

**MINUTES
TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 6, 2000**

The agenda for the Traffic Safety Commission meeting of April 6, 1999, was duly posted in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

A regular meeting of the Reedley Traffic Safety Commission was held Thursday, April 6, 2000, in the Reedley City Conference Room, 1717 - 9th Street, Reedley.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Chairman Penner called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners

Present: Penner, Brockett and Chief Johnson.

Absent: Dale Kennedy (open house), John Clements (ill).

Staff

Present: City Engineer, Andrew Benelli; Sgt. Todd Lowery; and Kay Pierce, Police Department Administrative Assistant.

Others

Present: Jerry Martens, Richard Linzmeier and Bobby Ikemiya.

3. PUBLIC DISCUSSION - None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

C. Brockett moved, C. Johnson seconded to approve the minutes of the August 5, 1999 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Request for Parking Restrictions on Manning Avenue West of Eleventh Street.

City Engineer Benelli reviewed the staff report stating that this request came from Council Member Gobby that staff investigate and consider prohibition of parking on the south side of Manning Avenue, west of Eleventh Street. He also received calls from private citizens on this same problem. The concern is that when there is a vehicle parked on Manning at this location, the vehicle could possibly be hit and the vehicles partially blocks the lane. Manning Avenue used to be striped for only two lanes of traffic. When the medical office building was built, it was increased to four lanes on both sides of Manning. This has made the problem worse, and it eliminated the bike

lane in this area. Richard Linzmeier, owner of Alta Propane, is in attendance at tonight's meeting. Staff was unable to contact the owner of the vacant lot which is where most of the vehicles are parked. Staff does recommend that parking be prohibited in this area from Eleventh Street back 275 feet west. This would encompass the area in front of the former Exxon gas station, Alta Propane and the vacant lot.

Richard Linzmeier, owner of Alta Propane and the Exxon station, stated that he prefers the Commission not paint this curb red because his customers have been parking in front of Alta Propane for over thirty years and will probably still park there to come in and pay their bill even if the curb is painted red because the front of the office fronts Manning Avenue. He has never had any complaints from anyone regarding the parking.

City Engineer Benelli stated that he received three other calls, besides Council Member Gobby, stating that the lane is very narrow when a vehicle is parked in front of the Alta Propane office. C. Johnson stated that the police department has received many calls regarding a van that parks in front of the vacant lot. The police department has asked this property owner to move the van many times. City Engineer Benelli drew a diagram showing the Commission how the lanes narrow as vehicles approach the intersection due to the left turn lane. As vehicles approach the intersection, they have to squeeze in because of the left turn lane. When a vehicle is parked in front of Alta Propane, it makes it more difficult to maneuver past the parked vehicle.

C. Brockett suggested installing a continuous left turn lane down the entire length of Manning Avenue.

Sgt. Lowery asked Mr. Linzmeier if his business has much of a front yard? Mr. Linzmeier replied that you walk out the front door and almost into the street. There is no room for a cut-out because it would undermine the foundation of the office. He stated there is a small area for parking around the back of the building, but nothing is striped for parking and it is inconvenient for his customers. C. Penner asked Mr. Linzmeier how long it will take him to move the canopy that was removed from the gas station and placed behind the office? Mr. Linzmeier replied that it would take a couple of months to remove the canopy. C. Penner added that Mr. Linzmeier could then direct customers to park in the back of the office. Mr. Linzmeier replied that it was possible, however, vehicles coming from Town and Country shopping center cut through his property and he is worried that because of this, someone might get hit on his property.

C. Brockett asked Mr. Linzmeier if his business was always that close to Manning Avenue. Mr. Linzmeier responded by saying that the street has come in approximately fifteen feet over the years, as well as Eleventh Street. His family has lost a lot of property over the years to street widening.

C. Johnson asked if the street striping, or the elbow, could be straightened more as it went into the left turn pocket? City Engineer Benelli replied that the striping is done to meet Caltrans standards, but that he would measure the lane. He stated that there is some liability in changing the pattern of the left turn lane where it doesn't meet Caltrans standards. Caltrans has four different designs for

this type of roadway left turn lane pocket, depending on the speed limit. The present turn lane is eleven feet wide with fourteen foot lanes on either side.

C. Brockett suggested the installation of a five-phase traffic signal which would eliminate the left turn lane. All traffic in the left lane would either have the option of turning left or going straight through. Each leg of the intersection would go one at a time. City Engineer Benelli added that this type of turn signal is popular in downtown areas where the City does not want to restrict parking and there's not enough room to take anymore right-of-way. He added that one of the disadvantages of the five-phase signal is longer waiting time for each lane of traffic

C. Johnson asked if staff could measure the distance of the traffic lanes and make a determination. Since property was taken from Linzmeiers and it should have always been no parking in front of the business. Staff didn't catch the lack of parking area sooner, he apologized, but if there is room for parking, there isn't a problem and it's staff's interpretation that there is a problem based on the van. However, traffic statistics are not showing that there is a problem, so if this item is tabled until the next meeting until staff measures the traffic lanes and the Commission comes back and states there isn't enough room and the curb in front of Mr. Linzmeier's business has to be painted red, would he object? C. Johnson continued stating that this is a very difficult decision to make until more information is obtained.

