

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MINUTES
7:00 p.m., Monday, September 14, 2009
Public Safety Building, 401 E. Third Street, Newberg, OR

“Mission Statement: To give the citizens of Newberg a forum to voice traffic safety concerns, evaluate related issues, provide a liaison with the City and promote traffic safety within the community.”

Members

Present: Chair Michael Simpson Jennifer Dawson (Vice Chair) Doris Brandt
Neal Klein Dick Meyer Lesley Woodruff

Members

Absent: Andrew Cookson (excused) Bryce Jones (resigned) Ronald Sult (unexcused)

Staff

Present: Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer Mary Newell, Support Services Manager
Tim Weaver, Police Sergeant Jennifer Nelson, Recording Secretary

Others

Present: Sandra Prewitt, Kraig Ludwig, Harold Trollinger, Roger Grill, Paula Runnells, James Oravetz, David Baldwin, Lee Bigelow, Heather Harrison, Eric Funk, Gary Feievfeil, Mark Wimmer, Scott Phoenix, Mr. Prewitt (no public comment form submitted)

CHAIR MICHAEL SIMPSON CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 7:05 PM.

A) Review and approve minutes of July 13, 2009

<p>MOTION: Simpson/Klein to approve the Traffic Safety Commission Minutes for July 13, 2009. (6 Yes/0 No/2 Absent [Cookson, Sult]/1 Vacant) Motion carried.</p>
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COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Ms. Sandra Prewitt expressed concerns for a lack of crosswalks in the area of Crestview Drive for children going to Joan Austin Elementary School. She also asked about an evaluation of the photo red light camera at Springbrook Road and 99W. Staff stated an evaluation on the photo red light did occur and research will also be conducted concerning the crosswalks.

PUBLIC HEARING

A) Public Hearing to consider a partial street closure (right-out only) of Vittoria Way at Hwy 99W

TIME – 7:12 PM

Mr. Paul Chiu, Senior Engineer, presented a brief staff report to update the citizens present as to the background and recent activities regarding the speeding and traffic volume concerns on Vittoria Way as well as the input received from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). The approved Transportation System Plan (TSP) states the intersection at Vittoria Way and 99W will be a “right in, right out” in the future but he would like to receive more public opinion before recommending a

solution to serve during the interim period between now and whenever the planned Crestview Crossings development connects with the Providence Drive intersection. There were some concerns as to the impact on the traffic flow if the intersection is closed completely, but making it a “right in, right out only” would not require any further approval since that is what the TSP calls for and what ODOT desires.

Mr. Kraig Ludwig recommended additional stop signs and speed limit signs and some form of a road bump to slow traffic down and make create a safer environment. He noted that other communities are using this method and it could be made to accommodate emergency vehicles. He did not wish to wait for the potential relief of the Crestview extension; he felt something needs to be done now.

Mr. Harold Trollinger believes a partial or full closure of the intersection at 99W and Vittoria Way is the only final solution. He felt the Crestview extension may not even help and his concerns grow for the safety his wife, grandchildren, and neighbors.

Mr. Roger Grill spoke of the over five thousand cars going down their residential road in a week, how after the increase in patrolling stopped things just go back to normal, and other people’s concerns for increasing the traffic at the intersection at Safeway. He felt that nothing is changing even though they keep on pushing for something to get done to help fix the problem and said he is considering selling his house.

Ms. Paula Runnells agreed something needed to be done even if it is only two more stop signs or some speed bumps; but, if the intersection is closed that will be 40% more traffic being added to Springbrook Road, which is already congested. She did not anticipate the Crestview extension would provide relief anytime soon, if at all. She said the intersection at Springbrook and 99W is already too full she sometimes has to continue on and go left at Vittoria Way to get home.

Mr. James Oravetz spoke of living in this area for seventeen years and the problems that have come with the growth in Newberg over the last thirty years. He said he almost go the front end of his car taken off two days ago by a speeding vehicle; but, he cannot see closing the intersection or even limiting it to a “right in, right out” because it may impede the volume of traffic, not the speed. He felt speed bumps would help.

Mr. David Baldwin said he was in favor of a “right in, right out” closure and agreed with staff there could be a real problem with diverting traffic to the 4-way intersection at Haworth Avenue and suggested signalizing that intersection to prioritize which direction of traffic can go through at certain times of the day. He felt the “right in, right out” should also be expedited to coincide with what ODOT is doing with 99W.

Mr. Lee Bigelow drew attention to the City Park located at Vittoria Way and Aquarius Boulevard and felt full closure of the intersection was the best idea. He felt any traffic problems with those vehicles going on Springbrook Road would be better dealt this there since it is a much larger street and better equipped for dealing with all that traffic.

Mr. Ludwig also submitted written testimony from his neighbor.

