



City of Blaine

Traffic Commission

June 4, 2024 | 7:00 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.** 2024-210 Welcome New Traffic Commission Member
Sponsors: Cathy Sorensen, City Clerk

4. Approval of Minutes

- 4.1.** 2024-211 Approval of September 5, 2023 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.** 2024-212 Police Department Traffic Update
Sponsors: Stefan Higgins, Assistant City Engineer

9. Adjournment



City of Blaine

Traffic Commission

September 5, 2023 | 7:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The Blaine Transportation Commission met in the City Hall Chambers on September 5, 2023. Chair Haas called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

2. Roll Call

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

Members Absent: Commissioner Ombe

Staff Present: Assistant City Engineer Stefan Higgins
Sergeant Zach Johnson

3. Approval of Minutes

- 3.1. 2023-412 Approval of May 2, 2023 Minutes.
Sponsors: Stefan Higgins, Assistant City Engineer

Motion by Commissioner Wold to approve the minutes of May 2, 2023, as submitted. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hill. The motion passed 4-0.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

There were no comments.

5. Adoption of Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Wold to adopt the September 5, 2023, Traffic Commission Meeting Agenda, as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hill. The motion passed 4-0.

6. Public Hearings/Comments

None.

7. New Business

- 7.1.** 2023-383 Authorize Parking Restrictions on Quincy Boulevard Cul-De-Sac
Sponsors: Stefan Higgins, Assistant City Engineer

Assistant City Engineer Higgins stated staff was provided a petition signed by seven of the nine (78%) property owners on the Quincy Boulevard cul-de-sac asking that the cul-de-sac be signed no parking from 10PM to 7AM daily, year round. A letter was sent to all adjacent property owners that this item will go before the Traffic Commission at the September 5, 2023 meeting. Installation of regulatory stop, no parking and speed limit signs requires authorization by the City Council. The regulatory signs proposed meet warrants established in the Minnesota Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices and/or Minnesota State Statutes. This proposed action will prohibit parking on the Quincy Street cul-de-sac, located on the west side of Quincy Street between 111th Avenue and Madison Street, from 10PM to 7AM daily, year round.

Commissioner Wifler inquired if vehicles were being parked in the cul-de-sac for days at a time. Mr. Higgins stated this was what the petitioners were stating, but noted he did not have a way to verify this information.

Chair Haas requested staff speak to the regulations regarding parking on city streets. Mr. Higgins reported parking was allowed on all city streets, unless it was signed "No Parking". He explained parking was now allowed on city streets during the winter months from 2AM to 7AM. He noted cars are supposed to be moved every 48 hours.

Chair Haas asked if vehicles were being moved every 48 hours. Sergeant Johnson reported CSO's and officers go out and occasionally check for violations. It would appear that vehicles and trailers have been moved and there was no way to tell if items were or were not being moved in this cul-de-sac.

Vice Chair Wold questioned if vehicles and utility trailers had to be parked on an improved surface. Mr. Higgins explained all parking in this cul-de-sac was being done on the paved surface.

Commissioner Hill asked if all seven petitioners lived on the cul-de-sac. Mr. Higgins reported this was the case.

Commissioner Wifler inquired if vehicles were being parked in front of all seven houses that have signed on to the petition. Mr. Higgins deferred this question to the petitioners. Sergeant Johnson stated it was his understanding vehicles were being parked too close to the stop sign, vehicles were obstructing other residents from having guests because there was no guest parking and occasionally they would be obstructing driveways.

Commissioner Wifler questioned if there were any fire hydrants in the cul-de-sac. Mr. Higgins stated he was uncertain.

Chair Haas opened the meeting for public comment.