City Engineer Benelli elaborated on the design already on the black board stating that the situation got worse when the additional traffic lane was added. The additional traffic lane was added because traffic was backing up and more room for the vehicles was needed.

C. Brockett stated that he is still in favor of the left turn signal to eliminate this problem because enough property has already been taken from Mr. Linzmeier. City Engineer Benelli replied that changing the traffic signals is a very expensive prospect. This would include removing the turn lanes and putting in at least two new signal heads. The signals are supposed to line up with the traffic lanes. If the existing turn lane is removed, the existing signal head will not be in the correct spot. This would mean the installation of a new mast arm also, or at least the relocation of the mast arm. It is not a small job to change out the signals, but it would work and is referred to as a five-phase signal. This allows the through traffic and left turn traffic to move at the same time.

Mr. Linzmeier asked how urgent is this problem? City Engineer Benelli replied that this item was held over from the last traffic safety meeting. However, other than the complaints he receives, there have been no accidents. C. Brockett suggested contacting the owner of the van parked on Manning and ask him if he could park the van in his driveway. C. Johnson stated that the Police Department has talked to the owner many times, and it hasn't done any good so far. City Engineer Benelli stated that there is only room to park one van in the driveway, and this property owner has at least two vans.

It was the consensus of the Commission to table this item until the next meeting. At that time, a diagram of possible solutions could be presented to the Commission. Hopefully, all Commission

members can be in attendance. The Police Department will also make contact with the owner of the vans also.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request for Parking Restrictions on "I" Street Frontage Road between Reed Avenue and Manning Avenue.

City Engineer Benelli reviewed his staff reported stating that this request has been discussed previously by the Commission. Several complaints have been received from the Planning Commission and local car dealers regarding the vehicles that are parked for sale along the frontage road. There is a plan in place to eliminate this frontage road and widen "I" Street in this area, but this plan is approximately six months into the future. Staff would like the Traffic Safety Commission to consider a parking restriction in this area. There are some delivery vehicles and customers for International Paper who is using the old Ford dealership site, so the restriction would have to allow International Paper to park in this area. A possible restriction could be restricted parking for two hours only between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. This would eliminate the parked cars for sale, but would still allow customers and delivery vehicles for International Paper. The Commission could also consider reducing the parking on one side of the street, possibly the side closest to "I" Street, and still allow parking on the other side. Most of the vehicles offered for sale park closest to "I" Street.

Jerry Martens of Marten Chevrolet stated that he is also representing other local car dealers who could not be present this evening. He stated that several weeks ago on a weekend, he counted 24 vehicles for sale at this location. He stated that he and the other car dealers have business licenses, individual sales licenses as well as dealer licenses that give them the right to sell automobiles in the city. He is not opposed to individuals selling their vehicles, but is opposed to the number of vehicles for sale at any given time in this location. The vehicles are not always in good condition and this is an eyesore for people entering Reedley. Special ordinances had to be written for Taco trucks selling in Reedley because they infringed on businesses who had to pay higher overhead and Mr. Martens felt that this was a similar situation against legitimate car dealers. If this is not prevented, what would stop him or other car dealers from placing vehicles on the frontage road with a sales representative to sell used cars? City Engineer Benelli added that the Planning Commission has also shown interest in this item. It was brought up at a previous Planning Commission meeting and the Commissioners also feel this is out of hand and something needs to be done.

C. Penner stated that he agreed with the points brought up by Mr. Martens and added that it is also unsightly because it is the entrance into Reedley. C. Brockett added that if temporary "No Parking" signs were installed, this would just force people to park elsewhere in town. City Engineer Benelli agreed this was true, but they wouldn't be assembled in just one area. C. Johnson added that it is unsightly, and that in Porterville, the City out-zoned certain commercial areas for selling cars, but since this frontage road leads into a former car lot, this would be difficult to do. The police department already tags the cars for 72-hours, but they do have three days to park in this area. Some of these vehicles are also vandalized.

Due to lack of area throughout the town, some tractor/trailer rigs also park on this frontage road. City Engineer Benelli suggested posting this frontage road for two hour parking between the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Most of the tractor/trailer rigs park there overnight and are usually gone by 7:00 a.m. The two hour parking restriction would force them to move their rigs by 8:00 a.m. which should work out for the truckers.

City Engineer Benelli stated that although this frontage road is scheduled to be removed in the fall of 2000, he would hate to commit to this deadline because it might not occur until the spring of 2001. With the potential for Walmart coming into the City, it might even change the design of this intersection. The Commission should make their decision based on the what is currently in this area.

C. Johnson moved, C. Brockett seconded the motion for Two Hour Parking, 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for the entire length of the Upper Bridge frontage road. Motion carried as follows:

AYES: Johnson, Brockett, Penner.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Clements, Kennedy.
ABSTAIN: None.

