

Traffic Commission Minutes

City of Rock Hill, South Carolina

August 16, 2023

A public hearing of the Traffic Commission was held Wednesday, August 16, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in City Council Chambers at City Hall, 155 Johnston Street, Rock Hill SC.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Derrick Lindsay, Steven Varnadore, Ivan McCorkle, Captain Jim Grayson, Clifton Goolsby and Terrence Nealy

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jimmy Bagley

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Herrmann, Arthdale Brown, Leslie Galvez, Diana Fragomeni, Tommy Feemster, and Mike Fry.

1. Call to Order

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

2. Approval of Minutes of the May 17, 2023 meeting.

Mr. Lindsay asked if there were any additions, corrections or deletions from the May 17, 2023 meeting minutes. Mr. Nealy then made a motion that the minutes be approved as presented; this was seconded by Mr. Goolsby and was unanimously approved.

3. Business:

A. Highland Creek Neighborhood

Staff Member Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann explained that the City of Rock Hill owns and maintains the roadways in this neighborhood. Mr. Herrmann stated that there have been no traffic studies done in the past so no traffic data is currently available.

Mr. Herrmann then transitioned to review an on-site assessment completed by staff. Mr. Herrmann outlined a sight-distance and visibility concern on the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Heckle Blvd and Prestwick Drive. Vegetation has become overgrown and is creating a safety issue. Mr. Herrmann then asked Mr. Feemster if SCDOT can examine this issue since SCDOT maintains the right-of-way of Heckle Blvd. Mr. Tommy Feemster (SCDOT Assistant District Traffic Engineer) responded that SCDOT would look into this matter and coordinate with City staff.

Mr. Herrmann then continued, noting a very steep grade change on Dewars Drive near Menzies Drive, as well as landscaping on private property that may be impacting sight-distance and visibility at intersections along Dewars Drive. Mr. Herrmann stated that staff could coordinate with Neighborhood Services and address these concerns with property owners.

Mr. Gary Nasin (831 Prestwick Drive) noted concerns regarding speeding in the neighborhood area. In regards to speed humps or traffic calming, Mr. Nasin explained that residents are concerned about liabilities to vehicles. Mr. Nasin then stated that there are no sidewalks within the neighborhood, which forces residents and children to walk in the street, which is also a safety concern. Mr. Nasin then requested Traffic Commission to consider three-way stop signs at intersections within the neighborhood. Mr. Nasin also

requested targeted enforcement to be conducted within the neighborhood.

Discussion then followed regarding Mr. Nasin's requests. Captain Grayson explained that RHPD has conducted targeted enforcement in this neighborhood area and would continue to do so when available. Mr. Herrmann then explained that with no traffic data currently available, staff would recommend a traffic study to be completed on can be done to collect data.

Mr. Goolsby then transitioned to summarize the effects of three-way stop-controlled intersections. Mr. Goolsby stated that three-way stops are often not advisable from an engineering standpoint because they often increase accidents as drivers ignore the stop signs. Mr. Goolsby continued, explaining that there are circumstances where three-way stops are warranted according to engineering standards. Mr. Goolsby noted that Mr. Herrmann had referenced some sight-distance concerns in the neighborhood. Those situations will be further evaluated and analyzed to determine whether a three-way stop-controlled intersection is indeed warranted or not.

Traffic Commission then unanimously recommended staff to complete a traffic study and share results at a future meeting. Traffic Commission also recommended staff to conduct further on-site evaluation to analyze sight-distance and visibility concerns on Dewars Drive.

B. White Street

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann explained that the City of Rock Hill owns and maintains this segment of the roadway between Constitution Blvd and Dave Lyle Blvd and it is classified as a Major Collector. Mr. Herrmann noted that Traffic Commission last reviewed this location at their May meeting where staff requested permission to have Campco provide traffic counts at each intersection to better analyze traffic patterns. Mr. Herrmann then reminded Traffic Commission that City staff had originally requested review of this location due to concerns regarding enforcement related to the speed limit. White Street near Constitution Blvd is posted with a 35 MPH speed limit, however there is not any posted speed limit on White Street near Dave Lyle Blvd. Mr. Herrmann also noted that staff had recognized a shift in the corridor to heavier pedestrian traffic levels, as well as the recent implementation of the My Ride Transit Hub at University Center.

