



CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Bruce Walden, Chief Administrative Officer  
**FROM:** William Gray, Public Works Director  
Joseph Smith, Senior Civil Engineer  
**DATE:** March 19, 2007  
**RE:** Ordinance from Traffic Commission

Attached is an ordinance for City Council approval from recent action taken by the Traffic Commission at its March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The ordinance is for the establishment of speed limits on Race Street from Windsor Road to the south City limits just north of the Yankee Ridge Subdivision. A research of City records found that in 1979 the Traffic Commission approved the installation of 30 MPH speed limit signs from the south City limit to Florida Avenue. This was done because of the narrow one lane bridge over McCullough Creek on Race Street. Also state statutes allowed cities to post 30 MPH speed limits on streets under their jurisdiction and within the corporate limits. No engineering study was performed at that time to determine the proper speed but the bridge was a major factor in the need of a lower speed limit. Since that time the bridge has been widened and a bike path installed thereby eliminating hazards to motorists. The area today remains rural in nature and the 30 MPH zone was found to be inappropriate for the present conditions.

A speed study was performed at two locations on South Race Street and the average speed was found to be 38.5 MPH and the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was 44.25 MPH. The current violation rate (>30 MPH) was found to be 93%. These results clearly indicate the existing speed limit of 30 MPH is not appropriate and is not being obeyed by motorists. The speed study followed the policy developed by the Illinois Department of Transportation for establishing and posting speed limits. This policy takes into account the prevailing speed, accident rates, access control conflicts (number of driveways and side streets), pedestrian and bicycle activity, sidewalks, bike paths and parking presence in arriving at a recommended speed limit. It was determined from the results of the engineering study that the posted speed limit should be set at 40 MPH. This speed of 40 MPH will now be a proper and reasonable speed posting for the conditions present at this time. The County has already changed their portion of Race Street south of the City Limits to 40 MPH as a result of this speed study recommendation.

The Traffic Commission has considered and recommends the attached ordinance.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

Joseph Smith, P.E.  
Senior Civil Engineer

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

William Gray, P.E.  
Public Works Director

ADMINISTRATION • ARBOR • ENGINEERING • ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT  
EQUIPMENT SERVICES • OPERATIONS • PUBLIC FACILITIES

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SCHEDULE Q OF SECTION 23-64 OF THE URBANA LOCAL TRAFFIC  
CODE DECREASING STATE SPEED LIMITS IN CERTAIN ZONES

**(Race Street)**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS, as follows:

Section 1. That Schedule Q of Section 23-64, entitled "Decreasing State Speed Limits in Certain Zones" of Article V of the Urbana Local Traffic Code, is hereby amended by ADDING to that schedule the following speed regulations for a certain portion of Race Street:

From the south City limits to the south Windsor Road right of way the speed limit shall be forty miles per hour (40 MPH).

Section 2. That the Traffic Engineer is hereby authorized and directed to post the appropriate signs indicating the speed regulations set forth in this Ordinance.

Section 3. All ordinances, resolutions, motions, or parts thereof, in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby repealed.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall not be construed to affect any suit or proceeding pending in any court, or any rights acquired, or a liability incurred, or any cause or causes of action acquired or existing prior to the effective date of this Ordinance; nor shall any right or remedy of any character be lost, impaired, or affected by this Ordinance.

Section 5. The City Clerk is directed to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form by authority of the corporate authorities, and this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in accordance with Section 1-2-4 of the Illinois Municipal Code.

This Ordinance is hereby passed by the affirmative vote, the "ayes" and "nays" being called, of a majority of the members of the Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, at a regular meeting of said Council.

PASSED by the City Council this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAINS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION IN PAMPHLET FORM

I, Phyllis D. Clark, certify that I am the duly elected and acting Municipal Clerk of the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois.

I certify that on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, the corporate authorities of the City of Urbana passed and approved Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_, entitled "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SCHEDULE Q OF SECTION 23-64 OF THE URBANA LOCAL TRAFFIC CODE DECREASING STATE SPEED LIMITS IN CERTAIN ZONES (Race Street)," which provided by its terms that it should be published in pamphlet form.

The pamphlet form of Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_ was prepared, and a copy of such Ordinance was posted in the Urbana City Building commencing on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and continuing for at least ten (10) days thereafter. Copies of such Ordinance were also available for public inspection upon request at the Office of the City Clerk.

DATED at Urbana, Illinois, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

SEAL

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY CLERK



**PROPOSED 40 MPH SPEED LIMIT:  
RACE STREET FROM SOUTH ROW OF  
WINDSOR ROAD TO SOUTH CITY LIMITS.**



City of Urbana  
Public Works Dept  
Engineering Division  
Date: 03/20/07



URBANA TRAFFIC COMMISSION  
Tuesday, March 6, 2007

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dennis Roberts, City Council Member  
Mike Bily, Chief of Police  
Joe Smith, Senior Civil Engineer

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Shawn Crowley, Parking Enforcement  
William Gray, Public Works Director  
James P. Quisenberry, 209 Pell Circle

The meeting began at 4:03 p.m.

**Additions to the agenda:**

There were no additions to the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Dennis Roberts asked that under, "Additions to the agenda," the second sentence be changed to read, [Mike Bily requested that Item #4 be revised to read, "Deaf Child at Play" sign' instead of "Blind Child at Play" sign'.] Mike Bily moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Joe Smith seconded the motion. The Commission voted 3-0 to approve the minutes of the February 2007 meeting as corrected.