B. Request for Stop Signs at Cypress and Acacia Avenues and at Acacia and Carob.

City Engineer Benelli reviewed the staff report stating that this request was received from Sierra Kings Hospital. The enclosed letter from Sierra Kings Hospital does not state whether they are asking for a four-way stop at those intersections, or stop only on Acacia. City Engineer Benelli does not recommend a four-way stop at either of these intersections, possibly a three-way. There is no traffic control on Acacia at this time. Cypress Avenue does handle some volume of traffic. No counts have been taken by City Staff, but the traffic volume is high due to the hospital expansion. There might be traffic counts that were taken when the hospital proposed the original expansion. He will look into this possibility. This is also the route that is used by the ambulances.

C. Penner asked why a stop sign would be need at Carob? City Engineer Benelli replied that he didn't feel that a stop intersection is needed as much at Carob as at Cypress, but that was the request from the hospital. Sgt. Lowery agreed stating that he didn't feel a stop sign was needed at Carob. City Engineer Benelli stated that some times stop signs are needed if vehicles park close to the corner, then it becomes a sight distance problem.

It was the consensus of the Commission to table this item until the next meeting. At that time, City Engineer Benelli will come back with traffic counts.

C. Request to Install Handicap Parking on "J" Street North of 15th Street

City Engineer Benelli reviewed the staff report on this request stating that this request was received from a representative of the Buddhist Church. (Diagrams and photos of the proposed request were given to the Commissioners.) One of the requirements of handicap parking is that there

be a ramp towards the front of the vehicles. The striped area is a dead area between the vehicles and the reason for this is when the American Disabilities Act was developed, the authors of this proposal felt it wasn't safe for a handicap in a wheelchair to try to pass behind a van or vehicle close to the traffic. They require that there be a ramp at the front of the vehicle so they can get out of their vehicle and go up the ramp. Staff relayed this information to the church. The church has agreed to hire a contractor to install this ramp. One parking stall is eliminated for the striped area. Staff recommends the installation of the handicap parking.

Bobby Ikemiya mentioned that there is a ramp already in the corner. City Engineer Benelli replied that this ramp unfortunately, does not meet the requirements of the A.D.A. The ramp is supposed to be located between the vehicles, not in the corner. Mr. Ikemiya replied that the church is willing to install the required ramp.

C. Brockett moved, C. Johnson seconded to allow the installation of a handicap parking stall on "J" Street, North of 15th Street. Motion carried as follows:

- AYES: Brockett, Johnson, Penner.
- NOES: None.
- ABSENT: Clements, Kennedy.
- ABSTAIN: None.

D. Discussion of converting Manning Avenue to four travel lanes between Reed Avenue and Eleventh Street.

City Engineer Benelli reported that Council Member Brown asked if the Traffic Safety Commission would review the potential for four lanes down Manning Avenue. City Engineer Benelli display a study from 1987 regarding this possibility. At that time, homeowners did not like the idea of the four lanes because many would lose parking spaces in front of their homes. City Engineer Benelli explained that the City does not own enough right-of-way in front of the College Motel to widen Manning Avenue at this point to four lanes. He continued by stating that four lanes would be difficult because the bike lane would have to be removed and parking would have to be restricted wherever there is a left turn lane.

C. Brockett recommended making the center lane on Manning Avenue a continuous left turn lane. C. Penner agreed adding that would be the most functional way to accommodate residents and traffic. Homeowners could use this center lane to enter and exit their driveways. C. Penner asked if the bike lane was in addition to a parking lane? City Engineer Benelli replied that was true. C. Penner continued by stating that people walking could still use the parking lane wherever there was no sidewalk.

C. Brockett moved, C. Johnson seconded to recommend to Council the installation of a continuous left turn lane down Manning Avenue. Motion carried as follows:

- AYES: Brockett, Johnson, Penner.

- NOES: None.
- ABSENT: Clements, Kennedy.
- ABSTAIN: None.

City Engineer Benelli stated that he could present a drawing to the Commission of how the continuous left turn lane will look. C. Brockett added that the continuous left turn lane might even help solve the problem in front of Mr. Linzmeier’s business.

7. COMMISSION COMMENTS AND REPORTS

A. Receive and Discuss Reports from Commission members Regarding Commission Member Activities.

C. Brockett asked about the possibility of installation of a left turn light on Frankwood Avenue at Manning Avenue for northbound Frankwood traffic. City Engineer Benelli stated that the fire hydrant has been moved at this location. However, the most immediate problem at this location is the curb return on the southwest corner of Frankwood and Manning. The radius at this corner will not be sufficient for large trucks to negotiate the turn if the left turn lane is installed. The trucks will still try to make the turn and will hit the signal pole. The radius needs to be increased to more than thirty feet. In order to increase the radius, additional right-of-way is needed. City Engineer Benelli will make contact with the property owner regarding the purchase of the additional right-of-way. In addition, a contractor would have to be hired for this job. Also, the signal poles will need to be moved back so they do not get hit by turning trucks. More work needs to be done on the preliminaries of this project.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Penner adjourned the meeting at 8:33 p.m. The next meeting will be held on July 13, 2000.

Jim Penner, Chairman
Traffic Safety Commission

ATTEST:

Kay L. Pierce, Secretary