MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC, BICYCLE, & PEDESTRIAN COMMISSION

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2019, 5:30 PM
CITY HALL, ROOM 203 (COUNCIL CHAMBERS)

A. ROLL CALL.

1. *Members:* Chairperson Matt Kuepers, Vice Chairperson Daniel Theno, Ald. Craig Stevens, Lieutenant Brad Strouf, Charles Karow, Brighid Riordan, and Ray Smith

Present: Daniel Theno, Brad Strouf, Ray Smith, Brighid Riordan
Present and Not Voting: Matt Kuepers
Excused: Charles Karow, Ald. Craig Stevens

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.

1. Approval of the Monday, February 11, 2019 Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission meeting agenda.

Moved by Commissioner Daniel Theno, seconded by Commissioner Ray Smith to approve the agenda for the Monday, February 11, 2019 Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission meeting. Motion carried.

Yes- Brad Strouf, Brighid Riordan, Daniel Theno, Ray Smith
No- None
Abstain- None

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

1. Approval of the Monday, January 21, 2019 Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission meeting

minutes.

Moved by Commissioner Daniel Theno, seconded by Commissioner Ray Smith to approve the minutes from the Monday, January 21, 2019 Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission meeting. Motion carried.

Yes- Brad Strouf, Brighid Riordan, Daniel Theno, Ray Smith
No- None
Abstain- None

D. REGULAR BUSINESS.

1. *Referred Back from Study:* Consideration with possible action on the request by Ald. De Wane to install a left-turn signal on Alpine Drive to East Mason Street. (Ald. Corpus-Dax - District 2)

Moved by Commissioner Daniel Theno, seconded by Commissioner Brighid Riordan to optimize the morning arrival and afternoon school release traffic signal timings at East Mason Street and Alpine Drive using the lowest possible cycle length while maintaining the existing signal displays. Motion carried.

Yes- Brad Strouf, Brighid Riordan, Daniel Theno, Ray Smith
No- None
Abstain- None

2. *Termination of 90-Day Trial Period:* Remove the NO PARKING zone on the south side of Mather Street from a point 50 feet west of Gray Street to a point 100 feet east of Gray Street.

Moved by Commissioner Ray Smith, seconded by Commissioner Daniel Theno to remove and adopt by ordinance the NO PARKING zone on the south side of Mather Street from a point 50 feet west of Gray Street to a point 100 feet east of Gray Street. Motion carried.

Yes- Brad Strouf, Brighid Riordan, Daniel Theno, Ray Smith
No- None
Abstain- None

3. *Termination of 90-Day Trial Period*: Remove the NO PARKING zone on the north side of Mather Street from Gray Street to Roy Avenue.

Moved by Commissioner Ray Smith, seconded by Commissioner Daniel Theno to remove and adopt by ordinance the NO PARKING zone on the north side of Mather Street from Gray Street to Roy Avenue. Motion carried.

Yes- Brad Strouf, Brighid Riordan, Daniel Theno, Ray Smith
No- None
Abstain- None

4. *Termination of 90-Day Trial Period:* Establish and adopt by ordinance a NO PARKING BIKE LANE zone on both sides of Mather Street from Gray Street to Vroman Street.

Moved by Commissioner Ray Smith, seconded by Commissioner Daniel Theno to establish and adopt by ordinance a NO PARKING BIKE LANE zone on both sides of Mather Street from Gray Street to Vroman Street. Motion carried.

Yes- Brad Strouf, Brighid Riordan, Daniel Theno, Ray Smith
No- None
Abstain- None

5. *Termination of 90-Day Trial Period:* Establish and adopt by ordinance a NO PARKING zone on the south side of Mather Street from a point 50 feet west of Gray St to Gray St.

Moved by Commissioner Ray Smith, seconded by Commissioner Daniel Theno to establish and adopt by ordinance a NO PARKING zone on the south side of Mather Street from a point 50 feet west of Gray St to Gray St. Motion carried.

Yes- Brad Strouf, Brighid Riordan, Daniel Theno, Ray Smith
No- None
Abstain- None

F. INFORMATIONAL.

1. Next meeting: Monday, March 18, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in Room 207.

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

G. ADJOURNMENT.

1. Adjournment of the current Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission meeting.

Moved by Commissioner Ray Smith, seconded by Commissioner Brighid Riordan to adjourn the current meeting of the Traffic, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Commission. Motion carried.

Yes- Brad Strouf, Brighid Riordan, Daniel Theno, Ray Smith
No- None
Abstain- None

VERBATIM MINUTES

- Item under A, roll call. Members present, we've got listed who's here & who's not.

- [Speaker] You're active if you want to name.

- Alderman Theno. Alderman Smith and Alderperson Riordan. And Brad Strouf and recording secretary.