Bill Gray asked the Commission if they would move Item #2 ahead of Item #1 so the concerns of Mr. Quisenberry could be heard first.

The Commission agreed to change to order of the agenda.

**New Business**

**Item #2- Discussion of parking on Race Street, south of Florida Avenue.**

Joe Smith discussed some concerns that were brought before the Traffic Commission in 2003 regarding commuter parking on Race Street. He said that motorists traveling northbound on Race Street crossed over the center lane to enter into the left turn lane during the peak morning hours. He stated that during that time of the day seemed to be the only time that there was significant congestion. He added that parking was currently allowed along the east side from Meadow Drive to 1706 South Race Street, where the right, center and left turn lanes begin.

Mr. Quisenberry stated that he lived on Pell Circle and while traveling through the intersection on his commute to Champaign was bothered by the traffic backup that went almost to Meadow Drive. He mentioned that the only time he noticed the problem was around 8:00 a.m., Monday to Friday.

Dennis Roberts suggested that parking be eliminated in that area.

Mike Bily asked that the residents impacted by the parking restriction be notified.

James Quisenberry asked if a stop light was planned at that intersection.

Joe Smith stated that a stop light was not planned for the intersection. He stated that he would measure the area. He agreed that the residents should be notified and asked that the item be brought to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Traffic Commission meeting for discussion.

### **Old Business**

#### **Item #1 - Discussion of 40 mile-per-hour speed limit on Race Street from Windsor Road to southern City limits.**

Bill Gray spoke to the Commission to explain the process for determining appropriate speed limits on City streets. He stated that ignoring the process would make enforcement difficult. Mr. Gray said that the measures used by the Engineering Division to determine speed limits were fairly consistent across the country.

Mike Bily said that he agreed to the suggestion to lower the proposed 40 mile an hour speed limit to 35 miles per hour because he thought the Traffic Engineer could live with that change.

Dennis Roberts stated that he thought Mr. Smyth made compelling arguments that the speed limit should not be set at the recommended 40 miles per hour limit. He stated that Mr. Smyth felt that bicyclists would not be comfortable with traffic traveling at that speed. Mr. Roberts felt that the compromise of a 35 mile an hour speed limit seemed reasonable. He said that he was not sure why the 40 mile an hour speed limit would be consistent. He asked Chief Bily if enforcement of the 35 mile an hour speed limit would be difficult.

Chief Bily said that he did not have the resources to enforce the speed limit in that area except on a complaint basis. He stated that if a speeding concern was expressed, he would address the situation at that time.

Mr. Roberts stated that he felt the arguments were significant.

Mike Bily stated that if there were guidelines used to establish speed limits, then the Commission should follow the guidelines.

Bill Gray stated that setting speed limit too low created problems because motorists would begin to disregard all signage.

Joe Smith stated that he yielded to the two Council members at the February Traffic Commission meeting since he felt that they would only approve a 35 mile an hour speed limit when the recommendation went to Council. He said that he took into account the points mentioned by Mr. Smyth when recommending the 40 mile an hour speed limit.

Mike Bily suggested that approving speed limits established using scientific methods would be appropriate.

Mr. Gray stated that the Council had approved unwarranted signage in the past, but he wanted to make certain that the Commission understood the methodology for establishing speed limits—that it was based upon national standards.

Mike Bily asked why the speed limit change was brought to the Traffic Commission.

Bill Gray stated that a missing speed limit sign was reported and Champaign County asked for a speed study to determine what the signage should be. He added the study recommended a 40 mile an hour speed limit.

Joe Smith moved to approve the 40 mile an hour speed limit on Race Street from south of Windsor Road to the southern City limits.

Mike Bily seconded the motion based upon the outcome of the speed study conducted by the Engineering Division.

Joe Smith added that the report would be submitted along with the recommendation and would show the reasons for reducing the speed limit to 40 miles an hour, such as accidents, driveway approaches, bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Dennis Roberts stated that he felt the theory of basing speed limits on what the traffic was doing was flawed. He questioned why it would be appropriate to set a speed limit at 90 miles an hour just because the motorists were traveling at that speed.

Mr. Gray stated that there are many factors that are used to determine speed limits in addition to the speed of those using the roadway.

The motion passed 2-1.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

Joe Smith said that as conditions change on any roadway, speed limits may be re-evaluated.



**New Business**

**Item #3- Discussion of “Right Turn Only” lane for southbound traffic on Lincoln Avenue, north of Florida Avenue.**

Dennis Roberts mentioned that currently southbound traffic had one left-turn only lane and two through lanes.

Joe Smith stated that the City had received some requests to convert one of the through lanes to a right turn only lane. He noted that a large number of motorists in the far right lane use the lane to make right turns onto Florida Avenue. He added that the traffic patterns would support the recommendation.

Dennis Roberts confirmed that the right lane is basically used for turns onto Florida Avenue.

Joe Smith stated that he favored trying this configuration. He added that if it was successful, the traffic signal could give traffic a green arrow for right turns.

Joe Smith moved to create a right turn only lane for southbound traffic on Lincoln Avenue north of Florida Avenue.

Mike Bily seconded the motion.

Dennis Roberts stated that he thought the change would benefit the traffic pattern.

The motion passed 3-0.

This item does not require Council approval.

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

The next meeting will be held April 3, 2007 at 4:00 p.m. at the Urbana City Building, 400 South Vine Street, second floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Stiehl  
Recording Secretary