

Traffic Commission Minutes

City of Rock Hill, South Carolina

May 18, 2022

A public hearing of the Traffic Commission was held Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. in City Council Chambers at City Hall, 155 Johnston Street, Rock Hill SC.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Derrick Lindsay, Jimmy Bagley, Steven Varnadore, Ivan McCorkle, and Captain Rod Stinson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Terrence Nealy and Clifton Goolsby

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Herrmann, Leah Youngblood, Arthdale Brown, Leslie Galvez, Kenny Williams, Tommy Feemster and Rob Walsh

1. Call to Order

Mr. Lindsay called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of the April 20, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Lindsay asked if there were any additions, corrections or deletions from the April 20, 2022 meeting minutes. Captain Stinson then made a motion that the minutes be approved as presented; this was seconded by Mr. Varnadore and was unanimously approved.

3. Administration:

A. Policies and Procedures

Staff Member Leah Youngblood provided a summary of proposed changes to policies and procedures for Traffic Commission that is being considered by City Council for First Reading on May 23rd, 2022. Mrs. Youngblood explained that if approved for First Reading, staff will bring these changes back for formal approval by Traffic Commission at the June 15th, 2022 meeting, prior to a Second Reading by City Council. Mrs. Youngblood asked for members to contact staff with any questions or feedback they may have.

4. Business:

A. Southland Park Neighborhood

Staff Member Chris Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann explained that ownership and maintenance responsibilities are shared by both the City of Rock Hill and SCDOT. Mr. Herrmann noted that the posted speed limit on Southland Drive is 25 MPH while all other roadways have a 35 MPH speed limit.

Mr. Herrmann then reviewed results of the requested traffic studies that were completed on Southland Drive and Glenarden Drive. The traffic study for Southland Drive was completed on May 13th, 2022 and showed a 50th percentile speed of 25 MPH and an 85th percentile speed of 33 MPH. The traffic study for Glenarden Drive was completed on May 13th, 2022 and showed a 50th percentile speed of 27 MPH and an 85th percentile

speed of 35 MPH. The study for Southland Drive captured approximately 300 trips per day, while the study for Glenarden Drive captured approximately 380 trips per day.

Mr. John Coleman (956 Southland Drive) voiced concerns regarding speeding on Southland Drive and Glenarden Drive. Mr. Coleman noted that the neighborhood would be supportive of lower speed limits or traffic calming in the form of speed humps.

Discussion then followed regarding existing speed limits within the neighborhood. Mr. Feemster then addressed the segment of Pearson Drive between Mt. Holly Drive and the neighborhood entrance, which is owned and maintained by SCDOT. Mr. Feemster noted that SCDOT staff would be supportive of a reduction in speed limit for Pearson Drive to 25 MPH, if desired by City staff for the segment of Pearson Drive owned by the City of Rock Hill.

Mr. Herrmann then summarized feedback he had received from Mr. Nealy and Mr. Goolsby regarding the results of the traffic studies. Mr. Nealy had explained that he was comfortable reducing the speed limit and posting a 25 MPH speed limit for the entire neighborhood. Mr. Goolsby felt that the traffic studies supported concerns he had voiced at the April meeting regarding a potential reduction from 35 to 25 for the majority of the roadways in this neighborhood. Mr. Goolsby was particularly concerned with the impact of doing this on Glenarden Drive which is very wide at 42 feet with curb and gutter. Mr. Goolsby felt that a reduction in the speed limit from 35 MPH to 30 MPH would be more suitable. Mr. Walsh then noted that such a reduction appears to be logical based on the 85th percentile speeds captured during the traffic study. Mr. Bagley then stated that a change in the speed limit may not have the greatest long term impact in light of the traffic study results.

In regards to the request for traffic calming, Mr. Herrmann explained that a project on either road would not currently qualify for any financial participation from the City as the current process requires 1,000 trips per day at minimum. Mr. Herrmann then highlighted that this could potentially change if the new policies and procedures outlined earlier by Mrs. Youngblood are approved by both Traffic Commission and City Council. Mr. Walsh then stated that given the results of the traffic studies, traffic calming in the form of speed humps may not have a significant reduction in the average speeds of drivers. Mr. Walsh felt that targeted enforcement would be the best approach at this time.

