

**ASHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
DECEMBER 19, 2013**

CALL TO ORDER: Chair David Young called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street.

Commissioners Present: Joe Graf, Shawn Kampmann, Craig Anderson, David Chapman, Corinne Viéville (arrived at 6:05 pm) and David Young

Commissioners Absent: None

Ex officio Present: Steve MacLennan

Staff Present: Scott Fleury, Mike Faught and Tami De Mille-Campos

Council Liaison Absent: Carol Voisin

SOU Liaison Present: Honoré Depew

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

PUBLIC FORUM

Bill Heimann, 647 Siskiyou Ave. He is here to support a speed zone study & movement of the 35mph sign on Ashland Street. He would like it moved across the other side of the railroad bridge. He stated that it is just past the crosswalk that is heavily used by children going to the middle school and at the other side of the bridge you have another crosswalk that is used to get to the bike path. He doesn't think that it is conducive to children's safety. The second thing he would like to talk about is the flashing light at the high school. He said it is inconsistent with the other flashing lights on Siskiyou. The constant flashing light doesn't follow the patterns. He also mentioned that the bump-outs previously motioned are going to affect the bicyclist flow in that neighborhood.

Fleury stated a fix is in the works for the flashing light at the high school. Parts will be ordered in order to complete the project in the spring.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes: November 14, 2013 and November 20, 2013

All Ayes. Approved as presented.

ACTION ITEMS

Orange Ave. Corridor Discussion

There was concern voiced regarding safety issues in that area (vehicular speeds). A speed and volume study was conducted by City staff and then Kim Parducci from Southern Oregon Transportation Engineering performed a site review and evaluated speed data which was measured on Orange Avenue near Drager Street by the Ashland Public Works Department after citizen complaints were received regarding speeders on Orange Avenue / Drager Street. Speed data from the days counted did not show any significant speeding occurring, but a field visit revealed sight distance restrictions and an intersection skew that contributes to what was reported (see attached Memorandum).

David Brabec, 440 Drager Street. Two years ago he bought the home & demolished it and has been rebuilding. He read a letter to the Commission which was submitted as public record (see attached).

The Commission asked what his suggestions are for solving these issues. He feels if we start with simple things like more signage, greater police presence etc. that would be a good start. He pointed out that other neighbors have suggested speed bumps although he isn't convinced about the effectiveness of that.

Douglas Falkner, 240 Orange Avenue. He used to live on Drager Street when they moved here 13 years ago (he submitted a letter as public record).

His impression of the study that was conducted is that the speed strips were not placed in the proper places to accurately reflect the cars speeding through the neighborhood. He thinks that the observations are more accurate.

His suggestions included greater police presence which would train people that if you are speeding you'll get cited. He stated that prevention is the key.

Kampmann asked if there is a certain time of day that the speeding generally occurs. Doug answered that it is normally during commute times during the winter months and during the summer is pretty much all day long. Kampmann also asked if this has been an ongoing problem or if this was a new problem may be attributed to new traffic patterns created by the road diet. Doug answered that it's been like this for quite a long time, at least 10 years. Chapman asked where he sees the biggest problem. Doug answered that Laurel has the most speeders. Drager doesn't have as much traffic but there are still people speeding.

Depew mentioned the "intersection repair" that was done in Portland in the Share-It-Square after responding to a tragic accident. It is an intersection that is painted and causes drivers to slow down by design because it is something unusual that catches their eye.

Ari Falkner, 240 Orange Avenue. He spoke to the idea of trying to create an active jurisdiction of police by disrupting people's patterns and making the police presence unpredictable.

Tom Pike, 248 Orange Avenue. He stated that he has lived there now for 6 or 7 years & prior to that he lived on Drager Street. He said it was apparent from the beginning that the front yard was not a safe place for their kids. He said it is troubling that the City said it was going to put out a speed trailer and after 5 months it still hasn't happened. He doesn't believe that the data collected accurately reflects what is going on out there. He would like to see the speed strips moved so that there is a more accurate reflection of what is going on. He isn't sure what the solution is but he has noticed that the narrower street on Orange Street doesn't get near as many people speeding. He isn't sure that slow down signs or children present sign is the right solution. He believes that a stop sign at Orange would be an inexpensive solution. He also likes the idea of the painted intersection that was mentioned by Depew. He would like to see that the data collected is reviewed further.