Mr. Herrmann then transitioned to review results of the traffic studies completed along the corridor. The first study was completed on June 7th between Dave Lyle Blvd and Technology Center Way. This first study captured 3,600 trips per day on White Street. The second study was completed on June 21st between Wilson Street and Constitution Blvd. The second study captured 5,800 trips per day. These are both a significant increase compared to the last study conducted in this area in 2019 which reflect 1,075 trips per day. Mr. Herrmann then gave reference to this noting large events held at the Rock Hill Sports and Events Center which attracted up to 7,700 daily users during these time frames. Mr. Herrmann then summarized the speed data, noting that the 50th percentile speed captured during both studies was 31 MPH and the 85th percentile speed captured was 38 MPH. However, Mr. Herrmann highlighted that the study did reflect 85th percentile speeds of 45 MPH and 48 MPH in front of University Center. Mr. Herrmann explained that this driving behavior is quite concerning to staff considering this is the new location of the My Ride Transit Hub and where pedestrian traffic is at its highest along the corridor. Mr. Herrmann then gave a brief summary of the traffic count data that was provided by Campco. Mr. Herrmann then inquired whether Traffic Commission saw

reason to decrease the posted speed limit on White Street given all of this data.

Discussion then followed regarding all of the data presented by staff. Mr. Goolsby explained that the My Ride Transit Hub was shifted from Laurel Street to White Street in April of 2023. Mr. Goolsby stated that safety improvements and management of speed should be a focus of Traffic Commission in this situation. However, a decrease of the speed limit will have some impact to the on-time performance of the transit system, now that all transit buses run along the corridor multiple times each day. Mr. Goolsby then stated that the data presented may support a decrease in speed limit to 30 MPH, however it does not support a decrease to 25 MPH. Mr. Goolsby then highlighted how a decrease to 25 MPH would be more impactful to the reliability of the My Ride Transit system. Mr. Goolsby lastly stated that there have been concerns with transit buses departing the hub and merging back into traffic on White Street headed northwest. Given those concerns, Mr. Goolsby stated that decreasing the posted speed limit to 30 MPH may help to address some of those concerns, granted that driver behavior is impacted by a lower speed limit.

Mr. Nealy stated that the corridor is still being developed, thus from a timing standpoint now may not be the best time to make a drastic change to the posted speed limit. Mr. Nealy continued that perhaps posting both ends of the corridor with the same speed limit would be the best approach. Once the corridor has developed further, then the Traffic Commission can revisit and make any adjustments. Mr. Lindsay then asked if there have been any accidents in this area. Mr. Herrmann stated that the RHPD is still gathering the data.

Captain Grayson then inquired whether staff had considered a traffic signal at the intersection of White Street / Textile Mill Way. Mr. Herrmann asked Mr. Fry if this was considered previously. Mike Fry (Campco Engineering) stated that this has not yet been considered because traffic levels had not yet reached a point where a traffic signal would be warranted at this location. Discussion then followed regarding traffic signal warrants.

Mr. Lindsay then asked if staff were aware whether most people speeding are tourists or local drivers. Mr. Herrmann stated that it is hard to say, yet it is possible given that visitors from out of town are probably not familiar with the typical rules of the road within Rock Hill City Limits like an un-posted roadway is has a 30 MPH speed limit. Mr. Herrmann stated in that particular case, having proper signage would be helpful.

Discussion then followed regarding the potential to decrease the posted speed limit to 30 MPH. Mr. Goolsby noted that it would be helpful to conduct a follow-up study if a change was indeed made. Captain Grayson asked how much of a gap period is needed between the change to the speed limit and a follow-up study. Mr. Herrmann stated three to six months. Mr. Fry stated three months to let the driver's get used to the speed limit then do another study. Mr. Nealy stated he recommends the speed limit to be 30-mph thru out the corridor.

Mr. Herrmann then explained that lowering the speed limit on a roadway is something that City Council is supposed to weigh in on. Mr. Lindsay stated he is fine with taking a recommendation to City Council to change the posted speed limit to 30 MPH.

The Traffic Commission then unanimously recommended to decrease the posted speed limit on White Street (Dave Lyle Blvd to Constitution Blvd) to 30 MPH. Traffic Commission requested staff to present this recommendation to City Council for their consideration.