Captain Stinson then summarized recent targeted enforcement that has been conducted in the neighborhood, as well as outreach to residents in the area. Captain Stinson noted that the targeted enforcement will be conducted in accordance with the results of the traffic studies.

Traffic Commission then recommended that RHPD conduct targeted enforcement in this neighborhood area. Traffic Commission also recommended that staff conduct outreach with the neighborhood if the new policies and procedures are approved and initiated.

B. Beaty Estate Neighborhood

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann then explained that ownership and maintenance responsibilities are shared between the City of Rock Hill and SCDOT. Mr. Herrmann then reviewed previous discussion from the May meeting which had focused on Marydale Lane.

Mr. Herrmann then reviewed the results of the traffic study completed on Marydale Lane.

Traffic study results from April 28th which showed a 50th percentile speed of 26 MPH and an 85th percentile speed of 32 MPH. Mr. Herrmann noted that the traffic study captured approximately 450 trips per day.

Mrs. Melissa Cassell (1139 Hermitage Road) voiced concerns regarding speeding and safety on Marydale Lane. Mrs. Cassell expressed appreciation for Traffic Commission completing the traffic study and requested any consideration for improvement that can be implemented, including targeted enforcement, speed humps, or choke points.

Discussion then followed regarding the results of the traffic study. Mr. Herrmann explained that like the previous agenda item, the data from the traffic study shows AADT levels below 1,000 trips per day. This means that the City would not be able to financially participate in any proposed traffic calming improvement. Though, Mr. Herrmann reiterated that this may not be the case if the proposed changes for Traffic Commission policies and procedures are approved. Mr. Walsh then explained that given the 85th percentile speed of 32 MPH shown in the traffic study, traffic calming may make sense but under the current policies, targeted enforcement may be the best approach.

Mr. Bagley then asked Mr. Herrmann to summarize recent studies regarding choke points on other City streets and the results shown, since Mrs. Cassell mentioned that approach as a potential improvement. Mr. Herrmann then noted that results of such studies have been mixed thus far. The project completed on Fieldcrest Circle has shown improvements up to 8% reduction in speeding and traffic volumes. However, the experiment ran on University Drive showed reductions in speeding less than 8% and virtually no reduction in traffic volume.

Mr. Walsh then asked if additional speed limit signage would be beneficial for targeted enforcement by RHPD. Captain Stinson noted that it could be beneficial since there are multiple roadways without speed limit signage. Mr. Walsh noted that this could be evaluated during an on-site assessment by staff, as well as analysis of sight distance and visibility at stop-controlled intersections.

Traffic Commission then recommended staff to complete an on-site assessment to evaluate speed limit signage, as well as sight distance and visibility at stop-controlled intersections. Traffic Commission also requested staff to conduct outreach regarding the potential changes to the policies and procedures.

C. Linwood Street

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann explained that ownership and maintenance responsibilities are held by the City of Rock Hill. Mr. Herrmann noted that the posted speed limit on Linwood Street is 25 MPH.

Mr. Brown then summarized that Mr. Chris Catoe (1581 Arbogate Drive) had contacted staff regarding speeding concerns in the Amber Ridge Neighborhood. Mr. Herrmann explained that the request was focused on implementing additional stop signs at intersections along Linwood Street. Mr. Herrmann noted that staff may need to complete an on-site assessment to evaluate sight-distance and visibility regarding the intersections along Linwood Street.

Discussion then followed regarding the requests for multiple four-way stops along Linwood Street. Mr. Walsh noted that historically, Traffic Commission has not utilized four-way stops as a method of Traffic Calming due to offset impacts related to drivers disregarding stop signs. Mr. Walsh highlighted that any traffic in the area would likely be residential related to the neighborhood as connectivity is limited and no cut-through traffic is possible.

Traffic Commission then recommended staff complete an on-site assessment to evaluate sight-distance and visibility for the intersections along Linwood Street. Traffic Commission also recommended outreach to the Amber Ridge neighborhood, emphasizing the 25 MPH speed limit on Linwood Street.