Steve MacLennan asked the group of neighbors about what speed they have observed people going. They said that they feel like most people are routinely going in excess of 30 mph. They also said that because there are no sidewalks it's almost like people see pedestrians as an inconvenience and try to hurry and get around them! Steve pointed out that Scott Fleury did get in touch with him about putting the speed trailer out there in August/September but the speed trailer was actually broken and out of commission. Now that it is repaired he will get it out there, he said there are a few neighborhoods in front of them.

The commission asked if the speed sign records the speed data. It does not record the speed. The speed study results do provide the speed on an hourly basis. There are definitely peaks throughout the day.

Scott Fleury spoke to the elements within the Transportation System Plan (TSP) related to this neighborhood. One of the priority projects in the TSP is continuing the sidewalks along the south side from Glenn Street through Orange to Laurel. They are looking to fund this project within this biennium through one of their safety improvement projects or within the next biennium, because it ties into Laurel which is a safe route to school. The other critical component that came out of the TSP which will have the potential to relate to speed is the planned bikeway. It was designated as a high priority project in the TSP for Orange to be a bike boulevard all the way through. With relation to speed Scott and the traffic engineer talked about house bill 3150 which was passed allowing local jurisdictions to reduce the speed by 5 mph if it meets the following criteria: the road authority determines that the highway has an average volume of fewer than 2,000 motor vehicles per day, more than 85 percent of which are traveling less than 30 miles per hour; and there is a traffic control device on the highway that indicates the presence of pedestrians or bicyclists. At such time the reduced speed limit would need to be posted and ground striping put down along with sharrows. He spoke to the skewed intersection and stated that in other locations in town there are curb returns and they have striped the double yellow on the center for about 50 feet which gives people the proper visual space to shoot towards. Please see the attached Traffic Engineer & staff recommendations. Faught stated that staff would want to have discussions with the neighborhood if there were going to be design changes within the neighborhood, such as additional sidewalks which could cause a loss of on street parking on one side. With regards to installing a stop sign, the Average Daily Traffic (ADT's) does not show that it meets warrants to do so.

Kampmann spoke to the visual solution that was previously mentioned by Depew. He personally thinks that is an effective solution as well, at least to start. One idea that he also had was the diagonal orange stripes on Orange for visual effect. He likes the orange color because it generally means caution and is a bold color to gain attention.

Chapman asked if Willow has the same problem. Fleury stated that the intersection is more aligned at Willow. The only stop signs are at the Railroad tracks and at Laurel.

Faught pointed out that there are opportunities for future traffic calming ideas in regards to sidewalks etc. but the recommendation from the Transportation Commission should be a short term solution while staff continues to work with the residents to find a more feasible long term solution.

Anderson stated that he lives in this neighborhood. He would like to see an investigation of a bulled out intersection. He feels that necking down the street could have some traffic calming.

Anderson/Chapman m/s to further investigate feasibility of a bulb-out intersection on the westside of Drager and Orange, support staffs recommendation to paint curb returns to increase sight distances and investigate the feasibility of a mini roundabout (traffic circle) at Laurel/Orange.

Discussion: Kampmann stated that the intersection at Laurel/Orange is offset and he doesn't think a mini roundabout would work. Graf likes the idea of sharrows. Young also likes the idea of the sharrows and the speed limit reduction.

Graf/Anderson m/s to amend the main motion and add sharrows, reducing the speed limit to 20mph and staff examine with the residents the idea of putting in rumble strips.

Discussion: Chapman would like to look at lowering the speed limit but he sees the need to adopt a future policy for how the speed limit reduction would be used.

All in favor. All Ayes.

Chapman/Graf m/s to amend the wording of the amendment and add that staff and the commission will look at a future policy for reducing the speed limit.

All in favor. All Ayes.

Chair Young went back to Public Forum since we had someone come in to speak.

