



Traffic Commission

6801 Delmar Boulevard, University City, Missouri 63130, Phone: (314) 505-8560, Fax: (314) 862-0694

CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC COMMISSION May 11, 2016

At the Traffic Commission meeting of University City held in the Heman Park Community Center, on Wednesday, May 11, 2016, Chairwoman Carol Wofsey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. In addition to Chairwoman Wofsey, the following members of the commission were present:

- Bob Warbin
- Jeff Hales
- Mark Barnes
- Eva Creer
- Derek Helderman

Also in attendance:

- Angelica Gutierrez (non-voting commission member – Public Works Liaison)
- Police Department Sergeant Shawn Whitley (non-voting commission member – Police Department Liaison) (arrived at 6:39pm)

Absent:

- Curtis Tunstall (excused)
- Councilmember Stephen Kraft (non-voting commission member – Council Liaison) (excused)

1. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Barnes moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Hales seconded the motion and was unanimously approved.

2. Approval of the Minutes

A. April 13, 2016 minutes – Amended

Mr. Barnes moved to approve the minutes from the October 14, 2015 meeting as amended. Ms. Creer seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Agenda Items

A. Stop Sign request at Julian Ave and Ursula Ave Intersection

Ms. Gutierrez reported a request for a stop sign requested following a recent accident. It was the only accident in the last 3 years. Staff recommended the installation of two yield signs at the intersection giving the right of way to traffic on Ursula Ave.

Dr. Warbin indicated that he believed stop signs would be a better solution because they more force with drivers and expressed concern over two vehicles arriving at the intersection at the same time presenting confusion as to which vehicle should yield.



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Ms. Gutierrez informed the commission that yield signs could be installed right away without council enacting an ordinance as is needed for a stop sign and suggested that the yield signs could be installed and the intersection could be monitored for 60 to 90 days.

Mr. Hales asked if a yield sign was acceptable to the petitioner, Mr. Smotherson.

Ms. Gutierrez indicated that she did not know if the yield signs were acceptable to Mr. Smotherson, but that he had received a copy of the recommendation for yield signs.

Ms. Wofsey has asked if a similar situation has come before the commission in the last few years.

Ms. Gutierrez indicated that the commission has rejected stop sign requests in the past.

Mr. Hales made a motion to approve the staff recommendation of the installation of yield signs as proposed by staff and was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The commission voted to approve the motion. Ayes: Mr. Helderman, Ms. Creer, Ms. Wofsey, Mr. Barnes. Nays: Dr. Warbin

B. Stop Sign request and pedestrian crosswalks at Westgate Ave. and Enright Ave. intersection

Ms. Gutierrez reported that staff received a request to improve pedestrian safety at this location. There is currently one stop sign on westbound Enright. The request would install three additional stop signs as well as pedestrian crosswalks and trim trees and foliage to improve safety.

Mr. Hales indicated that the report indicated there had been seven accidents in three years and asked what staff considers to be a large number of accidents in a three year period.

Ms. Gutierrez indicated that more than five accidents in three years is considered to be a large number of accidents.

Ms. Wofsey asked who owned the trees and foliage.

Ms. Gutierrez indicated that the trees and foliage were in the right of way but maintained by the Parkview Gardens Association.

Ms. Wofsey asked if the association was aware of the proposed changes.



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Ms. Gutierrez indicated that the association was not yet aware but would be made aware before implementation.

Dr. Warbin stated there was an existing sign post at the southwest corner of the intersection with no sign on it and asked if there was an existing ordinance for a stop sign that is no longer there.

Ms. Gutierrez stated that she had checked and the existing ordinance only covers the one existing stop sign at the intersection.

Petitioner Cheryl Adelstein spoke to the commission and provided additional context for the request. She discussed the recent loft project and construction of a mixed use bike/pedestrian sidewalk. Additionally, the recent implementation of the alternative bike route for Delmar routes bike traffic down Enright. They want to encourage all pedestrian and bike traffic to safely cross. She also indicated that Washington University planned to do all ADA upgrades at that intersection as part of the project.

Mr. Barnes made a motion to approve the recommendation as proposed and was seconded by Dr. Warbin. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Forsyth Blvd. and Bland Drive Intersection – No Left Turn from Gas Station Driveway

Ms. Wofsey received an email late that afternoon that the owner of the gas station has just received notice of the request and has requested additional time to respond. She indicated that Ms. Gutierrez advised that the commission would wait until the June meeting to address the request.