- [Speaker] Just a clarification, those would be commissioners.

- Oh just commissioners. Is Brad not signed, you wouldn't need to identify Brad then?

- [Speaker] No he's a member. Lieutenant.

- Didn't mean that wrong there. You're here. Okay, B, approve the agenda. Approval of Monday February 11th, 2019 traffic bicycle pedestrian commission meeting agenda.

- [Speaker] So moved.

- Second.

- Motion been made. Seconded. All in favor?

- [Crowd] Aye.

- Can you hear a voice then if they're not... We've got a small group here.

- [Speaker] Probably not, but we're able to track, for the record.

- Pretty small.

- [Speaker] I think we'll be fine.

- I don't know if you even have it on the mic, for public record.

- [Speaker] I did not but if we would like to go Dan, real quick. Let me see, two over. Dan did you want to..

- Move approval.

- [Speaker] And then...

- Second.

- All in favor.

- [Crowd] Aye.

- Motion carries. Item C, approval of the minutes of the Monday January 21st 2019 Traffic Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission meeting minutes. Do I hear a motion to approve?

- Move approval

- Second.

- Motion has been made & seconded. All in favor?

- [Crowd] Aye.

- Motion carries. D, regular business referred back from study, consideration with possible action on the request by Ald. De Wane to install a left turn signal on Alpine Drive to East Mason Street.

- Okay this comes to me. Now I need to change the, think it goes to podium and send live. Okay. So I'm gonna direct your attention to the monitors. And item in question is the intersection of East Mason Street and Alpine Drive. And very close to the I-43 East Mason Street interchange, it's the first signal to the west. Um, question for the commissioners, I'm not sure if you saw, but I did attach the full report to the agendas and agenda items, so I was hoping that you had an opportunity at least to read the recommendations and conclusions, but for the sake of the meeting I'm going to give a reader's digest of the study itself. So we've identified the location, and East Mason Street is a principle arterial in the city. Alpine Drive is categorized as a collector, urban collector street. So I'm gonna get back up to the map here so you can see the intersection a little bit closer and I just want to identify the lane configuration so everyone's aware of how the signal is laid out and how it operates. So East Mason Street has two through lanes in each direction, in the eastbound and westbound directions. Also has dedicated left turn bays, which are also signalized with permissive protected left turn arrows, and then there are dedicated right turn lanes on East Mason Street. Moving to Alpine Drive, there are, it's hard to see from this image, but, they're, it's actually demarcated as two lanes. Through movements can take place out of any of those lanes, so with the left turn obviously is from the inside lane, and right turn would be out of the curb lane. It's identical on both North and South approaches for the intersection. So the reason this is here, is that there have been some complaints relative to the delay time, the queue lengths, during school release times, and as you may be aware, Edison Middle is north of the intersection, and a little further away in and west would be East High School, or Preble, sorry. That's an error in the reports so I want that to go on record that the report notes East High School but it's supposed to mean Preble High School. So the signal phasing would be as

follows: the beginning of the cycle, basically the beginning of how the displays are portrayed would be you have leading lefts on East Mason Street, so you have a green arrow, followed by a yellow arrow, and then it goes to a circular green indication for the east and west movements. As those terminate, then it's a circular green for both north and south bound for Alpine Drive. So pretty common phasing for what you'd see for an intersection such as this. Now it operates in two different modes. It operates in what we call a coordination mode, or cord mode, during most parts of the day so the morning peak, the afternoon peak, and the pm peak, will operate in cord mode, meaning that there is a fixed cycle length and that allows for certain time windows for the side streets to get greens otherwise it defaults to the green on the main line. That allows East Mason Street to have what we call progression along there. It minimizes the number of stops for people on East Mason Street. Now the exception of that during the day would be for those school peaks. So during the morning peak which is seven to eight, and from 2:45 to 3:45, actually that's what the analysis periods would have been but the signals operate slightly before and after that. We try to accommodate the peak, and the peak just happened to be 2:45 for the school release and 7 to 8 for the morning to accommodate for that and it goes into what we call free mode, and free mode it actually goes out of cycle length from the rest of the system and responds more on a dynamic level based off of the traffic volumes that are present. So if there's more traffic on say the side street it's going to accommodate it a little bit more, it'll extend the time, there'll be minimum times, it'll extend it, and then there will be a defined maximum period that if it's at saturation it eventually has to cut it off and put the green back over to Mason Street. So in this case we do have those two peaks set up. We have the, or it's programmed into the controller, what we call a max 2 timing. Anyway getting onto how we evaluated the intersection, we used what's called level of service methodology, which really is a quantitative measure of delay. So the higher the delay is, the lower of a grade you're gonna get. So think of like in school, A, B, C, D, E, F. If you get an A, that means you got almost, very free-flow laminar type flow for your traffic, versus F which is complete breakdown and failure. So the report does describe what each of these levels are and what it would feel like to the motorists, and then defines it as the, in terms of seconds per vehicle. We call that controlled delay. So I set it up as five different scenarios or five different options. The first being the existing option, which I think is quite obvious what that would be. It is what we have out there today. During this afternoon peak, I guess I'll back step one sentence here. 2:45 was the higher the two peaks for the schools, just because that's usually when you have the exodus or the release time, you usually have more of a concentrated peak. So only the 2:45 to 3:45 time period was actually evaluated. So existing option, basically just looked at the way it's programmed at 2:45 and evaluated the 2nd option which I called the optimized existing timings option, was I used the basic timings within the controller, that's like your mins, your max, your extension times, things like that under the free mode, and had software optimize the timing. The third option, similar to that, I call optimized low cycle, and that is basically kinda wiping out some of the basic programming and kinda starting over. Going with some lower min times and then just wiping out the max time and having the software optimize. Fourth option would be what the request was actually for. For evaluating, adding that left turn arrow. So that involves changes to the traffic signal displays, would result in an improvement project to have those added. It also means the lane configuration would have to be changed in that southbound movement, and in this case the way that we would do it would be to change it from a through left, through right configuration for those two lanes, it'd be a dedicated left turn lane and then all of those through movements get put into the curb lane. There are other ways to do it, but based off of experience they're much less efficient so I didn't even explore those options. This would be the closest you would probably get. And then the last option is really no different than that, southbound lead, but then the optimized low cycle. I'm taking out, wiping out a lot of those basic timings and starting from scratch and having the software do the optimization into a lower cycle length. So the results are basically contained here in figure four. And

