



City of Blaine

Traffic Commission

May 2, 2023 | 6:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

The Traffic Commission is an advisory body to the City Council. The Commission's function is to review neighborhood traffic concerns on local streets, define issues, review alternatives and cost, hold neighborhood informational/public hearings and make recommendations to the City Council. For each item the Commission will receive reports prepared by City staff, hold neighborhood information hearings and take comment as needed and discuss and act on each issue/concern. The City Council will make all final decisions on these matters.

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Oath of Office**
 - 3.1. 2023-173 Welcome new Traffic Commission Member
Sponsors: Cathy Sorensen, City Clerk
4. **Approval of Minutes**
 - 4.1. 2023-170 Approval of September 6, 2022 Traffic Commission Minutes
Sponsors: Stefan Higgins, Assistant City Engineer
5. **Open Forum for Citizen Input**
6. **Adoption of Agenda**
7. **Public Hearings/Comments**
8. **New Business**
 - 8.1. 2023-174 Police Department Traffic Update
Sponsors:
9. **Adjournment**

**UNAPPROVED
CITY OF BLAINE
TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
September 6, 2022**

The Blaine Traffic Commission met in the City Hall Chambers on September 6, 2022. Chair Haas called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

ROLL CALL – 2022 TRAFFIC COMMISSION

Members Present: Chair Haas; Vice Chair Wold; Commission Members: Ford, Hill, Voeller and Wifler.

Members Absent: Commission Member Skarich.

Staff Present: City Engineer Dan Schluender, Assistant City Engineer Stefan Higgins, Sergeant Nate Hatanpa

Also Present: Adjunct Member Isabel Hobot.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Item 3.2 – May 3, 2022 Traffic Commission Minutes

Commissioner Wold requested a change on Page 3, in the fourth paragraph requesting the name be spelled correctly.

Motion by Commissioner Wold to approve the minutes of May 3, 2022, as submitted. Motion seconded by Commissioner Ford. The motion passed 6-0.

OPEN FORUM FOR CITIZEN INPUT

James Goltart, 3100 128th Avenue NE, stated over the past few weeks he has spoken to Commissioner Wifler regarding the speed of traffic along Harpers Street. He explained he was encouraged to begin a petition which led him to create a change.org petition three weeks ago. He reported he had over 100 signatures and 1300 views for his petition. He read the petition in full for the record. He stated his

neighborhood has been granted the use of radar speed signs, which were effective in addressing the high rate of speed until they are removed. He commented there have been four separate fatal accidents within his neighborhood and noted speed was the contributing factor in these accidents. He discussed how important it was to reduce the speed of traffic in order to improve pedestrian safety. He requested the Traffic Commission address the concern of speed along Harpers Street for the safety of the neighborhood and its children.

Chair Haas reported the traffic commission would be addressing this concern at this meeting.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Ford to adopt the September 6, 2022, Traffic Commission Meeting Agenda, as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hill. The motion passed 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMENTS

7.1 Review Traffic Control on Harpers Street

Mr. Schluender explained staff has been fielding calls and emails from residents with concerns about the speed of traffic along Harpers Street. He reported the majority of the concerns were with speed of traffic. He noted the 85% remains four or five miles over the speed limit and the Blaine Police Department continues to conduct educational enforcement campaigns on the corridor. He stated 85% of those that were pulled over lived within three blocks of Harpers Street, which made this a neighborhood issue. He explained a letter was sent to the neighborhood identifying the condition or concern on the corridor and asked for their help with addressing this concern.

Mr. Schluender understood the speed of traffic along Harpers Street has been a concern for some time. He reported staff has considered installing stop signs in the past, however, this was not recommended to the city council because warrants were not met. He noted the Blaine Police Department was successful in receiving two additional feedback signs and would be installing these signs on Harpers Street for a full year.

Commissioner Hill asked if these signs would be on a post. Mr. Schluender reported this was the case. He noted if the signs assisted in lowering speeds, permanent signs would be considered. He commented further on where the two signs would be placed along the corridor.

Chair Haas reported the residential speed limit throughout the city of Blaine was 30 miles per hour, whether or not a sign was posted. He explained this was the speed limit per state statute.

James Goltart asked if the recent speed count also calculated the number of vehicles. He stated he was curious to know if the volume of traffic was increasing along with the speed of traffic. Mr. Schluender stated he would have to further review the data, and could provide this information to Mr. Goltart and the commission.

Motion by Commissioner Hill to recommend the City Council install two feedback signs along Harpers Street per staffs recommendation. Motion seconded by Commissioner Wifler. The motion passed 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

8.1 – Review Traffic on Cloud Drive

Mr. Schluender reported staff continues to field complaints for Cloud Drive between Radisson Road to West Lake Boulevard. He reviewed the data staff has collected for the past several years with the commission. He noted the 85% percentile is zero to two miles over the speed limit. He explained the most recent counts were taken several weeks ago. He indicated it was his goal to take data again in a couple weeks, now that school was back in session. He stated the speed data was not completed with a trailer, but rather was done with the tubes. He discussed the options that were available to the residents that live along Cloud Drive, noting speed humps were not an option at this time. Staff explained the would collect more data in September and recommended the police department continue periodic educational enforcement campaigns along this corridor.

Commissioner Wifler asked if this corridor was discussed seven or eight months ago. Mr. Schluender stated this matter was discussed at a Zoom meeting with residents.