Ms. Heather Harrison felt the “right in, right out” option will only deter the amount of traffic in the morning, but will not prevent afternoon traffic from using Vittoria Way to avoid the Springbrook

intersection. She felt there should be a complete closure of the intersection until improvements are made to the Springbrook intersection.

Mr. Eric Funk asked about cost differences for installing stop signs vs. speed bumps vs. closing the intersection. It was determined that stop signs could be from \$100 to \$250 a piece, speed humps approximately \$10K, and the minimal contribution for concrete for the closure from the City would be \$5K-\$10K.

Discussions followed about emergency vehicle access with a closure or partial closure and being able to cross the intersection for easy access to the hospital.

Mr. Gary Feievfeil felt traffic will increase on both intersections because of the construction to the north and thought that closing the intersection would just force traffic back into town and into a know restriction. He said he has had no issues.

Chair Simpson closed public testimony at 8:07 PM.

Commissioner Jennifer Dawson empathized with the concerns of the neighborhood as well as the issues of Haworth and Springbrook being backed up; but, she would prefer to see the “right in, right out only” option in order to see 40% of the traffic get off of a residential road and onto Springbrook, which is a wider road.

Commissioner Neal Klein asked staff what the possibility would be of moving the signal down a little from Providence Drive and 99W and realigning everything. Staff did not have any idea of the cost to do this but the minimum to put in a signal alone would be \$250K, not to mention the engineering costs. If that was not an option, Commissioner Klein felt whatever solution was made, it should not be permanent; like a bulb out or cones stopping traffic from going onto Vittoria Way from 99W, so it can be evaluated in six-months to see if working. He did not wish to make it harder for the improvements in the future if something would need to be taken out or re-done in order for ODOT to complete the intentions approved by the TSP. He felt speed bumps were asking for problems.

Chair Simpson suggested installing several stop signs all along Vittoria Way in an effort to slow the traffic and deter those vehicles wishing to use Vittoria Way as a short cut because drivers in a hurry are not going to want to stop at every block. He performed his own tests and the difference in travel time while going the speed limit was only 35 seconds longer with the stopping vs. traveling straight through. He proposed stop signs be installed on Vittoria Way at Coffey Lane, Gemini Street, E Coffey Street, as well as a crosswalk painted on the north curb of Aquarius Blvd. at the wheel chair access. This would only cost \$1800 at \$300 per stop sign.

Commissioner Lesley Woodruff suggested adding a follow-up requirement to the proposal to complete an evaluation in six months.

Discussions followed between the TSC and the citizens in the audience which resulted in adding another proposed stop sign on Meadow Lane at Vittoria Way and another stop sign on the north curb of Aquarius Blvd. at Vittoria Way and the proposed crosswalk. Most audience members agreed with this proposal.

Mr. Bigelow wondered by that park was the only one in town without a 15 mph speed limit by it.

Mr. Ludwig added the speed limit sign visibility should be checked to make sure they are not obstructed and in a good place.

MOTION: Simpson/Dawson to approve **TSC-09-010** as a limited decision for the installation of eight stop signs along Vittoria Way: two at Coffey Lane, two at Gemini Street, two at E Coffey Street; one on Meadow Lane at Vittoria Way, and one on the north curb of Aquarius Boulevard at Vittoria Way and a painted crosswalk from the north curb of Aquarius Blvd. at the wheel chair access across Vittoria Way with an evaluation of all of the proposed installations to occur at the April 2010 meeting. (6 Yes/0 No/2 Absent [Cookson, Sult]/1 Vacant) Motion carried.

Chair Simpson recessed the meeting at 8:53 PM.

NEW BUSINESS

A) TSC-09-013: Villa Road – Speeding

TIME – 9:00 PM

Mr. Chiu presented the staff report noting this is one of the street intended for capital improvement projects in the next five years, but substantial improvements are needed for widening the existing pavement and it is impossible to drop barriers there to protect pedestrians.

Mr. Scott Phoenix submitted his concerns previously in writing (see official meeting packet for full report). He was concerned with the area on Villa Road as you proceed south on the north side of Haworth Ave. He spoke of the traffic at the pool, the bend at the dip, the loss and gain of elevation, increased speed with descent, and no sidewalks on either side for the pedestrians that insist on walking there despite the dangers. His primary concern was for the youth walking in this area where cars still pass even though they are less than a foot in front of pedestrians or bicyclists. He requested a speed reduction from 25 mph to 20 mph and the installation of speed bumps.

Ms. Prewitt stated Villa Road was a problem from the beginning to the end and spoke of problems of driving behind bicyclists and dangers of vehicles passing them. She suggested a sign at the park for all walking or cycling traffic to use the park path.

Mr. Tim Weaver, Police Sergeant, noted the City steers organized bicycle events away from Villa Drive for many of these reasons.