you can see the options are listed right here. And so to make things easy, what you see bolded and highlighted are actually what were the best outcomes. So the optimized low cycle, in essence, pretty much won in every category with the exception of, which probably makes sense, would be that southbound lead low cycle option. And I'm just gonna scooch down, these are the timings, not that it's really relevant to our discussion, but I just wanted to show you how the software optimized the timings so you can kinda see a breakdown of how the timings would result. One thing I wanted to add was that if an improvement project would happen, it would probably run in the realm of about 150 to 300 thousand depending on what we would find for condition of underground network. Also the timing of the project itself, if it gets concentrated towards the end of the year, prices go up. So it would be an expensive endeavor to do, and any time you go under, have a larger project like that you have to bring certain equipment up to standards. ADA law, things like that. The crash history as you can see from what we have here, is small but I did want to include that as part of this, because although the request has everything to do with long wait times and delays and things like that, I think safety can trump that sometimes, and if we would have a safety issue in this area, obviously that would be part of the discussion. Good news is that after a 5 year review of that I did not find any. I didn't find any crashes where adding a southbound left turn arrow would have prevented the crash. Were there crashes with the southbound, northbound movements? There were a few, there wasn't really all that much. Predominant crash history was east and west movements, which really should be no surprise, that's where the most traffic is, East Mason Street. But the good news is that I didn't find anything that it would be corrected by adding the arrow. So conclusions. The existing option, not the best. The second option, again, not the best. The third option as you saw from figure four, does result in having the most favorable results. And then the low cycle option with the southbound arrow does have its benefits. It does result in lower delay times, but I'm gonna go back to this table because what I thinks critical to see here is the comparison between the optimized low cycle and southbound lead. So you see all of these, you have the northbound eastbound westbound and the intersection all operating the best. But adding that southbound arrow, does result in the best delay, I shouldn't say best delay, but the devil's in the details as they say. If you look at the level of the service, the level of the service is identical. So you may have slightly higher delay values, but the average motorist is probably not going to be able to notice much of a difference. You know you got 23.8, so you've got 24 versus 32 seconds of delay here. That's gonna be minor in the respect of the motorists that's experiencing it. Level C is level C, and so you'll see that the actual levels of service do not change between them. I think that's very important, especially when you start looking the other way, when you start looking at the northbound, you have all levels of service B here and it gets downgraded to levels of service C over here. Eastbound and westbound do though happen to operate at about the same levels of service. The other thing I thought that was interesting was that when we use some of the same timing parameters, we actually get a decrease in the level of service down to D for that northbound movement, so. Getting back to,

- I guess just from the existing level of service, only a couple of Cs were turned to Bs, I mean that's pretty insignificant right?