Election of Officers

Fleury pointed out that we do have a new Transportation Commissioner, Alan Bender. He will be in attendance at the January meeting.

Faught stated that the term limit for the chair is 3 annual years. Young can be chair for one more year based on the codification.

Vieville would like to see Young continue as chair. She also stated that she will not be interested in stepping up to chair due to personal reasons.

Chapman/Vieville m/s to nominate Young as chair and Kampmann as vice chair. **All AYES.**

NON ACTION ITEMS

Walker Ave/Hersey St. sidewalk improvements

Project will bid in the spring of 2014. OBEC the consultant engineer is in the final negotiations with the Railroad for access & easements. The Railroad wanted to charge the City 50k for the crossing improvement so we put together a packet of similar projects & costs for crossing improvements to help finalize the deal. If they don't agree there is enough money in the budget to pay the 50k for the easement.

The Hersey Street prospectus was changed to match what was in the grant with sidewalk being constructed on one side of the street. Project has a 2 year window for engineering & construction.

Nevada St. Bridge Extension

They are going to be submitting an application for STP and CMAQ funds. The applications are due January 2, 2014. There is approximately 3 1/2 million dollars available through the MPO for this year for funding of approved projects.

Chip Seal CMAQ Grant Application

Over the years numerous residents who live along dirt roads have complained but there isn't enough interest to do an LID, so the chip seal is a good option. They've identified the roads that can be chip sealed. This meets some of CMAQ's requirements such as reducing pollution. There are approximately 20 dirt roads on the list. Fleury stated that this is our first time going after grant money for this type of project.

Downtown Parking Study

Anderson and Young are the two TC liaisons. Faught stated that he thinks this is a great group based on the first meeting. He is very excited about the consultants working on this project. Anderson agrees and is optimistic and excited about the process. Young stated that he is optimistic as well. He hopes everyone will work together to accomplish something. He thinks that everyone agrees that something needs to be changed.

FOLLOW UP ITEMS

Walker/Tolman bike path jurisdiction

Fleury said he isn't sure yet and he hasn't found anything in our records that states whose responsible for it. He emailed Jerry Marmon at ODOT because it is in their jurisdiction but he hasn't heard back from them yet. Right now nobody is doing anything with the repairs out there. He isn't sure if there have been any claims made against the City and will look into it.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Action Summary

Oregon Impact October and November Newsletter

Traffic Crash Summary

Depew stated that one of the bike accidents involved his friend on a bike with a vehicle turning right. The driver was cited.

MacLennan stated that there is a statute that states that a bicyclist cannot pass on the right if it is unsafe to do so. If the car ahead of you isn't turning right with their signal on then it is safe for the cyclist to pass.

Young requested that bike lane marking be added as a future agenda item.

COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION

Vieville asked if the lights at the high school will be audible as well. Scott said they will be the same as the rest of the system.

Depew asked whether there is any City wide policy to clear sidewalks during inclement weather. Faught explained that it is the responsibility of the property owner. The problem with the snow storm that we had is that it snowed and then froze. So unless it was cleared right away then you would have needed tools to remove the ice from the sidewalks. Fleury stated that as a property owner you need to be careful with what you do/put on the sidewalks because you could damage the concrete and have to pay to replace it.

Anderson asked if Normal Avenue was going to be brought back up for further discussion. Faught pointed out that the commission stated that they didn't want to revisit it which is reflected in the approved minutes.

Chapman would like to see Grandview added as a future agenda topic. There is a ditch on the side that people got caught in during the snow storm. He thinks that there needs to be flags sticking up or something to indicate the ditch. He also asked when it was going to be changed to a shared road.

Young asked Officer MacLennan about the video that was posted of him on the internet where he was citing a cyclist for riding in the street. The person cited purchased the dash cam footage from the officer. It will be going to court in January.