Miguel _____, 11148 Quincy Boulevard NE, stated he disagreed with the proposal. He reported he was the owner that had been targeted. He indicated this was impacting his family and his family had not received a warm welcome from the neighbors. He commented further on the harassment he had received from his neighbors. He further discussed how the neighbors were wasting city resources. He stated he has 25+ police reports from the past three years and explained he has not had a single violation, nor has he received a single citation. He explained he was following city ordinance with his vehicles and he was using the city street as it was intended. He indicated one neighbor had gotten all of the other neighbors against him and continually called the police on him. He stated he was originally from Ecuador and became a U.S. citizen in 2006. He reported he has a big family with four kids and two of his children still visit on the weekends. He discussed how he could not expand or widen his driveway because it was already shared with a neighbor. He reported he was a hard-working, tax-paying citizen and he believed his family had equal rights to exist in this neighborhood without being targeted by the police. He feared that, as a minority, his voice would not be heard. He quoted a statement from the Chief of Police noting cul-de-sacs were public streets and nobody owns it except for the City and it was to be used by residents.

John _____, 11148 Quincy Boulevard, stated he disagreed with the proposed "No Parking" on the Quincy Boulevard cul-de-sac. He reported the Chief of Police stated cul-de-sacs were public and were to be used by city residents. He explained the city has over 400 cul-de-sacs. He stated he was an American citizen who paid taxes and he had the right to park on public streets like anyone else. He commented on his experiences while parking in the cul-de-sac noting his tires had been marked, even when only parked for several hours in the cul-de-sac. He reported he had copies of 26 police reports for the Traffic Commission to review and reiterated that not a single violation was issued. He indicated the neighbors were misusing 911. He discussed how his enclosed work trailer was the main reason this started. He understood Mr. Young does not like to see it. He explained he used the enclosed trailer to house his work tools and equipment. He noted this trailer was only parked in the cul-de-sac one day this year and there were still 10 calls made to the police. He then reviewed a police call that was made by his neighbor on June 10. He indicated his family has seven people and each person has their own vehicle. He stated the proposed parking ban was directed at his family. While he understood Mr. Young does not like to see vehicles parked near his home, it was allowed. He stated he spoke with the neighbors last summer about parking in the street and none had a problem with it except for Mr. Young. He commented further on how Mr. Young has tried to intimidate his family and told him to get ready for a lawsuit. He reported the issue before the commission was not about parking, but rather was ongoing harassment and discrimination. He provided the commission with a copy of the 26 police reports and encouraged his neighbor to stop wasting 911/police resources. He asked the commission to properly analyze the petition before making a decision.

Erin Cortez Blackford, 11136 Quincy Street, explained she and her husband did not sign the petition. She anticipated a lot of her neighbors did not read the petition closely. She reported she has lived in Blaine for the past two years. She urged the commission to not

pass this "No Parking" petition. She explained the city already had a no parking ban for the winter months. She did not believe it was necessary to ban parking from 10PM to 7AM all year. She feared the parking ban would inconvenience all neighbors who hoped to host guests from out of town. In addition, she feared that this parking ban was targeting or harassing one specific family. She understood the family in question was a minority family that parked one or two cars in the cul-de-sac during the summer months. She reported these vehicles were typically in front of her home and she did not object to them being parked legally on the cul-de-sac. She found it troubling and concerning that her neighbor that lived at 11124 feels he has the right to dictate who comes and goes, stay and park in her neighborhood. She explained her husband was Hispanic and she was very uncomfortable with how her neighbors were being treated. She stated she was questioning if she should start family living in Blaine. She indicated she was a teacher at an International Charter School in Minneapolis where she teaches 7th grade social studies. She stated one of the biggest themes for her classroom was citizenship and how to practice good citizenship. She discussed how her class defined citizenship and noted her class of 7th graders was practicing better citizenship than some of the adults in her community. She reiterated that she has not been inconvenienced by her neighbors and she did not understand why one cul-de-sac in Blaine, out of hundreds should be posted "No Parking". She indicated this petition was being brought forward to target one specific family and should not be considered. She urged the commission to practice good citizenship today by refusing to pass this petition.