C. Seven Oaks Neighborhood

Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of the area; highlighting termini, signage, road width, grading and curvature. Mr. Herrmann explained that the City of Rock Hill owns and maintains this roadway. Mr. Herrmann stated that there is no current traffic data for this area. Mr. Brown then explained that he received concerns from the neighborhood regarding the with conditions of the in-roadway sign, and crosswalks on Seven Oaks Blvd.

Mr. Herrmann then summarized details from the staff assessment completed in the area. Mr. Herrmann provided an overview of mid-block crosswalks located at the intersection of Seven Oaks Blvd / Craven Hill / Essex Hall and at the intersection of Seven Oaks Blvd / Avalon Drive / Townsend Lane. Mr. Goolsby then stated that these crosswalks are mid-block crosswalks which historically have been concerning to Traffic Commission. However, this is an existing condition within a low-traffic residential area and the crosswalks are high-visibility or ladder style. Mr. Nealy agreed and noted that that it does appear that the striping of the crosswalks could be updated. Mr. Nealy then added that pedestrian signage is only existing in one of the two locations, if Traffic Commission recommended adjustments, it should include added pedestrian signage for the second location. Mr. Herrmann stated that if Traffic Commission recommended updating the crosswalks, staff would coordinate with Public Works to determine a cost estimate. That cost estimate could be provided at a future meeting.

Mr. Herrmann then transitioned to summarize another detail from the on-site assessment conducted by staff. Mr. Herrmann highlighted sight-distance and visibility concerns at the intersections along Shetland Lane where there driveways positioned in such a way that can block the view of drivers attempting to turn onto Shetland Lane. Mr. Herrmann wants to make a few more assessments with this area for visibility. Mr. Lindsay asked what can be done in this situation. Mr. Goolsby responded that staff could conduct a more thorough analysis regarding sight-distance and determine whether a three-way stop is warranted at these locations. However, given that it is an existing circumstance of the built environment in the neighborhood, significant changes like that may not be well-supported by residents. Mr. Goolsby stated that this should be avoided in future developments. Mr. Goolsby asked what the TC can do as a board regarding this issue. Mr. Lindsay stated that recommendations can be made to the Planning Commission or to staff for their consideration during Plan Review process.

The Traffic Commission then unanimously recommended staff to coordinate with Public Works regarding cost estimates for updating the pedestrian signage and crosswalks on Seven Oaks Blvd. Traffic Commission also unanimously recommended that staff work to avoid sight-distance and safety issues regarding driveway locations relative to intersections during the Plan Review process.

D. Delivery Vehicles

Mr. Herrmann explained that there have been numerous complaints in several neighborhoods throughout the city ~~about~~ regarding speeding by delivery vehicles. Mr. Lindsay stated that enforcement should be able to assist with this situation. Captain Grayson noted that in the past, RHPD has corresponded with companies directly. Mr. Goolsby asked if there were any ordinances that address this issue. Mr. Herrmann stated he could research and see if other communities have passed ordinances pertaining to delivery trucks and speeding, however he did not of any specific existing City Ordinance

pertaining to this item. Discussion then followed. Those in attendance agreed that a best first step would be to allow RHPD to correspond with delivery companies and increase enforcement. Traffic Commission could further discuss possible ordinance changes in the future if the issue persists.

The Traffic Commission then unanimously recommended RHPD communicate with delivery companies in the region and increase enforcement in residential areas.

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.

Mr. Herrmann noted that the October 1st deadline for the Traffic Calming Application Process is quickly approaching. Mr. Herrmann indicated that staff have met with multiple neighborhoods that have expressed interest in applying.

Mr. Herrmann then reminded Traffic Commission that York County Pennies for Progress will hold a public meeting for the City of Rock Hill to make requests for Pennies 5 on September 20th at 6PM at the Operations Center. Mr. Herrmann noted that the public is welcome to attend and provide input regarding projects.

5. Next Meeting:

Mr. Herrmann explained that the next meeting has been scheduled for September 20, 2023, at 10:00 AM in Council Chambers.

6. Adjourn:

There being no further business, Mr. Goolsby made a motion to adjourn. Captain Grayson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:22 AM.