

Traffic Commission Minutes

City of Rock Hill, South Carolina

November 16, 2022

A public hearing of the Traffic Commission was held Wednesday, November 16, 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, Captain Jim Grayson, and Kevin Richardson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Clifton Goolsby

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Herrmann, Arthdale Brown, Brent Deaton, Tommy Feemster, Vic Edwards, 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 September 21, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Lindsay asked if there were any additions, corrections or deletions from the September 21, 2022 meeting minutes. Mr. Nealy then made a motion that the minutes be approved as presented; this was seconded by Mr. Bagley and was unanimously approved.

3. Business:

A. College Downs Neighborhood / Neely Road

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting the upcoming widening of Neely Road through the York County Pennies for Progress program. Mr. Herrmann explained that the analysis completed for the widening project notes recommendations for closing multiple accesses including one access on College Plaza Blvd and an access on Aaron Ave. Mr. Herrmann then explained that Traffic Commission previously reviewed this area at the March 2022 meeting where resulting action items included staff make recommendations to York County regarding consideration of one-way traffic pattern being implemented on College Plaza Blvd and consideration of the Aaron Ave access being open to emergency access only. Mr. Herrmann then summarized feedback received from the neighborhood as well as staff input following further evaluation.

Mr. Herrmann then reviewed the recent traffic analysis completed by York County for the Neely Road widening project and summarized recommendations related to College Plaza Blvd and Aaron Ave. The analysis states "It is recommended that the three driveways to College Downs neighborhood (two at College Plaza Blvd and one at Aaron Ave) be consolidated to a single entrance / exit at the existing middle driveway to reduce the number of conflict areas that contribute to angle and rear end crashes. The current driveway spacing of the College Plaza Blvd entrance does not meet the SCDOT criteria outlined in the ARMS manual of 220' for 35 mph roadways with an AADT greater than or equal to 2000 vpd."

Mr. Patrick Hamilton (Program Manager, York County Pennies for Progress) then summarized the analysis and these recommendations. Mr. Hamilton stated that due to

the accident history and the spacing for the existing driveways not meeting the ARMS manual requirements, York County staff and SCDOT staff feel that the best overall option is to consolidate the driveways to one access only. Mr. Bagley then inquired as to how the two College Plaza Blvd accesses would be consolidated? Mr. Hamilton explained that one access would be closed permanently and disconnected from Neely Road. Mr. Bagley then asked if this recommendation has been shared with the neighborhood? Mr. Hamilton noted that a public meeting has not yet been held at this point to share this information.

Mr. Lindsay then transitioned to inquire whether the access to Aaron Ave could remain for emergency access only? Mr. Hamilton responded that this could be done utilizing grass pavers so that it appears no connection is there, but emergency access has that option if needed. Mr. Lindsay then stated that residents in this neighborhood have largely lived there for decades and may be accustomed to using that access on a daily basis; thus this approach utilizing grass pavers may lead to more issues and accidents. Mr. Hamilton responded that York County staff would coordinate with SCDOT staff to implement signage that would notify drivers that the Aaron Ave access was closed.

Mr. Lindsay then inquired whether the Aaron Ave access could remain open for public use? Mr. Vic Edwards (SCDOT District 4 Traffic Engineer) then stated that the widening project of Neely Road would impact the throat of this access, however if improvements to the access can be designed to meet current standards and design criteria then SCDOT can evaluate allowing an access to Aaron Ave. Mr. Lindsay then asked if this can be investigated now during the design process for the project? Mr. Hamilton responded that York County would not be opposed to analyzing the feasibility of an access to Aaron Ave. Discussion then followed regarding the possibility of this access remaining. Mr. Bagley noted that he certainly appreciates York County considering the option to let the access on Aaron Ave remain as residents of the neighborhood prefer having both options available for accessing their homes.

Ms. Phyllis Fickling (1744 Aaron Ave) noted that residents would indeed prefer the access to Aaron Ave to remain. Ms. Fickling noted that the widening project will be a significant disruption to the neighborhood and some consideration should be given to options that would ease residents concerns within College Downs. Ms. Fickling also noted the importance of upcoming public meetings for this project so residents are aware of all the details of the project.

