

ITEM NO. 3:

Consider request for a MARKED CROSSWALK on 19th Street at Alabama Street.

David Woosley presented the information provided in the staff report.

Public comment:

Betty Alderson, 1920 Maine Street: I recently walked down the new sidewalk along the north side of 19th Street and found when I got to Alabama Street it didn't go anywhere and there is no protective way to cross 19th Street, of any kind, between Louisiana and Naismith; it would be helpful to have a crossing for people who are walking, and if we are going to encourage that, we need to look at how we get people from one side of the street to the other.

Commissioner Miller: I'm concerned that we'd be putting down a crosswalk that would provide a false sense of security.

Commissioner Ziegelmeyer: I would agree; we've had this situation several times; if we don't put in a light or refuge island, I'm afraid we'd have someone walk across the street and believe a car is going to stop.

Commissioner Harden: I agree; a crosswalk with 11,000 vehicles a day crossing it in an unprotected way is not the greatest public policy.

Commissioner Smith: I understand where Betty's coming from, but I don't think it really warrants doing anything at this point; but that is an awfully long stretch from Louisiana to Naismith; except during peak periods, there is usually ample opportunities to get across 19th Street.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MILLER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WOODS, TO RECOMMEND DENIAL OF THE REQUEST FOR A MARKED CROSSWALK ON 19TH STREET AT ALABAMA STREET; THE MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

ITEM NO. 4:

Consider request for TRAFFIC CALMING on 9th Street adjacent to Sunset Hill Elementary School.

Woosley presented the information provided in the staff report.

Public comment:

Chris Bay, 901 Schwarz Road, Principal, Sunset Hill Elementary School: The issue is that the traffic doesn't slow down even though we have a crossing guard and we have two schools that are funneling onto Schwarz Road; our request is to do anything to help calm the traffic and protect our students and the crossing guard; based on the data, it would qualify so your recommendation to the commission would be appreciated.

Trina Langston, 712 Arizona Street: I foresee if something isn't done, we're going to have a tragedy on that street; the traffic on that street is unbelievable; I've had several parents approach me requesting that something be looked at regarding slowing the traffic or a signal or some way to ensure the safety of the kids.

Commissioner Miller: I live in that area and I'll add another detail; when I stop to turn left onto Wellington, I'm a little concerned about getting rear-ended the way people come flying-down headed westbound on 9th.

Commissioner Ziegelmeyer: I drive that street at least three to four times a week; there's a lot of traffic on that street and I'm surprised the speeds are as low as they are; I agree that this is a location that warrants traffic calming.

Commissioner Harden asked if it meets the criteria; Woosley advised that it does.

Commissioner Heckler: From personal observation today during school crossing times, I suggest the traffic was going far greater than 20mph.

Commissioner Smith asked if the previously approved refuge island were built, if it would help to alleviate the current problem; Woosley advised that the refuge island would make it easier for pedestrians to cross the street by having to cross only one direction of traffic at a time, but would have a limited effect on reducing the speed of traffic.

Commissioner Woods asked what options there were for traffic calming; Woosley advised that since 9th Street is a "collector" street, the most common device in Lawrence would be speed cushions.

Commissioner Woods asked if speed cushions would be more likely to be put in than the island; Woosley advised it would depend on how each device was ranked, based on the city's ranking system and funding from the city commission.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MILLER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ZIEGELMEYER, TO RECOMMEND INSTALLATION OF TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES ON 9TH STREET ADJACENT TO SUNSET HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL; THE MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

ITEM NO. 5:

Consider request to establish NO PARKING along one side of Emerald Drive.

Woosley presented the information provided in the staff report.

Commissioner Smith asked if this was the only place where we have NO PARKING for designated periods of the year; Woosley advised that there were several streets in the neighborhood with the same restriction.

Public comment:

Jim Haller, 2008 Emerald Drive: I've lived there for 25 years and I have put-up with the problem of parking on both sides of the street; there's been times when a fire truck or ambulance could not get down our street because of the parking on both sides of the street; this evening I had a lot of trouble just backing-out of my driveway; cars were parked on both sides of my driveway and directly across the street; it's real nice during the basketball season and easy to get up-and-down the street; the rest of the year it is a real problem; I've even had to have the police tow vehicles out of my driveway.

Betty Alderson, 1920 Maine Street: I would speak in favor of this; there was an effort to do this a number of years ago, but there were a few neighbors who thought they wouldn't have room for their Thanksgiving guests; with KU removing the privilege of freshmen last year to have permits to park on the hill and sophomores this year, there is no parking in this area during the daytime at all; I certainly would recommend that you consider this for the people on Emerald Drive.

Commissioner Woods asked which side of the street would be best; Woosley suggested the east side since that is where the current restriction is.

Commissioner Ziegelmeyer asked if letters were sent to both sides of the street; Woosley advised that they were.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ZIEGELMEYER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SMITH, TO RECOMMEND ESTABLISHING NO PARKING ALONG THE EAST SIDE OF EMERALD DRIVE; THE MOTION CARRIED (6-0).

Commissioner Heckler asked to have a representative from the Fire Department to attend the next meeting to give their perspective on NO PARKING requests of this type.

ITEM NO. 6:

Public Comment:

None.

ITEM NO. 7:

Commission Items:

Commissioner Smith asked about the FLASHING YELLOW ARROW for left-turning motorists on Louisiana Street at 19th Street; Woosley advised that was a new design approved by the Federal Highway Administration due to safety concerns about "permissive" left-turn maneuvers and that studies during the past 10 years have shown this to be a safer design than just a GREEN BALL indication. Commissioner Smith questioned whether the Traffic Safety Commission should review changes of this type; the Commission generally felt that such decisions should be made by city staff.

ITEM NO 8:

None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 P.M. The next scheduled meeting is Monday, November 3, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

David E. Woosley

Transportation/Traffic Engineer