D. Bynum Avenue

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, speed limits, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann explained that ownership and maintenance responsibilities in this area are held by SCDOT. Mr. Herrmann then noted that Traffic Commission had not reviewed this particular location in the past however, there had been a history of review by Traffic Commission along other segments of Bynum Ave.

Mr. Brown then summarized that Mrs. Phyllis Randall had contacted staff regarding speeding concerns on Bynum Ave. Mr. Brown noted that the resident seemed to think speeding was occurring for drivers traveling from Constitution Blvd.

Discussion then followed regarding the concerns. Mr. Feemster noted that speeding may be limited due to the short length of the roadway. Captain Stinson explained that on-street parking is common on this street and should act as a natural traffic calming effort. Captain Stinson also noted that a traffic study could be completed to gather data on the perceived speeding and when it could be occurring.

Mr. Lindsay then requested that staff evaluate the segment of Bynum Ave from Constitution Blvd to Main Street as well, noting concerns with speeding and sight distance at the intersection of Bynum Ave / Castle Street.

Traffic Commission then recommended that staff complete two traffic studies on the separate segments of Bynum Ave. Traffic Commission also recommended staff complete an on-site assessment for sight distance and visibility regarding the intersection of Bynum Ave / Castle Street.

E. Galleria Blvd

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann explained that ownership and maintenance responsibilities are held by the City of Rock Hill. Mr. Herrmann noted that the posted speed limit is 35 MPH. Mr. Herrmann next explained Traffic Commission had not previously reviewed this location.

Mr. Don Baker (555 Paddock Parkway) voiced concerns regarding speeding and littering along Galleria Blvd. Mr. Baker noted that he and other employees voluntarily pick up litter along the roadway when possible. Mr. Baker requested consideration of management of litter along roadways and consideration of an Adopt-a-Roadway program.

Discussion then followed regarding these requests. Mr. Herrmann noted that there is no speed limit signage for NB traffic from US 21 / Anderson Road. Mr. Bagley then noted

that the City of Rock Hill does not currently have trash crews that work to manage litter along roadways. Landscaping and mowing is either contracted out for city property or is the responsibility of property owners to maintain. Mr. Herrmann explained that the littering issue is being addressed by Code Enforcement. Mr. Herrmann also noted that the City does not currently have an Adopt-a-Roadway program, though the County and State do. Mr. Herrmann highlighted that this has been proposed for City Management to consider.

Captain Stinson then summarized targeted enforcement that has been conducted in this area recently; noting that multiple warnings and citations have been written for speeding. Captain Stinson also highlighted that RHPD are on the look-out for those littering and citations can / will be written for offenders.

Traffic Commission then recommended targeted enforcement to be conducted by RHPD. Traffic Commission also recommended staff to coordinate with Public Works to implement a 35 MPH speed limit sign for NB traffic closer to US 21 / Anderson Road.

F. Rawlinson Road

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, speed limits, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann highlighted that this roadway is classified as a Major Collector. Mr. Herrmann then explained that ownership and maintenance responsibilities are held by SCDOT. Mr. Herrmann also noted that the speed limit is 35 MPH near the end termini of the roadway, however it is 45 MPH for the middle of the roadway. Mr. Herrmann lastly summarized traffic patterns related to drop-off and pick-up for car-rider and bus traffic for Old Pointe Elementary School.

Mr. Russell Pilot (4725 Country Oaks Drive) voiced concerns regarding speeding and pedestrian safety related to Old Pointe Elementary School. Mr. Pilot noted pedestrian safety concerns as students walk to / from school via the Shared Use Path on Rawlinson Road. Mr. Pilot then noted safety concerns at the Country Oaks Drive / Rawlinson Road / school & YMCA Aquatics Center intersection during drop-off and pick up times, due to speeding and school related congestion.

Discussion then followed regarding these concerns. Mr. Herrmann noted that staff had completed an on-site assessment during AM Peak Hour conditions, highlighting typical school related congestion from 7:15 AM to 7:45 AM. Mr. Herrmann did note that staff had observed parents entering the school / YMCA Aquatics Center access and drop off students, allowing them to walk in to school and parents to leave via this rear access, therefore avoiding the congestion of the main access via Heckle Blvd. Mr. Herrmann also highlighted the Speed Limit sign for NB traffic from Main Street / SC 5 was blocked by overgrown vegetation at the old Burger King site.