David Young, 11124 Quincy Boulevard, stated he brought this petition to the city. He noted six of his neighbors signed off on the petition and agreed the parking in the cul-de-sac was concerning. He explained he was not concerned with the fact one home had five licensed drivers, but rather that the son had five or six cars that he was not paying for insurance or tabs on. He understood that most of the time the cars are moved within 48 hours, but not always. He commented on the discussions he had had with the father and son. He discussed how the truck and trailer were a problem in the past, but this has changed now to an excessive number of vehicles that were not properly licensed. He reiterated that seven of the nine houses on the cul-de-sac signed the petition, which should say something.

Chloe _____, 757 99th Circle NE, reported her father lived at 11148 Quincy Boulevard NE. She believed it was a shame she could not see her dad because one of the neighbors objected. She did not believe it was for the neighbor to say how much money her brother did or did not make, or for him to judge. She explained the neighbor was the one wasting taxpayer money by calling the police on the cars. She explained she loved visiting her family and she thought it was a shame someone had to create such a problem over some cars.

Chair Haas closed the meeting for public comment.

Vice Chair Wold explained he lived on a cul-de-sac in Blaine. He indicated he did not go calling the police every time he was irritated by a neighbors vehicle. He encouraged the neighbors to work through this issue.

Commissioner Wifler indicated he was inclined to believe this was not really a parking issue.

Commissioner Hill agreed.

Chair Haas discussed how a "No Parking" restriction would impact all of the families on this cul-de-sac. He stated it was very uncommon for a cul-de-sac to have a no parking ban.

Commissioner Hill questioned if vehicles with expired tabs could park on a city street. Sergeant Johnson reported his CSO's and officers are not going to cite a car that is parked on the street with expired tabs. However, they could be cited on private property as a junk vehicle, but there was more that went into this.

Chair Haas asked if there was a regulation in place that spoke to the number of vehicles a property could have in a driveway. Sergeant Johnson stated the city did not have a regulation in place, rather city code required vehicles to be parked on improved surfaces.

Motion by Commissioner Wold to recommend the city council deny the no parking restriction on Quincy Boulevard cul-de-sac located on the west side of Quincy Boulevard between 111th Avenue and Madison Street from 10PM to 7AM daily, year round. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hill. The motion passed 4-0.

7.2. 2023-384 Police Department Traffic Update
Sponsors: Zach Johnson

Sergeant Johnson provided the Commission with an update on traffic. He discussed the efforts of the traffic unit from this summer, noting eight covert traffic studies were completed. In addition, the speed trailers have been deployed to 28 different locations in the city. He explained today was the first day of school, which meant officers were conducting back to school safety patrols within the school zones. He reported the city received another TZD grant from the State of Minnesota and this grant would fund an officer from October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024. He stated the department took possession of an unmarked traffic truck and he hoped this vehicle would be on the streets in the next few months. He commented on the parking concerns that were occurring around Centennial High School. He discussed the work the department was doing with the school bus company to install cameras to ensure drivers that violate the stop arm were cited. He noted he would be participating in discussions with Anoka County Highway regarding 109th Avenue and Radisson Road. He stated he was in the early stages of requesting the State complete a speed study on Lever Street north of Main Street.

Vice Chair Wold asked how staffing levels were within the Blaine Police Department. Sergeant Johnson explained the department was short on officers at this time, but had the full support of the city council. He noted the department was actively seeking qualified applications for the openings within the department.

Further discussion ensued regarding how the bus violation video evidence process has been streamlined.

Vice Chair Wold requested the City place information regarding the plans for TH65 on the city's website. Sergeant Johnson encouraged residents to Google Thrive On 65 for the most up to date traffic plans for TH65.

8. Old Business

None.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Hill to adjourn the Traffic Commission meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Wold. The motion passed 4-0. Adjournment time was 7:59PM.



City of Blaine Staff Report

File Number: 2024-212

Agenda Date	Status
June 4, 2024	
In Control	File Type
Traffic Commission	Presentation

New Business -

Agenda Item # 8.1

Police Department Traffic Update

Background

Recommendation

Attachment List

None