Dr. Warbin strongly recommended that the commissioners go the site and observe the intersection.

Mr. Hales moved to postpone consideration of this request until the next meeting and was seconded by Mr. Barnes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Wofsey also recommended that each commissioner visit the site.

D. Delcrest Dr. Parking Restriction

Ms. Gutierrez indicated that affected property owners were notified of the changes following the April meeting advising them of the proposed parking restrictions. Staff did not receive any feedback from residents. She indicated that she had heard from the petitioner requesting an update on when the signs would go in and was advised that commission had requested the affected residents be notified and given the opportunity for input.



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Mr. Hales stated that he recalled that the commission had approved the recommended parking restrictions on a temporary for 90 days.

Mr. Hales asked if the commission needed to approve the recommended permanent restrictions.

Dr. Warbin recalled that the commission recommended that the signs be installed on a temporary basis for 60 to 90 days to allow for feedback and the commission would revisit making the recommendation permanent.

Dr. Warbin moved to make the proposed parking restriction recommendation permanent and was seconded by Mr. Helderman. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Council Liason Report

None

5. Miscellaneous Business

Ms. Wofsey expressed concern about pedestrian crossings on Delmar, not just in the Loop but across from Lewis Park and out west and heard from numerous concerned residents and suggested the commission take a look at the issue.

Mr. Hales shared his concerns about the crosswalks in the western section of Delmar as well as the crosswalk at Gannon and North and South. He asked if there is any way the city could urge the county to install solar crosswalk lights, particularly on the Delmar crosswalks.

Ms. Wofsey believes it is a persistent problem and perhaps the county council representatives should be contacted.

Ms. Gutierrez indicated that staff is well aware of the issues and have contacted the county for signals as well as wider crosswalks without success. The county maintains the crossings meet MUTCD standards. She indicated that the crosswalk at Delmar and Center is particularly concerning because of the hill and the sitelines. She indicated that when she first raised concerns to the county, the county indicated that as many as 30 years ago, the city requested the crosswalks on Delmar for the synagogues. She indicated that she had approached the Rabbi at Agudas Israel about removing the crosswalks out of safety concerns or installing electronic solar signals and was advised that they wanted the crosswalks to remain but that they could not use the electronic signals at certain times because of their religious beliefs, even if the signal had a sensor that would detect their presence at the crosswalk. She indicated that the options are limited and it's a challenging issue.



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Dr. Warbin asked if there was any state requirement to stop while pedestrians are in the crosswalk and inquired if a yellow sign could be placed in the center of the road that instruct traffic to stop for pedestrians.

Ms. Gutierrez informed the commission that that was one of the first requests she made to the county and the county did not want to do that because it would have complicated maintenance such as snow plowing.

Sgt. Whitley discussed the challenges of the Delmar Crossings which include poor lighting at night, traffic volume, traffic speed, visibility and the fact that many of those who use the crosswalks wear traditional clothing that is mostly black which makes them difficult to see after dark. He indicated that cars are required to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk and that it is a problem and informed the commission that he would take the commissions feedback to the police department to see what additional efforts could be taken.

Ms. Wofsey also stated that she had heard complaints that the signal at Old Bonhomme and Delmar is too short for pedestrians to cross.

Ms. Gutierrez indicated that the timing had been adjusted in the last several years at the request of the synagogue.

Mr. Hales stated that he believed signalized crosswalks was extremely important on Delmar because it is a four lane road and while a truck, van or SUV may be slowing down in the outside lane for a pedestrian, traffic in the inside lane may have an obstructed view of the pedestrians in the crosswalk because of the vehicle in the outside lane which can potentially make it impossible to see the pedestrians until you are nearly at the crosswalk.

Sgt. Whitley stated that pedestrians often can see one car yielding to them and enter the crosswalk and other cars fail to yield.

Mr. Barnes stated that he believed the traffic light timing at Vernon and Kingsland had been changed and thanked the staff for the change as the red light used to last for 3 minutes.

Mr. Barnes asked for an update on the Starbucks traffic issue on North and South.

Ms. Gutierrez indicated that there was an email sent to the commission with an update. Starbucks made a number of improvements to their lot and widened the driveway. Additionally, an additional lane was striped for southbound traffic.

6. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 pm

Minutes prepared by Jeff Hales, Traffic Commission Secretary



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