

ASHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
June 25, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Joseph Graf called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. in the Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

Commissioners Present: David Young, Joe Graf, Alan Bender, Danielle Amarotico, and Dominic Barth

Commissioners Absent: Corinne Viéville

Staff Present: Scott Fleury, Tami De Mille-Campos

Council Liaison Absent: Michael Morris

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Traffic Crash Summary

Young asked about the speed trailer. MacLennan said there are problems with the speed trailer but they are working on getting it repaired. Young said it is an effective tool so it would be nice to have it back up and running again. Fleury asked about the guard rail crash on North Main (near the pump station). MacLennan doesn't know anything about the details of that other than it was hit. MacLennan mentioned that it has been a busy week for crashes (3 in the past week or so) and they would see those on the next crash summary.

Graf thanked David for his service as Chair.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes: May 28, 2015

Barth noted the reference to Ashland Hardware should actually be Ashland Lumber.

Minutes are approved as presented.

PUBLIC FORUM

James Stephens,

Represent the Southern Oregon Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Association

He shared he is here because Ashland has a very serious parking problem and he would like the commission to consider a shuttle bus that can pay for itself and be self sustaining. He would like to see the commission consider a clean shuttle bus that operates on electricity. A bus that is profitable for the city, good for business and prevents congestion which does all of the opposite things that a parking structure does, which invites people to come into the town but does not solve the traffic or parking problem. He encourages the commissioners to go to their website soheva.net. He added, last week he went to Stanford University and they have run electric busses for the last few years. The busses are run by the department of parking and transportation. He will post an article written by their director of facilities on the Soheva website.

Andrew Kubik, 1251 Munson Drive

He wanted to formally lend his support for an electric trolley system in downtown Ashland. He has attended a few of the ad hoc committee meetings and has become acquainted with some of the issues/needs in the downtown. He has about 24 years of transportation planning experience and some of it involved circulation in downtown and how to mitigate the amount of single occupancy vehicle traffic. He added he has noticed in the past few months when

traveling around to tourist areas similar to Ashland that they all have a trolley system of some sort. He noticed they are a good marketing tool in addition to being a good transportation device. The hotels use them, City sponsors them, and merchant associations sponsor them. He went on to say he would like to see them possibly be red since the city kind of has a British theme.

Bender mentioned there is still a vacancy on the commission and anyone that was interested in transportation issues is welcome to apply.

Huelz Gutcheon, 2253 Hwy 99

He stated 80% of personal vehicles in 2050 will be electric which means the amount of electricity being used is more than we can handle. This means the best thing to do is make sure all new roofs are pointed the right way. He added, by 2020 all new residences in California must be zero net which is not that hard to do but the point is getting Ashland to get going on that sooner than later because of the larger situation. It turns out solar panels are way more important for transportation.

Robert Worrell, 491 N Mountain Ave

He shared he is concerned about what he is hearing about an expensive parking structure being built. As a taxpayer he doesn't like that idea. He does like the idea of a shuttle. He's been places where they have them and they work out pretty well. He also likes the idea of it being electric.

Young stated there seems to have been a trend in the public forum so he wanted to encourage those in attendance regarding the downtown parking to attend future downtown parking and circulation ad hoc committee meetings which occur the first Wednesday of each month from 3:30-5:00 in council chambers. He added there isn't a plan to build an expensive parking garage; the overall plan is still being worked on by the ad hoc committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Bicycle Education Program

Rachel Dials, Recreation Superintendant for Ashland Parks and Recreation and Egon Dubois, Bicycle Safety Instructor

Rachel shared each year they use the proceeds from the bicycle swap to help fund the program. They estimate about \$8200 a year in program costs, which includes instructor time as well as the maintenance of the fleet of bicycles. The bicycle swap netted about \$4500 in 2015 and they are asking the Transportation Commission for \$2000 so they can move towards breaking even on that program. She added the Transportation Commission has set precedence for this request since the 2011/2012 school year. They asked for the funds to be distributed before the current biennium budget ends.

Egon thanked the commission for their support of this program. He feels it is very important to have a program such as this one. It puts 4-6th grade students through an intensive traffic awareness program. The program caters to approximately 400 students per year. During the 2014/15 school year 315 students participated (the decline was due to Bellview elementary not participating because of a change with their extracurricular activities). Walker, Helman, John Muir and Ashland Middle school all participated. Willow Wind was invited to join but they haven't committed yet, although they are considering it. He added the program has been proven to work very well in no other way than by feedback from parents and the public.