Mr. Feemster then noted that SCDOT had received concerns in this area, specifically sight distance and visibility with the school / YMCA Aquatics center access on Rawlinson Road. Mr. Feemster explained that SCDOT is evaluating whether vegetation can be cleared to improve sight distance and visibility to the northeast toward Heckle Blvd. Mr. Herrmann then inquired whether SCDOT had considered a 35 MPH speed limit for the entire Rawlinson Road corridor, rather than segments with 35 & 45 MPH zones. Mr. Feemster noted that this has not been considered, though SCDOT can complete a traffic study to evaluate speeds in this area. Mr. Herrmann then inquired whether SCDOT had considered a school zone for this section of Rawlinson Road, since there was not such a zone currently on Heckle Blvd where the main school access is located. Mr. Feemster

stated that he was not aware of any such consideration, since the school was constructed prior to his employment with SCDOT.

Mr. Herrmann next explained that there is a current development that is being proposed in this area, which is required to provide a Traffic Impact Analysis. Mr. Herrmann stated that the TIA should provide data that staff can utilize to further evaluate the school / YMCA Aquatics Center intersection with Rawlinson Road.

In regards to pedestrian traffic, Mr. Varnadore asked if staff had observed students walking to school in the mornings. Mr. Herrmann noted that this had not been observed in the mornings, though it does occur in the afternoons. Mr. Varnadore then asked if that student pedestrian activity would warrant a school zone. Mr. Feemster stated that this could be analyzed by SCDOT staff. Mr. Bagley then asked if staff had any communication with Old Pointe Elementary School administration regarding these concerns? Mr. Herrmann stated that there had not been, though staff could certainly reach out to School administration during the summer as they prepare for the new school year in the fall.

Traffic Commission then recommended that staff coordinate with SCDOT regarding a traffic study on this section of Rawlinson Road near Country Oaks Drive, as well as potential improvements to sight-distance and visibility, and consideration of a school zone. Traffic Commission also requested staff to conduct outreach to administration at Old Pointe Elementary regarding traffic patterns for pick-up and drop-off.

G. Duffey Court

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, speed limits, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann explained that ownership and maintenance responsibilities are held by the City of Rock Hill. Mr. Herrmann noted that the speed limit is an unposted 35 MPH.

Mr. Brown then summarized concerns noted by staff regarding vehicles being parked and abandoned in the greenspace at this location. Mr. Brown noted that code enforcement staff had requested consideration of “No Parking” signage at this location because the vehicles parked there had been deterring mowing that is contracted out by the City.

Discussion then followed regarding this request. Mr. Herrmann provided historical aerial images showing that this had been a common occurrence for many years. Mr. Herrmann also stated that the approved plat for the neighborhood from the 1968 labeled this area as a planting area, not a parking area. Mr. Herrmann stated that this seems to be a pattern of behavior based on convenience rather than need, as on-street parking is allowed along Duffey Court. Mr. Lindsay then stated that he and Councilman Perry Sutton can conduct outreach to the residents regarding the issue.

Mr. Williams suggested adding “No Parking” signage in the greenspace so as to best address the behavior that is occurring. Mr. Lindsay inquired whether City staff could add trees to help address the parking issue. Mr. Bagley stated that staff could look into this.

Traffic Commission then recommended that RHPD conduct targeted enforcement for any vehicles that may be abandoned. Traffic Commission also recommended staff coordinate with Public Works to add “No Parking” signage to this planting area.

4. Other Items

A. Status Report

Mr. Herrmann briefly summarized the Status Report which outlines follow-up action items from the previous meetings.

5. Next Meeting:

Mr. Herrmann explained that the next meeting has been scheduled for June 15th, 2022 at 10:00 AM in Council Chambers.

6. Adjourn:

There being no further business, Mr. Lindsay made a motion to adjourn. Mr. McCorkle seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.