Mr. Bagley then explained that while Traffic Commission is making recommendations to be considered for this project, Neely Road is owned and maintained by the state and the widening project is being managed by York County. Mr. Bagley encouraged Ms. Fickling to contact Mr. Hamilton to get the details of the project and any upcoming public meetings.

Traffic Commission then requested that Mr. Hamilton consider the connection to Aaron Ave to remain as a part of the Neely Road widening project and provide any information as a part of that evaluation at a future meeting.

B. Sanitation Service

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of challenges that are being faced by public works staff regarding sanitation service to multiple residential areas. Mr. Herrmann summarized previous discussion regarding these challenges related to “T Turnarounds” or “Hammerhead Turnarounds” in residential areas within the Ardwyck Place neighborhood, Atherton Place neighborhood, Pennington Townhomes, and Osprey Point neighborhood

that are being used for parking by residents and visitors.

Mr. Herrmann then noted that Traffic Commission reviewed this item at the September meeting. Resulting action items included: staff to coordinate with Rock Hill Police Department and Rock Hill Fire Department to understand any emergency issues. Mr. Herrmann explained that this coordination had been completed and summarized feedback from the Rock Hill Fire Department in regards to the State Fire Code. Mr. Herrmann outlined the feedback from Fire Marshall Otis Driggers regarding access to buildings from roadways. Mr. Bagley then stated that he would recommend posting these areas for “No Parking” on a permanent basis for emergency service purposes, doing so would assist in enforcement for the Rock Hill Police Department. Mr. Bagley inquired whether any communication has occurred between City staff and these neighborhood areas? Mr. Brown affirmed that Neighborhood Services has reached out to HOA’s and property management companies, noting that staff could reach back out again ahead of the signs being posted.

Mr. Herrmann then transitioned to summarize challenges that are being faced by public works staff regarding sanitation service in the Winthrop University area including Ebenezer Ave, Park Ave, Union Ave, and Aiken Ave. Mr. Herrmann noted that Traffic Commission reviewed this item at the August meeting. Resulting action items included: staff to complete a sign survey in the area. Mr. Herrmann noted that this sign survey has been completed. Mr. Herrmann then reviewed the existing signage in the in regarding to parking limitations, highlighting that eight different types of signs are used throughout the area for a total of over 60 signs. Mr. Herrmann reiterated from the previous meeting that staff continue to receive concerns regarding “No Parking” signage in this area and regulations not being adhered to by residents, visitors, and Winthrop staff and / or students. Mr. Herrmann then reviewed where parking is allowed and not allowed in this area and where different signage exists. Discussion then followed regarding these parking limitations and signage in this area.

Mr. Herrmann then explained that the staff recommendation for this area would be to implement one consistent signage scheme utilizing “No Parking” signs with an arrow pointing whichever way parking is not allowed. Mr. Herrmann added that staff recommended adding new “No Parking” signage along Stewart Ave to address spillover parking. Discussion then followed regarding these recommendations. Mr. Bagley agreed that utilizing one consistent signage scheme would be the best way to address the area. Mr. Edwards noted that utilizing signage with an arrow indicating where parking is not allowed would mean that signs will need to be placed at 15 degree angles so that drivers can view the signs as they are approaching, rather than placing signs parallel to the roadway.

Captain Grayson then inquired whether the curbs can be painted to indicate where parking is not allowed? Mr. Walsh responded that this has been discussed at Traffic Commission before but the understanding was that this would require a change to the City Ordinance. Mr. Walsh added that painting the curb is not a standard from the MUTCD so it would require local governance if this was something desired. Mr. Edwards agreed that it would require local governance as the state does not have any standards regarding this. Mr. Bagley then stated that this could be an approach to try if staff find that the consistent signage scheme does not address the concerns.

Mr. McCorkle then inquired whether it was worth considering city parking passes for this area in order to address this issue. Discussion then followed on this. Consensus was

that this is something to consider as a future option.