Mr. Phoenix stated The Vine Ride was marked on Villa Road. Sergeant Weaver said he did not believe The Vine Ride requested a permit through the City because they would not have approved it if that route was marked.

Sergeant Weaver felt the City could not legally endorse a sign like this unless they painted a bike lane clear over to the other side.

Discussions followed about the anticipated water line repair with as a part of the stimulus project in April of next year and the grinding and repaving from 99W to Haworth Ave. along Villa Road. All

the projects are being broken down into different phases since they cannot be completed together and the section from Haworth to Crestview is the most challenging.

Mr. Paul Prewitt spoke of kids riding bikes up the hill southbound and trying to ride on the edge and cars think they can pass them.

Commissioner Klein stated he also lives in this area and also rides a bicycle and he avoids this road at all costs because of the danger. He said it is an old country road and not meant for traffic.

Commissioner Doris Brandt spoke of a new bus stop on Carol Ann Drive with several cars stopped behind being an accident waiting to happen.

Chair Simpson stated the problem was there is presently no way to engineer the needed changes and creating a different traffic pattern by moving the bicycles to the center lane could mess people up because it is so unfamiliar. He said he would not be unwilling to reduce the speed limit, which may or may not help.

Mr. Phoenix felt a barrier of any kind will help slow people down and separate pedestrians from the traffic.

Ms. Prewitt mentioned more adequate lighting would help too.

Commissioner Klein asked if the main concern was the speed limit because of west side.

Mr. Phoenix replied the main concern was actually the east side where people normally walk and the blind curve.

Commissioner Klein felt reducing the speed from 25 mph to 20 mph was not going to do much because cars are hidden in the dip allowing gravity to take their cars down the hill and slow down on the uphill; there is not a place to enforce this. He felt it would be better to restrict bicycle and pedestrian traffic going south on Villa Road.

Mr. Phoenix argued he was trying to put a focus on the drivers since bicycles are vehicles and a part of legitimate traffic as well.

Ms. Prewitt was more concerned that money is being spent to improve so many other areas and saving the area with the most problems for last.

Commissioner Klein added he would also love to see that road realigned but no matter what is done there are private property owners involved that have to be willing to cooperate and funds also need to be established to complete it.

Discussions followed about being proactive, finding the money needed to fix the problems, and working on smaller scale solutions until the ultimate solution can be engineered and executed properly.

Mr. Prewitt felt this area should be prioritized at the top of the list and argued that money can be found if it was wanted, but it will not be found if no one is looking.

MOTION: Klein/Dawson to approve **TSC-09-013** for signage going south on Villa Road at the park stating “bicycles and pedestrians not recommended” and signage at Fulton Street where it narrows stating “dangerous road please use extreme caution”.

Commissioner Woodruff did not wish to single out bicyclists or car drivers; she felt all should be warned equally.

Discussions followed concerning available or appropriate signage allowed and best placement for those signs. The motion was withdrawn and **TSC-09-013** was tabled in order for staff to research possible sign verbiage and location and return within the next two meetings with a report and recommendations.

Mr. Phoenix stated he still believed the speed should be reduced to 20 mph.

B) TSC-09-012: Arduus-2nd-3-rd-Hwy 219 – Vision and Parking

This item will be placed on the next agenda since the citizen requesting had to leave the meeting early.

STAFF REPORTS - GENERAL INFORMATION

A) Police

Mr. Tim Weaver, Police Sergeant, reported the number of DUII’s are already at last years’ numbers which may either be a result of officers being more aggressive or the current economy may dictate why there are more drunk drivers out there. He also mentioned curb painting on Deborah Road to help buses to get through more quickly at the school.

B) Engineering

Mr. Chiu gave updates on plans for improvements on Columbia Drive west of Howard Street, on College Street, anticipated start and finish dates for Hwy 219 for the right in, right out concrete median at 2nd Street, and streets intended for improvement with the federal stimulus package will be advertised for bids in December of this year.

C) Items from Commissioners

Commissioner Dawson said 63 kids graduated from Safety Town and 22 middle-school students volunteered with over 700 hours of volunteer time committed.

Commissioner Woodruff said she turned in the bicycle safety mini-grant applications for a Bike Rodeo with the library as part of the summer reading program. She also found a way to give away bike helmets since they can be purchased for only \$5.45 each. She also spoke about a flyer that she has been working on with Commissioners Klein and Dawson and asked the other members to take a draft version home for review and suggestions. She also mentioned the idea to come together once a quarter for a work session.

Commissioner Brandt stated she knew the property owner at Park Lane and Villa Road and may ask her husband to approach him about maybe donating part of his land to the City to help with needed improvements there.

ADJOURN TO NEXT MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 10:56 PM until October 12, 2009.

Jennifer L. Nelson
Recording Secretary

Michael R. Simpson
Traffic Safety Commission Chair