

URBANA TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Tuesday, June 6, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dennis Roberts, City Council Member
Mike Bily, Chief of Police
Joe Smith, Senior Civil Engineer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Shawn Crowley, Parking Enforcement
Charlie Smyth, Council Member, Ward 1
Robert Bridgewater, 2606 Landis Farm Road

The meeting began at 4:05 p.m.

Additions to the agenda:

There were no additions to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes:

Joe Smith moved to accept the minutes as read. Mike Bily seconded the motion. The Commission voted 3-0 to approve the minutes of the May 2006 meeting.

Item #1 - Discussion of lighting and lane markings on Airport Road.

Dennis Roberts summarized the discussions regarding safety improvements for Airport Road. Mr. Roberts stated that two projects were recommended as a result of the discussions: to install a pole light on Airport Road at Landis Farm Road and to stripe lanes of traffic on Airport Road. He said that the cost for the pole light would be covered by the City. He added that the Traffic Commission requested input from the two residents at the corner of Landis Farm Road and Airport Road.

Joe Smith stated that Mr. Bothfuhr, one of the Landis Farm residents, contacted him and that he was in favor of any project that would improve traffic conditions at that intersection.

Dennis Roberts stated that the discussions were in response to a citizen's concern following a fatal accident on Airport Road.

Joe Smith was not aware of any accidents at that particular intersection.

Robert Bridgewater stated that a hit and run accident occurred on Airport Road near the intersection.

Mike Bily said that he would request that accident information be compiled for that intersection.

Joe Smith reviewed the plan for striping Airport Road. He stated that a work order was to be completed that would create no passing zones to the east and west of Landis Farm Road.

Dennis Roberts said that he had sent a letter to the residents in the Landis Farm subdivision. He received a call from one resident favoring the lowering of the hill on Airport Road as a way to improve safety on Airport Road.

Joe Smith reviewed the work that would be required to lower the hill. He gave a preliminary estimate of \$30,000 to \$40,000 to complete the lowering of the hill. He added that the drainage work necessary on that hill might result in a higher cost for that project. Mr. Smith stated that the striping project would be pro-rated with Somer Township.

Mr. Bridgewater asked why roads were not improved by the developers.

Joe Smith said that the City did not require developers to improve arterials as part of their development. He continued by stating that Airport Road would be scheduled for improvement as more area was annexed.

Charlie Smyth stated that Airport Road would probably be added to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Dennis Roberts asked that Engineering look at the possibility of adding the lowering of the hill on Airport Road to the CIP. He stated that the installation of the pole light at the intersection would be beneficial by illuminating the area where vehicles enter and exit the subdivision.

Robert Bridgewater expressed concern about the striping on an oil and chip road (Airport Road). He asked if the striping would withstand the increased traffic on the road resulting from additional development and the bleeding of the oil from the heat of summer. He mentioned a study that was completed that indicated an additional 1500 cars per day used Airport Road to travel to and from the Wal-Mart store located on High Cross Road.

Dennis Roberts asked when the street light would be installed.

Mr. Smith replied that the light would probably be installed within a month. He added that Champaign County would probably add rock on Airport Road before micro-surfacing, which would provide a better surface for the painting of stripes on the road. He estimated that the time frame for the striping would probably be in the fall. As for scheduled projects in the CIP, Mr. Smith said that Airport Road to the west of Cunningham Avenue was slated for improvement, but to the east of Airport Road was not part of the current list of projects. He said that the City would continue to monitor traffic on Airport Road and that he would discuss the project with the

Public Works Director and Assistant City Engineer to determine what work would be done on Airport Road.

Dennis Roberts asked when the signage would be installed on Airport Road.

Joe Smith stated that the signage would be added when the striping was completed.

Item #2 - Discussion of traffic concerns on Iowa Street at Busey Avenue.

Joe Smith discussed the results of a speed study that was conducted near the intersection of Iowa Street and Busey Avenue (see attached). He summarized by stating that from the data, the area did not have a speeding problem and that conditions were below the average for a normal residential street. Mr. Smith recommended that no further action be taken. He suggested that the speed trailer be located on the street between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. during the week to encourage motorists to adhere to the speed limit.

Shawn Crowley discussed the difficulty associated with placing the speed trailer in areas with trees. She stated that the solar battery did not retain a charge for a long enough time to be effective.

Charlie Smyth asked if STEP enforcement could be assigned to that area to monitor traffic speeds.

Mike Bily stated that they would assign STEP to that area.

Mr. Smyth asked for an electronic copy of the study.

Joe Smith stated that he would provide the copy.

Mr. Smyth read an e-mail from a resident unable to attend the meeting. The resident expressed concern about the speed limit being set at 30 m.p.h. She felt that the speed was too fast for a residential area. The resident had stated that it was mentioned at an earlier meeting that the cars parked along the street slowed motorists. She pointed out that the cars, belonging mostly to students, were gone during the summer—the time of the year when most children would be playing outside. The resident requested that a four-way stop be installed at the intersection.

Mr. Smith stated that he would not endorse the installation of stop signs on Iowa Street at Busey Avenue because traffic did not justify the installation of the signs. He added that signs were not installed to slow traffic.

Chief Bily stated that sometimes having squad cars monitoring speed result in traffic calming, but that with the small number of vehicles speeding, it would be difficult to ticket speeding motorists. He added that often the violators are those who live in the neighborhood.

No further action was recommended.

Item #3 - Discussion of speed study on Green Street between Vine Street and Cottage Grove Avenue.

Joe Smith reviewed the results of a speed study that was conducted on Green Street between Vine Street and Cottage Grove Avenue. (See attached.) He stated that there were some excessive violations that might have been squad cars leaving the City building.

Mike Bily stated that he would try to determine if those vehicles were squad cars and if they were, discuss safe speeds for emergency dispatch with his officers.

Joe Smith stated that traffic speeds did not seem to be problematic for this street.

Dennis Roberts mentioned that a resident had requested a stop sign at Green Street and Anderson Street which the Traffic Commission did not recommend since the installation of the signs were not warranted.

Joe Smith mentioned that stop signs were not used as a means to slow traffic.

No further action was taken.

The Traffic Commission members reviewed the STEP reports conducted in May. (See attached.)

The members discussed the date of the next Traffic Commission meeting. Mike Bily moved to postpone the July meeting. Joe Smith seconded the motion.

The Commission approved the motion 3-0.

The Commission discussed items to be placed on the August Traffic Commission agenda.

Dennis Roberts complimented the Public Works Department for the work done on the "Parking Primer." He said that it provided a great deal of information about parking issues and solutions in Urbana.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

The next meeting will be held August 1, 2006 at 4:00 p.m. at the Urbana City Building, 400 South Vine, second floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stiehl
Recording Secretary