Traffic Commission then unanimously recommended that staff implement “No Parking” signage in the “T Turnaround” or “Hammerhead Turnarounds” in the residential neighborhoods discussed. Traffic Commission also unanimously recommended that staff implement one consistent signage scheme in the Winthrop University area.

C. Lige Street / Haynes 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 SCDOT. Mr. Herrmann noted that the posted speed limit is 25 MPH and Haynes Street has an unposted speed limit of 35 MPH. Mr. Herrmann explained that this area was reviewed by Traffic Commission at the September meeting. Resulting action items included staff to complete an additional traffic study on Lige Street to provide additional information.

Mr. Herrmann then transitioned to review results of the most recent traffic study, which was conducted to analyze how grade change and directional traffic impacted results. For reference, Mr. Herrmann reminded Traffic Commission of results of a traffic study completed on August 6th which showed a 50th percentile speed of 30 MPH and an 85th percentile speed of 37 MPH. That study also captured approximately 890 trips per day. Mr. Herrmann then reviewed the results of the studies completed on November 1st. A study conducted on northbound Lige Street near Saluda Street captured a 50th percentile speed of 32 MPH and an 85th percentile speed of 40 MPH, with an AADT count of 486 trips. A study conducted on northbound Lige Street near Flint Hill Street captured a 50th percentile speed of 33 MPH and an 85th percentile speed of 40 MPH, with an AADT count of 299 trips. A study conducted on southbound Lige Street near Flint Hill Street captured a 50th percentile speed of 31 MPH and an 85th percentile speed of 37 MPH, with an AADT count of 203 trips. A study conducted on southbound Life Street near Saluda Street captured a 50th percentile speed of 34 MPH and an 85th percentile speed of 42 MPH, with an AADT count of 517 trips.

Captain Grayson then transitioned to explain that targeted enforcement had been conducted in this area recently resulting in multiple traffic stops. Mr. Tommy Feemster (SCDOT District 4 Assistant District Traffic Engineer) noted that the study results show speed levels changing depending on time of day. Mr. Feemster stated that it appears that speed levels decreased during the evening, which may be a result of more on-street parking occurring during that time. Discussion then followed regarding potential for traffic calming in this area. Mr. Edwards explained that since this is an SCDOT roadway they would need to fully evaluate this, however if all warrants are met then the City would be financially responsible for implementing any traffic calming and maintaining it. Mr. Walsh explained that it would be best to petition the neighborhood area to see if traffic calming would be supported. Mr. Lindsay noted that attaining 75% support from property owners in any petition may be difficult with a high percentage of properties in this area being rental properties.

Mr. Herrmann then transitioned to inquire about other possible methods that could be considered by SCDOT such as speed radar devices. Mr. Edwards explained that in other instances where those devices have been implemented speeds decreased within the first 30 to 60 days and beyond that studies showed speeds higher than before a speed radar device was implemented. Mr. Edwards then asked if the speed trailer owned by Rock Hill Police Department could be utilized in this area? Captain Grayson noted that it be difficult

to place along Lige Street given the limited shoulder width.

Traffic Commission then recommended targeted enforcement to be conducted in this area by Rock Hill Police Department.

D. Unposted Speed Limits

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the changes that have been approved by City Council on October 24th to the City Ordinance related to speed limits on unposted roadways. The ordinance now outlines that unposted roadways have a speed limit of 20 MPH in any business district, 30 MPH in any residential district, and 45 MPH under other conditions. Mr. Herrmann noted that the City's Marketing office and Police Department have been putting out educational information to share the new changes.

4. Other Items

A. Status Report

Mr. Herrmann briefly summarized the Status Report which outlines follow-up action items from the previous meetings as well as action items completed by staff administratively.

B. ADA Transition Plan

Mr. Herrmann briefly noted that a public survey is currently available for the City's ADA Transition Plan. Mr. Bagley explained that this is not a new plan, rather an update to the existing plan and a request for new public input.

5. Next Meeting:

Mr. Herrmann explained that the next meeting has been scheduled for January 18th, 2023 at 10:00 AM in Council Chambers.

6. Adjourn:

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