

URBANA TRAFFIC COMMISSION
Tuesday, October 4, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dennis Roberts, City Council Member
Joe Smith, Senior Civil Engineer
Eddie Adair, Chief of Police

OTHERS PRESENT:

Charlie Smyth, City Council Member, Ward 1
Debbie Ghrist, 1002 South Busey Avenue
Leslie Edmondson, 716 West Iowa Street
Ann Reisner, 905 South Busey Avenue
Ryan Thomas, 606 West Iowa Street

The meeting began at 4:00 p.m.

Additions to the agenda:

There were no additions to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes:

Joe Smith moved to accept the minutes as read. Eddie Adair seconded the motion. The Commission voted 3-0 to approve the minutes of the September 2005 meeting.

Item #1 - Discussion of speed study on Illinois Street.

Joe Smith discussed the results of a speed study conducted in an unmarked vehicle on Illinois Street near Webber Street. He stated that speeds for 60 vehicles averaged 26 miles per hour; the median speed was 26.5 m.p.h. He added that the maximum recorded speed was 36 m.p.h. and the 85% was 29.6 m.p.h. Mr. Smith concluded that there was not a speeding problem on this street.

Eddie Adair noted that the City had performed a speed study in this area before and had not found a speeding problem. He stated that the fact that the street was a brick street could give a perception of speeding because of the sound from traffic on the bricks.

Joe Smith said that westbound traffic was traveling faster since there were no parked cars on that side of the street to slow traffic.

Joe Smith moved that no further study was needed at this time.

Eddie Adair seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0.

Item #2 - Discussion of speed study on Green Street.

Joe Smith discussed the results of a speed study conducted in an unmarked vehicle on Green Street near Anderson Street. He reported that speeds were recorded for 56 vehicles with an average speed of 28.25 m.p.h. and a median speed of 28.4 m.p.h. He added that the maximum speed was 41 m.p.h. with the 85% traveling at 32.4 m.p.h. Mr. Smith said that the results were not unusual on a collector street. He stated that westbound traffic was faster since there were no parked vehicles on that side of the street.

Dennis Roberts asked if traffic speeds on this street could be further studied.

Chief Adair said that he would request a STEP detail be located on that street.

Charlie Smyth asked if a speed study could be conducted at time other than the time (3:20 to 3:50 p.m.) of the recent study to receive more information on traffic speeds on Green Street.

Dennis Roberts moved for STEP enforcement to be assigned on Green Street and a second speed study be conducted on Green Street.

Eddie Adair seconded the motion.

Chief Adair stated that the results of the number of violations from the STEP detail would be reported at the November Traffic Commission meeting.

The motion passed 3-0.

Due to staff commitments, the second speed study on Green Street will be conducted in Spring 2006.

Item #3 - Discussion of traffic concerns on Iowa Street at Busey Avenue.

Charlie Smyth stated that there were at least eight children living within this area of Urbana; three of which were under the age of eighteen months. He noted that there was heavy bicycle traffic and that several parents used this intersection to take their small children to the Child Development Lab on campus.

Leslie Edmondson stated that many children ride their bicycles in this area. She expressed concern about the possibility of increased traffic resulting from the addition of a parking lot on that would exit onto Iowa Street.

Charlie Smyth added that this area was a heavy parking area with its close proximity to campus.

Dennis Roberts questioned the possibility of adding stop signs on Iowa Street at Busey Avenue.

Joe Smith stated that the traffic volumes on Busey Avenue would not warrant the installation of stop signs on Iowa Street. He reported on the results of a speed study conducted on Iowa Street near Busey Avenue. He stated that the average speed was 23.3 m.p.h. with the median speed recorded at 22 m.p.h. Mr. Smith added that the highest speed recorded was 37 m.p.h with only two of the 32 vehicles traveling over the speed limit.

Eddie Adair stated that the speed trailer would be installed on Iowa Street in that area to encourage motorists to obey the speed limit.

Different solutions to reduce speeding were discussed.

Joe Smith stated that traffic calming solutions were being considered for Lincoln Avenue.

Charlie Smyth requested that more studies be conducted.

Dennis Roberts asked if a lower speed limit might be considered.

It was noted that a study would need to be conducted before doing so since the current speed limit is based upon the State speed limit for residential areas (30 m.p.h.).

Joe Smith said that he would install traffic counters which would record speeds and time of day for traffic on that street at a certain location. He added that he would ask for information regarding the number of traffic accidents at the intersection of Iowa Street and Busey Avenue. Mr. Smith will report the results of the study at the November Traffic Commission meeting.

Due to staff commitments, the second speed study on Iowa Street will be conducted in Spring 2006. Residents attending the meeting to discuss this item will be notified of the schedule change.

Item #4 - Discussion of parking restrictions on Maple Street between Michigan Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue.

Joe Smith stated that Michigan Avenue had recently been regraded. Since the street was only 22' wide, there was a request to restrict parking on both sides of the street. Mr. Smith did not want to restrict parking without polling the residents on that street.

He moved that the item be postponed until the residents can be notified of the proposed parking restrictions and allowed to express their opinions about the impact of the restrictions.

Dennis Roberts seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0.

This item will be on the November Traffic Commission agenda.

Item #5 - Discussion of parking restrictions on the west side of Cottage Grove Avenue between University Avenue and Park Street.

Joe Smith stated that Cottage Grove Avenue was 31' in width, which was enough width to provide one lane for parked vehicles and two lanes for traffic. He added that the existing yellow zones painted on Cottage Grove Avenue at Park Street were adequate to allow visibility for vehicles entering and exiting the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District facility. Mr. Smith recommended that no action be taken. He suggested that if the neighborhood wanted parking restrictions, they could circulate a petition and present it to the Traffic Commission. He said that the Traffic Commission would honor a petition if the residents requested that parking be eliminated in that area.

Joe Smith moved that no action be taken. He requested that Mike Little from the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District be notified of the decision and that he be made aware that a petition from the neighborhood requesting the restrictions would be honored if presented to the Commission.

Eddie Adair seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0.

City staff will notify the residents in this area to determine whether the parking restrictions will create hardships for them.

Item #6 - Discussion of parking restrictions on the south side of Florida Avenue in the Fairway Estates Subdivision.

Joe Smith explained that there are no houses on the south side of Florida Avenue in this area. He added that the parking restrictions would continue the parking restrictions already approved on Florida Avenue to the east of Smith Road.

Joe Smith moved to restrict parking on the south side of Florida Avenue between Kinch Street and Smith Road.

Eddie Adair seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0.

This item will go to Council for consideration.

Item #7 - Discussion of parking restrictions in the 300 block of East Crystal Lake Drive.

Joe Smith stated that this item was added to the agenda in response to a parking problem encountered by Parking Enforcement. He stated that there was parking along the south side of the street that conflicted with a driveway opening. He said that he would take pictures of the area and further discuss the issue at the next Traffic Commission meeting.

The motion passed 3-0.

Meeting adjourned at 5:09 P.M.

The next meeting will be held November 1, 2005 at 4:00 p.m. at the Urbana City Building, 400 South Vine, second floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stiehl
Recording Secretary