

MINUTES
BLOOMINGTON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018 4:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 EAST OLIVE STREET
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Angela Ballantini, Ms. Jill Blair, Ms. Katherine Browne, Mr. Michael Gorman, Ms. Elizabeth Kooba, Ms. Kelly Rumley

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Maureen (Reenie) Bradley

OTHERS PRESENT: Ms. Diana Hauman, Ward 8 Alderman; Mr. George Boyle, City Attorney; Mr. Jim Karch, Director of Public Works; Mr. Kevin Kothe, City Engineer; Mr. Philip Allyn, City Traffic Engineer; and several members of the public.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Gorman called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

2. ROLL CALL: Mr. Allyn called the roll. With six members in attendance, a quorum was established.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

4. MINUTES: Reviewed and approved the minutes of the December 19, 2017 regular meeting of the Bloomington Transportation Commission. Ms. Blair motioned to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2017 meeting with correction of several minor typos. Ms. Browne seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the Transportation Commission unanimously via voice vote.

5. REGULAR AGENDA

A. TC-2018-01 – Proposed Routine Changes to Chapter 29 of the Bloomington City Code, “Motor Vehicles and Traffic”

Mr. Allyn summarized information from the agenda packet relating to each requested Section Modification:

1. Chapter 29: Section 145(a): Stop Signs

Modifications related to Section 145(a) pertain to creating an “all-way stop” condition at two intersections. Regarding Lincoln and Bunn, there was a gap in Lincoln Street between Bunn and Maple to the east. About 10 years ago, Lincoln Street was connected resulting in changes in traffic patterns and higher volumes at the intersection, which lead to the installation of all-way stop control at this intersection.

Staff observed a pattern of crashes over several years at the Lee and Olive intersection. Various options were tried such as pavement marking changes, improving sight distance, and installing new signs, but crashes did not decrease. Following implementation of the all-way stop, the number of crashes has dropped and the all-way stop is desired to remain permanently.

2. Chapter 29: Section 145(d): Stop Signs

Modifications related to Section 145(d) are not changes to the traffic control, but rather formalizing it with the installation of a stop sign.

Four locations, Granada/Olive, Seville/Olive, Northwood/Hedgewood, and Wedgewood/Hedgewood are “T” intersections. While state law specifies that traffic on the non-through leg of a “T” intersection is always required to yield the right of way to traffic on the through legs, there is a high occurrence of drivers at these intersections not yielding as required. Stop signs were installed to communicate proper intersection right of way laws.

The Wedgewood/Oakwood intersection is in the middle of the same subdivision. This four-leg intersection was previously uncontrolled, which required drivers to yield to the vehicle that arrived at the intersection first. Since Oakwood has longer straight sections to the north and south of Wedgewood, there developed a pattern of failure to yield to traffic on Wedgewood. Stop control was added on Wedgewood to increase the safety of the intersection.

The Wedgewood/Bunn intersection does not exist and is proposed to be deleted from the Code.

3. *Chapter 29: Section 148(a): Public Carrier Stops, Taxicab/TNC Stands*

This modification expands the Connect Transit transfer area. Buses are currently using the south side of Front Street between Center and Main. Additional space was needed on the north side of Front between Center and Madison to provide space for additional buses traveling westbound. This area is temporarily closed for sidewalk repairs, but buses will return to using this area in the Spring.

4. *Chapter 29: Section 149: Parking*

Beecher Street between East and Franklin was a through street that was removed and sidewalk constructed to better serve this portion of the IWU campus. The proposed parking changes on Beecher reflect the removal of this block of street.

The addition of a non-parking restriction on the west side of Bronco from Oakland to the south property line of 405 is the result of a business owner request. One of the other properties in this commercial area occasionally hosts festivals with high volumes of people parking along both sides of Bronco. This restricts access to other businesses, particularly for large delivery trucks. The request was reviewed by City Staff, a request for comment was sent to all property owners in the commercial subdivision, and the responses were analyzed. The only response received against the proposed parking restriction was from the owner of the property generating the high number of cars, who requested that the proposed no parking restriction be placed on the east side instead of the west side and for the entire length of Bronco. Staff reviewed this suggested modification, but found that it would not eliminate the blocking of access to the original requestor.

5. *Chapter 29: Section 153(a): Parking Spaces for Handicapped Persons on Streets, Municipally Owned Parking Lots and Private Parking Lots*

Modifications related to Section 153(a) pertain to specific requests from residents for a marked and signed public on-street Handicap Parking Stall. For the parking stalls to be added, Staff reviewed the requested location, verified that the requestor had a valid special license plate(s), a special decal or card allowing them to park in a marked and signed Handicap Parking Stall, evaluated the site to determine the safest and most efficient location, and installed the necessary markings and signage. The installed spots are reviewed by Staff periodically after implementation and modified or removed as needed. The proposed Code

modifications reflect new spots added, the modification/relocation of spots previously added, and the removal of spots no longer needed.