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

Transportation Safety Public Outreach
SOU Multi-Modal Future
Lithia and 3rd Intersection Analysis
Iowa St. 20mph zone
Siskiyou Blvd. Signal Timing
Project financing and funding mechanisms

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Tami De Mille-Campos, Administrative Assistant

Ashland is a hillside community. Most people go to school, work and run errands by first getting in their car. Its what happens when you build a house on a hill. Nice view but few ways of getting up that hill without a motor. This is not the case in Quite Village. Quite village is built in a part of Ashland where it is flat. We ride our bikes to the store. We ride our scooters to school. Our kids play ball in the front yard because they know if it goes in the street its not going to roll 5 blocks down the hill. This is why my neighbors and I have decided to live here. They are not the most beautiful homes in Ashland, they are not the biggest homes, they are not the most expensive but they are in an area where we know our kids can ride to the park, scoot to school, and run over to a friends house. There are over 30 kids from 19 different families within a block of my house. In the past year, on two separate occasion's two different children where hit by cars. Thank God by some miracle none were seriously injured. One was riding his bike the other one was parked, at a corner, on the correct side of the street and hit head on. I had already spoken to the city 5 months prior to the second accident and nothing had been done. I was told the city would put up a portable speed sign to remind drivers of how fast they were going, it didn't happen.

I have neighbors who have called the police to report repeat offenders speeding and running the stop signs. Compared to the hillside streets our streets are very easy to drive but people bringing their kids to school from above the boulevard or driving through our neighborhood to get to I-5 don't realize the amount of children in this area. They think a wide street allows them to drive fast, with one eye on their phone. They've been chased down by my neighbors and told

gets parked on it won't work. But then two weeks later they moved the strip to a place where cars could be parked but they put it less than 30 yards from the only stop sign on the whole street. I called and e-mailed again but they never moved the strip. If you want to know the maximum speed people are going on our street the strips should be placed where people can actually go fast.

In the end, I want the city to be held accountable to its responsibilities. This has been made public record and if something happens again they cannot act unaware of the current situation. I have seen no changes by the city since my first report over 9 months ago. I have seen my own child hit by a car in that time, I have seen numerous cars cut corners, drive at unfathomable speeds, and neighbors confront some of those drivers with words best described as unkindly. One neighbor who walks her kid to the preschool on Willow describes the walk as "scary."

My wife is an emergency room doctor and if you need an in depth description of a child after they have been struck by a vehicle she can do it for you. She can handle telling a family that an elderly loved one has passed, she can handle the drunk taking a swing at her, she can handle the rape kits, the blood pouring out of a throat as she tries to stick a tube down in it so they can breath. But when she has to inform a family the child is dead, that she has done everything she can but it wasn't enough, that she knows they will dig a hole and put their kid in it. That's when she isn't the same again. She can't be the same again. I'm now standing in front of you with the signatures of my neighbors, I'm showing you how many kids live within a block of this intersection, and I'm asking you to do something to calm down the

to slow down but they have never been seen being pulled over and cited for speeding or running a stop sign.

Longtime residents of quite village say traffic has gotten much worse. Drager used to be a dead end street and Orange used to be a dirt road after crossing Laurel. They say the traffic has gotten much worse and so has the speed of the vehicles. The traffic engineer's proposal to paint street corners orange to "increase visibility" demonstrates the inability of the city to understand our situation. Those trailers were put there by the residents to make people slow down when they turn down Drager from Orange. Since it is angled (down hill) like the on-ramp of a freeway, if my child decides to ride his bike out of the driveway onto the street he would be hit by the oncoming traffic no matter how careful he was. This neon colored yellow man with the red cap and orange flag is placed out on the corner when my children are in front of the house but he has been routinely run over by people taking the corner too fast. This happens when no cars are parked on the corner and the "visibility is increased." If you increase the visibility of that corner, you will increase the speed that people take it at. So I placed the contractors trailer there (with cones-like this one-which regularly get hit) while they build my house but the house is almost done and the trailer will soon be gone.

As for your speed data you collected I find both studies inaccurate and here is why. When the first strip was placed I immediately notified Scott by phone and e-mail about its placement. It was too close to the 90-degree turn of Glenn onto Orange; nobody could speed at that section. The person I was directed to informed me it's the only place it could be because people could not park there and if the strip

traffic. Because if a parent has an option of protecting their child or letting someone get to WHEREVER faster, they are going to protect the child.