Graf asked if this was for the current biennium or the next biennium. They are requesting it for the current biennium and Fleury said he thinks he can make that happen. He added the commission has two budget lines. One was the \$2,000 line item from the bicycle/pedestrian commission and the transportation/traffic safety commission had a line

item of \$3,000 so combined the Transportation commission has \$5,000 per year which comes from the Street fund. Graf asked how much has been spent so far and Scott replied \$3,000 was given to them last year and approximately \$1000 on sharrows and bike lanes.

Young/Bender m/s to provide \$2000 in funding, payable in the current fiscal year. ALL AYES.

Young stated he has had the pleasure of witnessing this program for more than 15 years. He added this directly fulfills one of the commission's mission statements.

Graf asked who pays the remaining \$1700 to break even and Rachel stated the Parks and Recreation department will absorb the rest.

Grandview Shared Road

Fleury stated when the TSP was adopted there were a number of streets that were dedicated in the TSP as shared roads. A shared road is essentially a shared space between vehicles, bikes and pedestrians. They allow for certain treatments and speed limit posting which is 15 mph. One of the streets designated as a shared road is Grandview. In order to move forward they have outlined a process that will include getting the community involved, specifically those residents adjacent to where the transformations will occur. They will have a traffic engineer look at the road and help design appropriate signage for the road and determine if any additional treatments are needed. He added he doesn't think every shared road will have the exact same treatment. There will be some unique characteristics and circumstances that will need to be analyzed for each shared road. They would like to bring in the traffic engineer and talk about what should happen on Grandview then bring that back to the commission for discussion and invite the residents to participate. Once finalized, they would take that to council for approval. He added one critical aspect they are looking at is enforcement by the Police.

Bender asked if there were certain criteria that Grandview had to meet in order to be selected. Young mentioned there is an illegal guardrail that was recently installed by the builder of a new home on Grandview. He said there has been some chatter about how that happened and there have been several complaints coming in to the department about the lack of safety for other modes of transportation.

David Chapman (previous Transportation Commissioner) shared why Grandview was selected. He said one of the uses of a shared road is when there is limited right of way. Grandview has limited right of way with not enough room for sidewalks/curbs/gutters etc. and it currently works as a de facto shared use road so it was one of the main candidates.

Fleury added it is also accesses the ditch trail and the trail system up there so it is heavily trafficked by pedestrians right now.

Young added he likes the idea of the neighborhood participation and making this a public process.

David Chapman said the white paper doesn't specifically address what should work for Grandview but he said early on when the Transportation Commission looked at this issue they looked at a document called "shared use streets, an application of shared use space to an American small town" and he suggested they take a look at it before this issue comes back to them. He added he was one of those upset about the guardrail on Grandview. One of the things he would like them to look at in the document is the notion of a pedestrian escape and the importance that it be factored in when this is designed. Part of the design should be a 4-5 foot path on one side of the road which the pedestrian could use as an escape which the guardrail doesn't do when it puts the pedestrian in the street.

N. Main Loading Zone

Fleury clarified there was a piece of this that was lost in translation when he was developing the staff report. He said there are two things going on; the downtown multi-modal parking committee is still working on a plan which includes the development of loading zones along the corridor for trucks. A few of the businesses near 88 North Main came in to have a side discussion about their parking issues for loading and unloading and so internally they went into a little bit of design and truck modeling to see what would work and what wouldn't work. He added what they had talked to Kim Parducci about was a full loading zone for a full truck (60 feet long). This was the long term look at what might work for the downtown. As far as short term what is going on right now is that trucks can double park and it's not illegal for them to do so. Right now Liquid Assets and the Spice Exchange have smaller vehicles (Sprinter vans) that come and park in the yellow zone while unloading which Diamond Parking has been citing them for doing. As part of the short term solution Mike Faught and David Young met with the owners of Brothers restaurant, Liquid Assets, and The Spice Exchange to talk about an interim solution. The interim solution would be to create a loading zone in the last space to allow them to temporarily load/unload. The overarching would be a full loading zone at a future date based on the outcome of the recommendation from the downtown parking committee.

Young said he and Mike had met with all of the business owners on the block (Brothers, Patricia Sprague Realty, Liquid Assets, Spice and Tea Exchange) and gave them a presentation on the current design plan for the corridor. He stated it was actually during that meeting where there was very little issue about the parking. It was a combination of Diamond Parking's enforcement when they really don't have big trucks parking there. He added they may have subsequently met with Mike and Scott but all they really cared about was 1 parking space.

Amarotico/Barth m/s to recommend the conversion of the first parking space at 88 N Main to a 15 minute loading zone. All AYES.

OLD BUSINESS

Geneva Park Site Distance

Fleury gave a brief overview of this agenda item from last June's meeting per the memo for this agenda item.

Amarotico asked what the tipping point was for the Average Daily Trips (ADT). Fleury answered he would have to delegate that to Kim to answer but to him if the ADT was to go up to 2,000-2,500 cars per day then that would be the tipping point for him. He added the speed is also a factor.