- It can be insignificant, however I think the biggest thing to note here is that reducing the cycle length actually has, basically the feeling it is for the motorists' is that it has faster turnaround at the signal, you know you're not waiting as long. Now the thing that's good with this is that during the peak hours, when you have that concentration of the school release, you're not getting that large queue back up with the lower cycle length, and they're able to go and process three, four, five vehicles and then let East Mason go and then go back to the side street just for that peak time. Now the thing that's nice for the free operation is that time doesn't need to be used, or there are no vehicles

present, it won't even bring up the phase or it will truncate it, and put time back on to East Mason Street. So the efficiencies I think you'll actually see with a lower cycle length. No doubt in my mind and these numbers, you're going from level of service B, or from C to a B, that should be noticeable, although you look at the delay numbers, the difference between them may be similar to what you see between some of these other options but it's really that level of service and how the motorist is interpreting the signal operation in their delay time, I think ultimately what is most important. Because when people call me they're not going, uh I've sat, well some of them will say they've sat there for five minutes, but you know, we know that's not true, but you know they'll be like, I can't believe how long I sat there. It's, you know, they're talking on a delay kind of thing, I'm talking about the quality and level of service which is linked to that, but people I think will notice a change from a level C to a B. So with that being said, I think I've pretty much said all of my conclusions, and my recommendation is actually quite simple. It's oops, moved into the appendix here. Is to go with that low cycle optimized timing plan. Which will reduce it down to about a 65 second cycle length, and I think that we try that and find out how that works. I think that you'll see lower queue lengths for certain and I think from qualitative and quantitative perspective from the motorists, I think that they will see an improvement. So that's my recommendation to the committee.

- Okay. Can I hear a motion to vote on this recommendation, or is there any questions first?

- Now that's with no, capital improvements right there, that's just with using the existing, that's there, or? When you said between 150 and 300 thousand to get, that would be included?

- The answer to that is options four and five with adding the arrows would cost between 150 and 300 thousand. The option that I'm recommending is simply an optimization with the existing equipment, so the only cost that's gonna be realized to the city is my time, my electrician's time. We'll go out, make the changes, we'll observe the changes. Obviously if something needs to be adjusted in the field versus what the model is telling us we'll make those slight adjustments, but at the end of the day I agree with what the model is coming up with that the lower cycle lengths we'll probably certainly see the benefit, and it's really just for that time period and that peak and then it goes back to normal programming.

- How long of a time frame is that?

- Can you repeat?

- How long of a time frame is it, in the afternoon then? When school's letting out?

- Correct, yes. It'll be, well the analysis was 2:45 to 3:45, I think the programming starts at 2:30 PM, it's like an extra 15 before, and then an extra 15 after. We do that just in case there's early release or if there's some other reason that the school, that the peak may fluctuate.

- That's the morning too, or just in the afternoon?

- It is morning as well.

- Mr. Chairman.

- We had a motion by Dan Theno.

- I move approval of the recommendation of the traffic engineer.

- Second.

- Motion been made and seconded, all in favor?

- [Crowd] Aye.

- Motion carries.

- Order 2, 3, 4, and 5.

- [Woman] I'm just voting for everybody. That's what I did last time.

- 2, 3, 4, and 5, Dave you want to run those together, so we could see all of them as they pertain to the same

- Correct, yes, items D2, D3, D4, and D5 are all connected or inter-related. If you wanted, did you want me to read them into the record and give my recommendation.

- [Speaker] Yeah, probably should I think.

- Okay. Item D2, termination of 90 day trial period. Removing the no parking zone on south side of Mather street from a point 50 feet west of Gray street to a point of 100 feet east of Gray street. Item D3, termination of 90 day trial period. Remove the no parking zone on the north side of Mather Street from Gray Street to Roy Avenue. Item D3, termination 90 day, oh I just read that one didn't I. Item D4, termination 90 day trial period. Establish and adopt by ordinance a no parking bike lane zone on both sides of Mather Street from Gray Street to Vroman Street. Item D5, termination 90 day trial period. Establish and adopt by ordinance a no parking zone on the south side of Mather Street from a point 50 feet west of Gray Street to Gray Street. Chair you have the floor.

- Okay, do I hear a motion to approve?

- So moved.

- Motion made. Second?

- Second.

- Motion made and seconded. All in favor?

- [Crowd] Aye.

- Motion approved.

- F. Next meeting, Monday March 18th, 2019. Back in Room 207 at 5:30, everybody good in this room with any conflicts?

- Ray will not be here.

- Chuck said he would be back in March. And I assume you have, will let the mayors' office know that we will be losing Chuck probably after March I think.

- I didn't know that.

- Yes, Chuck is going to depart us. And Ray you had mentioned to me at some point.

- Some point. It's not a big deal. Putting our house up for sale.

- Maybe let the mayor's office know, one for sure, and down the road, whatever Ray determines the end of his service.

- Which new mayor do you inform?

- I said the mayor's office though. Probably meet twice before the election begins.

- One more meeting.

- One more meeting, okay. One more meeting Phil. With that, entertain a motion to adjourn?

- I make a motion to adjourn.

- Motion been made.

- Second.

- We're adjourned. Alright we made it through. Congrats.