We have a Moral Justification to protect our children.

You have a legal obligation to enforce the law.

If you are good servers of our community, then you also have a moral justification to act prudently, effectively, and with the knowledge that you are doing the right thing. I hope this problem is quickly taken care of and if whatever you try, if it doesn't work, then I expect you to try something else.

David Brabec
440 Drager St
12/19/2013

Introduction:

Hello my name is Douglas Falkner. I live at 240 orange avenue, the first house from on Orange after the intersection. For a year I used to live on Drager st, three houses from the corner at Orange.

I want to thank all of you for being here tonight to listen to our comments on this very important safety issue

By way of background, I am trained emergency medicine physician. When my family moved here 13 years ago, we had two children age 3 and 5. Over the course of time we have seen traffic in our neighborhood increase dramatically, along with an increase in speeding and ~~un~~^{reckless} driving. Compared to ~~then~~^{now}, the overall situation has gotten much worse ~~these days~~. *13 yrs ago when we first moved here,*

As many of you know, Orange Avenue, West of Laurel, is an extension of a what I have heard called a substandard intersection.

Orange Avenue is also an extension of Glenn Street off of North main. It feeds Laurel street in the Helman School district, which we discovered is a federally designated safety route.

If anyone would simply spend just an hour observing traffic patterns on our neighborhood streets, especially Orange Avenue, during heavier traffic times, this is what you would see: Speeding along Orange and Laurel, running stop signs at the intersection of these two streets, racing around the corner from Laurel to Orange westbound, and careening, yes careening, around the corner to enter Drager Street off of Orange, all frequent, common, daily occurrences.

Orange Avenue is a cut through for many commuters to access N. Main or Hersey street, so traffic in our neighborhood has been getting heavier year by year, even moreso with the new developments being built just now. For example the Helman Springs and Billings Ranch developments, which have no other easier route to North Main than going right through our neighborhood and using Orange Avenue.

People these days all seem to be in a hurry to get somewhere, while they talk on their cell phones and ignore the speed limits in our neighborhood. Even when we signal and plead to speeders to SLOW DOWN, please, they often go all the faster, they even gun it in apparent spite, sometimes yelling obscenities and make poignant hand gestures in our direction, if you know what I mean.

Our kids are certainly at risk from drivers in our neighborhood--, already 2 children have been hit by cars. As you heard before, fortunately neither child was badly hurt. But all pedestrians are at risk, not just our kids.

Do we really need to wait for a tragedy before we take effective preventive action on this issue. As an emergency physician I know that an ounce of prevention in this

Worth

case of speeding through our quiet family neighborhood is worth not a pound, but ^{of cure} rather its all the anguish and tears ^{that will be} shed when, god forbid, a child's life is irrevocably lost when traffic is not calmed in a neighborhood like ours. When a pedestrian is killed by a car, there is simply no taking it back. It is just too late.

We in our neighborhood feel that it is the obligation of the city traffic commission and law enforcement personelle to hold dangerous and irresponsible drivers in our neighborhood accountable and to make sure that they obey the traffic laws, notably stopping at the intersections, slowing down for turns onto side streets, and driving within safe speed limits.

We appreciate the traffic study you performed, but know that it doesn't accurately represent the true picture—we see people speeding and driving recklessly all the time. While we know the study was well-intended, the placement of the measuring strips were simply not in the positions where maximum speeds and unsafe driving behavior are generally observed.

What we are asking for is something quite simple: traffic calming. While we may not be traffic experts, it seems logical that putting up several highly visible "Slow Children Signs" and having a regular, sporadic hidden presence of a traffic police officer giving real tickets to violators, just like they do on Hersey Street, would alert, and train drivers that this is not an area where you can speed and drive recklessly without paying the price. We all know that a few sting operations of ticketing drivers alongside proper signage works!

Let's give it a try and see if we can not only calm the traffic in our family neighborhood, but also prevent the unspeakable horror and unnecessary accidental deaths of our vulnerable children and their parents.