

DES MOINES TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

December 11, 2007

MINUTES

The Des Moines Traffic Safety Committee met at 7:30 a.m. on December 11, 2007, in the Conference Room of the Traffic and Transportation Division, lower level of the Armory Building, 602 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines, Iowa 50309. Those members in attendance were:

Mark Barkley
Mary Conlow
Gary Fox
Carl McPherson

John Morrissey
George Robinson
Bob Saf
Jim Windsor

Members Absent: Jack Beardsley, Mary McBride, and Kevin Williamson

Staff Present: Mike Ring, Jennifer Rouse, Mark Garrett and Michelle Schomer

Guests Present: Charles F. Manning, 612 Scandia, ***New Business Item #1***
Phillip Beener, 607 Scandia, ***New Business Item #1***
Mary and Danny Ferguson, 606 Scandia, ***New Business Item #1***
John Piert, 4500 SE 6th, ***New Business Item #1***

CHAIRPERSON MARK BARKLEY CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 7:30 A.M.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Minutes of November 20, 2007 Meeting

MOTION was made by Bob Saf to approve the minutes as mailed; seconded by Jim Windsor. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Status Report

Staff presented the recommendations approved at the Special Traffic Safety Committee meeting held in November regarding modifications to traffic calming in the area of University between 41st and 42nd Streets to the City Council on December 3, 2007. By Roll Call No. 07-2397 on December 17, 2007, the third and final reading was approved and the modifications were implemented.

3. 41st / 42nd Streets Traffic Calming—3-Way Stop at 42nd and Forest

At a special November 20 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee approved a series of recommendations regarding traffic calming issues on and around 41st and 42nd Streets between University and Forest Avenues. These recommendations were subsequently presented to the City Council, which approved the recommendations and the first reading of the enabling traffic ordinances at their December 3 meeting.

The Committee tabled consideration of a staff recommendation to install a 3-way stop at the intersection of 42nd Street and Forest Avenue, to the December meeting. The Committee also approved a staff recommendation to continue working with representatives of the residents and businesses in this area to consider additional, or perhaps different, long-term traffic calming actions. Council approved both of these additional recommendations.

The recommendation to install a 3-way stop at 42nd and Forest has not had opportunity for very much public input, and no consensus has been determined in favor of or opposed to the all-way

stop. The intersection of 42nd and Forest has a very favorable crash history, so the recommendation for a 3-way stop does not have urgent safety implications. It was recommended that this issue, along with other potential traffic calming measures, be brought to a meeting with area representatives in January, with a future recommendation presented to the Traffic Safety Committee.

Staff recommended that the recommendation for a 3-way stop at the intersection of 42nd Street and Forest Avenue continue to be tabled to a future meeting.

MOTION was made by George Robinson to approve the minutes as mailed; seconded by Bob Saf. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Status Report

There was no Other Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Petition for Parking Restriction—Scandia Avenue between SE 5th and SE 7th

Gary Fox presented this item as follows:

The City received a petition from residents in the vicinity of SE 7th Street and Scandia Avenue to prohibit parking on the north side of Scandia from SE 5th to SE 7th. Related to this petition, they have requested removal of the stop sign on Scandia at the “T” intersection with SE 7th.

Scandia Avenue currently allows parking on both sides of the street, with some limited corner clearance restrictions. The street is not wide enough for two-way traffic where vehicles are parked on both sides of the street. In addition, due to the terrain and development pattern in this area, Scandia is the only east-west street that connects to SE 5th Street, which is the main north-south collector street. Therefore, Scandia is used by the neighborhood to access SE 5th Street. Staff supports the restriction of parking on the north side of Scandia to improve vehicle access to the neighborhood, snow removal operations, emergency vehicle access to the neighborhood, and mail delivery.

A stop sign was installed for Scandia at the intersection with SE 7th Street during the construction project that closed the SE 5th and McKinley Avenue intersection this past summer. It is common traffic control to have no stop signs at low volume residential “T” intersections. Staff concurred with the request to remove the stop sign at this intersection to return to the traffic control that existed for many years.

Staff recommended that parking be restricted on the north side of Scandia Avenue from SE 5th to SE 7th, that appropriate corner clearance parking restrictions be provided on the south side of the street, and that the stop sign be removed at the intersection of SE 7th and Scandia.

All directly-affected residents present at the meeting for this item were against the petition requesting parking restrictions.

MOTION was made by George Robinson to remove the stop sign but to leave all parking as it is currently ordinance; seconded by Bob Saf. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Legal Opinion—City Motorcycle Helmet Law

Gary Fox presented this item as follows:

At the October 9, 2007 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee requested information regarding the ability of the City of Des Moines to pass legislation requiring minors to wear helmets when they are passengers on motorcycles. The City's legal department prepared a legal opinion on this matter and determined that if the City did pass such a law, it would not be upheld by the Courts since it would be preempted by State law. The full legal opinion is attached.

John Morrissey suggested that a letter be written to the State voicing the Committee's safety concerns. All Committee Members should sign the letter. It was suggested to e-mail a draft of the letter to everyone.

Bob Saf believes wearing motorcycle helmets will not reduce the number of accidents, but would reduce the severity.

This item is for informational purposes only.

3. "Open Mike" Discussion by Committee Members

Carl McPherson began discussion in regard to a request for signals at MLK and Prospect.

Gary Fox said the request for signals at MLK and Prospect has been studied in the past and that signals were not warranted. In addition, there have been improvements made in the area of Prospect Park in recent years that allow an alternate access. Gary also explained that the City of Des Moines currently has well over the national average for signals in place, and signals at MLK and Prospect are not currently recommended.

Jim Windsor wondered if a "trip light" could be constructed at MLK and Prospect.

Gary Fox said a \$200,000 signal at MLK and Prospect is not currently in the City's budget.

Bob Saf said that instead of school buses going west and out onto MLK, they go east through Prospect Park and end up on Hickman.

Mary Conlow asked that our Committee do better at notifying citizens. Should follow a set notification procedure each and every time and use parliamentary rules at the meetings we hold.

Mark Barkley asked about the Indianola Connector discussion at the City Council meeting on Monday night.

Gary Fox said the requirement in Iowa Law regarding notification that eminent domain may be exercised for a trail project before any planning is done on the project led to controversy at the meeting. The discussion at City Council was mostly a procedural discussion. City staff will hold another public meeting to explain the project to residents and other interested parties, and will receive additional public input regarding bicycle and pedestrian features.

These items were for discussion purposes only.

4. *Other New Business*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Schomer
Recording Secretary

DES MOINES TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

DECEMBER 17, 2007

OFFICIAL VOTE COUNT

	OLD Item 1		OLD Item 3		NEW Item 1	
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Mark Barkley	X		X		X	
Jack Beardsley						
Mary Conlow	X		X		X	
Gary Fox	X		X		X	
Mary McBride						
Carl McPherson	X		X		X	
John Morrissey	X		X		X	
George Robinson	X		X		X	
Bob Saf	X		X		X	
Kevin Williamson						
Jim Windsor	X		X		X	