Fleury shared he would have to talk to Kim Parducci because he feels that if parking was removed thus creating more right of way, the speeds would probably go up. Right now you basically have de facto traffic calming with the on street parking.

Young said when the Commission looked at this last they asked about the sightlines. He asked if Fleury was satisfied with this not being an issue. Fleury answered yes; he has driven out of that driveway probably 30 times. Young kind of feels the issues that brought this to the commission were more related to user error than design flaws.

The commission's consensus was to not take further action on this item at this time.

FOLLOW UP ITEMS

United Way Bike Rack

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Action Summary

Traffic Crash Summary

Moved to beginning of the meeting for Officer MacLennan's convenience

Oregon Impact May Newsletter

COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION

Graf asked about moving the Traffic Crash Summary up in the agenda. The commission didn't feel it was necessary to move the agenda item but the Chair will use discretion at each meeting.

Young would like to see a few things as future agenda items: the queues at Mountain/Siskiyou. Fleury stated they did the slurry seal and then it got re-stripped, he thought the loops were replaced but he will check with ODOT and ask them to go and take a look at it. For those that are new to the commission he shared all of the signals in the city are the city of Ashland's responsibility but there is an agreement with ODOT and they repair/maintain them.

Next, the Ashland Creek Park has a sidewalk that ends about 150' before Oak St with no pedestrian crossing so you have a little section of sidewalk on the north side of Hersey and then there's a path that everyone uses but it's full of star thistle. He mentioned the East Hersey Street sidewalk project but he doesn't think that will happen for awhile. Fleury stated that is in progress right now so the potential to construct is either late 2016 or early 2017. This would be the complete connection which would tie into the existing sidewalk and go all the way up to Oak. He added there was initially a midblock crossing proposed at that location. During the initial discussion with Kim Parducci she wasn't very responsive to having a midblock crossing at that location and at that time Parks had no funds left in their budget so they couldn't do a full traffic analysis in order to be able to recommend one way or another. He added he could talk to Parks about having them clean up the brush because that is likely in the right of way and should be something they could manage.

And last, Young shared there has been an increased interest in trolleys amongst the public. He is in favor of the trolleys and he wonders if the Transportation Commission wants to take this up as an agenda item and take some action in terms of recommending something to Downtown Parking committee and then ultimately to Council. Amarotico stated she would need to learn more about it. Young shared some of the background on the trolley with the commission. Barth echoed the same as Amarotico and wondered what the route would be. Young answered the idea is the shuttle would run from exit 14 to exit 19. Bender said the parking issue is very seasonal and during the OSF off season parking isn't nearly as big of a problem. Young stated the parking consultants have actually found the parking situation to be year round.

Graf asked how detailed the commission thinks the recommendation should be. Young mentioned he had previously proposed a sub-committee for the downtown trolley and he still thinks it would be great to have a sub-committee of the downtown parking committee or even a sub-committee of the Transportation Commission. Graf asked Young what he is asking of the Transportation Commission in regards to this. Young answered he is asking for this to be considered as an agenda item. He also stated there is a groundswell of public interest. Graf said he would like to ask those in support if they would actually use the trolley. Part of the issue is that parking is free and if people have to wait for the trolley how many people would actually use it. Young simply wants someone to marshal the process. Bender said he doesn't disagree with that but he thinks we need to look at the argument just beyond the traffic engineering and take a look at what it is going to do for the city in terms of making this a world class city and makes the city a model. Fleury said if he were to bring this as an agenda item it would be that the Transportation Commission would like to make a recommendation to the Downtown Parking Committee that they put focused effort into looking at the development of a rubber tired trolley program in the downtown. Young would prefer the option of the Transportation Commission marshaling the process. Barth said he knows this is a big issue and wonders about

getting SOU involved. He loves the idea but he sees this as more of a tourist thing. He has only been here for about 4 years but he doesn't see a parking problem. Graff stated he hears that the commission isn't interested in getting down into the weeds but they are interested in discussing a recommendation as a commission. The consensus is the commission would like to spread this out over the course of two meetings; one meeting to discuss the trolley in general in response to the citizen comments and then another meeting depending on the outcome of the first meeting. The commission would like to get some background data regarding the trolley in advance of the meeting packet going out.

United Way Bike Rack

Graf mentioned he had skipped over this agenda item. Fleury shared an update with the commission per the memo.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

Commission Training

Public Outreach/Education-Oregon Impact Programs

Traffic Control Resolution Update

Encroachment Guidelines-Bike Racks

Traffic Crash Summary PD letter

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Tami De Mille-Campos, Permit Technician