6. *Chapter 29: Section 156.5: Altered Speed Limits*

Hershey from Empire to 500' north of Washington is listed twice in the City Code and the duplicate listing is to be deleted.

The Ireland Grove modification relates to the renaming of the south part of Oakland to Streid Drive.

Mr. Gorman asked regarding Chapter 29: Section 145(d): Stop Signs, if there is a particular reason for installing stop signs rather than yield signs. Mr. Allyn indicated our internal policy has been to install stop signs rather than yield signs. Mr. Gorman indicated that he assumed that in a low traffic intersection, where the vast majority of the time there is no opposing traffic to stop for, better compliance would be obtained with yield signs since people are less likely to fully stop if there is no one else around. Why is the policy to use stop signs rather than yield signs, assuming yield signs are allowed by the MUTCD? Mr. Kothe indicated that the policy was changed several years ago. The sight distance requirements for yield signs are significantly greater than for stop signs. Yield signs typically work OK in new subdivisions where there is little landscaping. However, in older subdivisions, even those only 10 years old, landscaping is more mature and drivers can no longer see adequately to make the judgement required for a yield sign and stop signs are needed.

Mr. Gorman asked about Chapter 29: Section 148(a): Public Carrier Stops, Taxicab/TNC Stands and Connect Transit stops. Mr. Gorman indicated he would like to see all Connect Transit stops listed as places where parked cars can be towed. It would be difficult for people to use the bus if they are negotiating around parked cars blocking access to the bus. Why could we not list the regular bus stops? Mr. Allyn indicated the driving reason is that the stop locations tend to change as routes are adjusted and it would be hard to keep Code up to date with regular changes. Towing would not be able to happen if the specific spot was not listed. It would get hard to enforce the towing if the Code list is not always completely correct. The area we have specifically mentioned is a defined area with multiple buses stopping for a length of time. Parked cars significantly hinder the operation of the transfer area. If someone is parked illegally at an isolated bus stop, the impact to the operation of the bus will not be nearly as severe. In addition, it wouldn't be practical for the driver to wait for the car to be towed rather than continuing on the route. Mr. Gorman asked if it would be possible for the Code to state parking is prohibited within so many feet of the bus stop sign. Mr. Allyn will review the Code to see if it isn't already covered generically in the parking restrictions and check on whether towing would still be allowed or if only ticketing could be done.

Mr. Gorman asked about Section 149: Parking. What kind of parking situation does the Temple have during festivals? There appears to be ample parking in the movie theater lot behind the property. Is there an arrangement between the Temple and the movie theater for people to park in that lot? Mr. Allyn indicated that he wasn't aware of any arrangements between the two private businesses. Staff contacted all properties in the area and the only comment against the request was not concern for losing half a block of parking, but rather wishing to take the entire block of parking instead. Staff did not explore locating additional parking for the Temple because they did not indicate they needed more parking. Mr. Gorman suggested that Staff in general encourage people to share parking areas when there are large lots in the vicinity as this is good for density and ensuring adequate parking for everyone. Ms. Browne agreed that this is good in principle, but in this location the theater parking lot is deceptively far away and there is no sidewalk between the properties making pedestrian accommodations difficult. Shared parking may not be appropriate here. Mr. Gorman indicated that adding sidewalk and/or removing fence could improve pedestrian access and this was just something to keep in mind in future similar situations. Mr. Allyn

agreed that it would be helpful to suggest, but ultimately it would be an agreement between two private property owners and the City doesn't have control over how they share or don't share their private property. It would be something that we could suggest though if they were complaining about not having enough parking.

Ms. Rumley motioned that that the Transportation Commission recommend City Council Approve the proposed ordinance modifying Sections 145(a), 148(a), 149, 153(a), and 156.5 of Chapter 29 (Motor Vehicles and Traffic) of the Bloomington City Code. The motion was seconded by Ms. Browne. The motion was approved by the Transportation Commission unanimously via voice vote.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Gorman requested an update on the Fairview and Empire project discussed in November. Mr. Allyn indicated that the Open House was held on December 21, 2017 and was well attended. Written comments were received from 18 people, of which 14 were in support of the project, two were in support of the project with exceptions, and two were opposed to the project. With 16 of 18 in favor of the project, Staff is moving forward with the project as discussed at a previous meeting.

7. NEW BUSINESS: None

8. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 4:18 pm unanimously by voice vote; motioned by Ms. Kooba and seconded by Ms. Blair.

Respectfully,

Philip Allyn
City Traffic Engineer