Nick Putz, 2475 Cloud Drive NE, stated this matter was discussed in October 2021. He explained he was told someone from the City would be contacting him regarding speed humps but he never heard from anyone. He reported this led him to follow up with staff mid-summer. He commented on how the state of Minnesota passed new legislation in 2019 that would allow cities to lower their residential speed limit to 25 miles per hour. He indicated he started a petition for this. However, after reading a traffic study, he learned that posting speed limit signs at 25 miles per hour would not assist in lowering the speed of traffic. This led him to request speed humps. He reported his street had a speed trailer several weeks ago and commented on how this led to some erratic behavior from drivers. He stated he has also had drivers drag racing down his street. He anticipated a lot of the speeding traffic were passing through the neighborhood and were not residents that lived on the street. He requested the commission consider putting additional traffic calming measures in place to assist with lowering the speed of traffic along Cloud Drive for the safety of the residents and children in the neighborhood.

Chair Haas stated speed humps were not common in Minnesota.

Mr. Putz asked what could be done to assist with lowering the speed of traffic along Cloud Drive. Chair Haas reported education and enforcement would be key.

Mr. Putz stated he was new to the neighborhood and explained he rarely saw a cop along Cloud Drive. He inquired how his concerns, and the concerns of his neighbors were being addressed by the police department.

Chair Haas asked what information the police department had regarding the violators. Sergeant Hatanpa stated the violators could be cutting through the neighborhood to the Lakes. He understood the neighborhood had more traffic when school was in session.

Chair Haas encouraged the police department to do more enforcement and education along this corridor. He asked if Cloud Drive was an MSA roadway. Mr. Schluender stated Cloud Drive was not designated an MSA roadway.

Janan Putz, 2475 Cloud Drive NE, requested the city consider posting a radar sign along Cloud Drive to assist with addressing the speed of traffic.

Sergeant Hatanpa reported he understood the volume of traffic along Cloud Drive has increased. However, he noted he could not have an officer posted along Cloud

Drive for long periods of time every day. He stated it was difficult for him to have officers posted at the right time along this corridor to catch the speeders. He reported the majority of traffic using this roadway were going the speed limit.

Mr. Putz stated he was interested to see what data was gathered from the speed tubes in September.

Ms. Putz reported she was considering moving out of the city of Blaine in order to get away from the traffic and safety concerns that were occurring along Cloud Drive. She expressed frustration with the fact the city could not make this roadway and the speed of traffic a priority.

Commissioner Hill stated he drove down Cloud Drive often and he encouraged residents to consider posting a sign in their yard that says “Drive Like Your Children Live Here”. Mr. Putz reported two people on the road have posted these signs.

Commissioner Ford explained the commission was hearing the concerns of the residents along Cloud Drive. He stated he was a new member of the commission and noted this could be looked into further. However, he noted there were people who broke the law by speeding down city streets.

Mr. Putz encouraged the traffic commission to consider temporary speed humps for Cloud Drive. He asked that the residents along Cloud Drive be allowed to make this decision. He questioned why the residents along Cloud Drive couldn’t make a request for 25 miles per hour along their roadway if that was what they wanted.

Chair Haas discussed the advantages and disadvantages of speed humps. He reported enforcement and education would continue along Cloud Drive.

Mr. Schluender explained staff was not making any suggestions because staff has not identified a speeding issue on this corridor. He understood there were some drivers with bad behavior, but the majority of drivers using Cloud Drive were adhering to the speed limit. He suggested a trailer be placed along Cloud Drive along with the tubes in order for another round of data to be collected. He recommended this data be collected and that the commission revisit this matter at a future meeting.

Mr. Putz supported this recommendation.

Motion by Commissioner Hill to recommend driver feedback trailers be posted along Cloud Drive, followed by speed tubes in the next three weeks, with an AM/PM educational enforcement campaign for the Blaine Police Department. Motion seconded by Commissioner Voeller. The motion passed 6-0.

8.2 – Crosswalk at Jefferson Street and Bengal Drive

Mr. Schluender stated staff received a resident from several residents that a crosswalk be installed on the east side of Jefferson Street onto Bengal Drive. Staff reached out to the school district and was waiting to hear back from their staff.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Schluender introduced Assistant City Engineer Stefan Higgins to the traffic commission.

Chair Haas congratulated Loren Hill who was awarded the 2020 TZD Engineering Steward Award for his outstanding work addressing traffic fatalities in the state of Minnesota.

POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Sergeant Hatanpa stated the Blaine Police Department has been targeting traffic at 119th Avenue from Club West Parkway to Radisson Road. He reported Lever Street north of 125th Avenue was another area of concern. He explained 117th Avenue from Ulysses Street to Jefferson Street has been another area for enforcement, now that school was back in session. He stated he looked forward to having the speed feedback signs installed along Harpers Street.

NEXT MEETING

Chair Haas stated the next Traffic Commission was scheduled for Tuesday, October 4, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Ford to adjourn the Traffic Commission meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hill. The motion passed 6-0. Adjournment time was 7:24PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Guenther
Minute Maker Secretarial



City of Blaine Staff Report

File Number:

Agenda Date

May 2, 2023

Status

In Control

Traffic Commission

File Type

Guest Speaker

New Business -

Agenda Item # 8.1

Police Department Traffic Update

Background

Police Department Traffic update

Recommendation

Attachment List

None