

URBANA TRAFFIC COMMISSION

Tuesday, July 6, 2004

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Milton Otto, City Council Member
William Gray, Public Works Director for Joe Smith, Senior Civil Engineer
Pat Connolly, Lt. (Support Services) for Eddie Adair, Chief of Police

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jim Hopkins, 2207 Lantern Hill Drive
Jack Pritchard, 2102 Lantern Hill Drive
Jeff Crawford, 2103 Lantern Hill Drive
Pat Pioletti, Public Facilities and Parking Manager
Lynn Fenter, 2107 Lantern Hill Drive
Marsha Fenter, 2107 Lantern Hill Drive
Peggy Schneider, 2213 Lantern Hill Drive
Eric Schneider, 2213 Lantern Hill Drive
Linh Hopkins, 2207 Lantern Hill Drive
John Peters, 2108 Lantern Hill Drive
Susan Peters, 2108 Lantern Hill Drive

The meeting began at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Bill Gray moved to accept the minutes as read. Pat Connolly seconded the motion. The Commission voted 3-0 to approve the minutes of June 2004.

Item #1 - Discussion of the installation of parking meters on the east side of Goodwin Avenue, north of the Boneyard Creek.

Pat Pioletti stated that the area on the east side of Goodwin Avenue, north of the Boneyard Creek and south of Springfield Avenue originally used as a bus stop, was vacant. He proposed changing that area from no parking to metered spaces since that area was heavily used for on-street parking. He said that both he and Joe Smith had confirmed with the MTD that the bus stop was no longer used.

Bill Gray moved to add parking meters to the east side of Goodwin Avenue, north of the Boneyard Creek in the area currently designated as a bus stop.

Pat Connolly seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

Item #2 - Discussion of traffic concerns on Lantern Hill Drive.

Bill Gray discussed the results of a traffic study completed on Lantern Hill Drive from Kinch Street to Smith Road.

570 vehicles travel on Lantern Hill Drive daily

340 vehicles (over ½) do not live on Lantern Hill

230 live on Lantern Hill Drive

The average speed was 27 MPH; normal range for similar street would be 26-29 MPH

The 85th percentile speed was 33.6 MPH; normal range would be 31-34 MPH

Violation rate 35%; normal range would be 16-32%

Maximum speed 55 MPH

Most vehicles traveling over 40 MPH were westbound

Of the westbound non-resident vehicles, 60% traveled from Prairie Green Apartments;
15% traveled from Rainbowview Apartments; 25% travel from Washington Street, east
of Smith Road

All westbound non-resident vehicles turned left at Kinch Street to travel to south Urbana

Mr. Gray expressed concern about the high speeds and low speeds of vehicles on the street.

A resident asked if the speed limit could be reduced to 25 MPH around the curves on Lantern Hill Drive.

Mr. Gray stated that speed limits established in residential areas comply with the Illinois Rules of the Road, which would be 30 MPH.

Bill Gray discussed some solutions to the cut through traffic on Lantern Hill Drive. He mentioned that the street could be closed at Smith Road, but the residents would bear a substantial portion of the financial responsibility for the closure. He added that if that option were exercised, the Fire Chief would prefer the street closing occur after Smith Road was opened since the fire trucks used Lantern Hill Drive for emergency response.

Mr. Gray felt that the completion of Smith Road would redirect traffic from Lantern Hill Drive to Smith Road since it would be a more direct route to Florida Avenue. He stated that the Smith Road connection to Florida Avenue would be completed in late fall or early spring at which time Rainbowview Drive and Country Squire Drive would also connect to Smith Road. In the long-term plan, Mr. Gray said that Smith Road would connect Washington Street to the Stone Creek subdivision and Windsor Road.

Milton Otto asked if stop sign would be installed on Smith Road at Michigan Avenue.

Bill Gray stated that there would not be a stop sign on Smith Road at Michigan Avenue, at least after the initial completion of the project, but the east/west streets would stop at Smith Road. Mr. Gray said that if development along Florida Avenue continued, Florida Avenue would be connected to High Cross Road within the next two to three years adding more traffic flow options for Smith Road.

Bill Gray said that closing a City street was a very unusual option, requiring City Council approval. He estimated the cost of closing Lantern Hill Drive to be approximately \$20,000 to design a hammerhead for vehicles to turn, remove curb and gutter and redesign the street within the existing right-of-way. Mr. Gray stated that he would like to see the impact of the opening of Smith Road to Florida Avenue instead of closing Lantern Hill Drive first. He added that the City needed to examine the need for emergency response when deciding whether or not to close City streets.

In the interim, Mr. Gray suggested that the speed trailer be placed on Lantern Hill Drive periodically and that STEP enforcement continue to monitor traffic in that area.

Susan Peters asked if the STEP officer would park in her driveway to monitor traffic. She felt that the time between 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. was a time when speeding was prevalent.

Pat Connolly asked that any resident who observed reckless driving contact the Urbana Police Department. He said that if an officer was in the area, the officer could be aware of the potential problem. He said that if there were specific vehicles that were causing chronic problems to contact him or leave a phone message, but reckless driving should be reported immediately. Lt. Connolly asked Ms. Peters to email him regarding parking in her driveway to monitor traffic.

Bill Gray suggested that residents park their vehicles along the street as a means to slow down traffic.

A resident said that his vehicle had been sideswiped on the street.

Mr. Gray stated that he and the Police Chief would meet with the manager at Prairie Green Apartments to discuss closing the west entrance of Prairie Green Apartments.

Milton Otto suggested that the Traffic Commission wait until Smith Road opened and then determine whether the problem still exists. He asked for the name of a person from Lantern Hill Drive to contact regarding the outcome of the City's discussions with Prairie Green's management.

Ms. Peters stated that a City representative could contact her.

The Commission discussed the results of the May and June STEP details. (See attached reports.)

Meeting adjourned 4:40 P.M.

The meeting will be August 3, 2004 at 4:00 p.m. at the Urbana City Building, 400 South Vine Street, Second Floor Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stiehl
Recording Secretary