

**MINUTES
TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING
AUGUST 5, 1999**

The agenda for the Traffic Safety Commission meeting of August 5, 1999, was duly posted in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

A regular meeting of the Reedley Traffic Safety Commission was held Thursday, August 5, 1999, in the Reedley City Council Chambers, 845 "G" 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, LuAnne Young of K.C.U.S.D. and Chief Johnson.

Absent: Dale Kennedy.

Staff

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

Others

Present: Jason Chavez:

3. PUBLIC DISCUSSION - None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

C. Johnson moved, C. Brockett seconded to approve the minutes of the April 22, 1999 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Request for Turn Lanes into Reedley High School Parking Lot.

City Engineer Benelli reviewed the staff report stating that this request came from K.C.U.S.D. School Board Member, Don Armson, requested right and left hand turn lanes to be installed on North Avenue at the entrance into the student parking lot. He also requested that the City investigate other methods of improving the traffic flow on North Avenue in front of the school. The traffic volumes on North Avenue are highest in the morning when the students are arriving for school and the congestion there is increased because of "drop-offs" of the students. The right turn lane into the student parking lot that was approved by the Traffic Commission at their last meeting

has been installed. There was also an interest in prohibiting parking on the south side of North Avenue near the student parking lot. The property owner at 743 "F" Street, Mr. John Williams, has been contacted and his response was that he has no preference whether there are parking prohibitions there or not as long as it doesn't affect his driveway. Staff recommends that parking is prohibited at all times on the south side of North Avenue, west of "F" Street to the alley between "F" and "G" Streets. The owner of Reedley Pool Service was opposed to any restrictions on parking on North Avenue because he felt he would cause students to park in front of his business on "G" Street. The parking prohibition would possibly cause up to ten parking spaces to be lost, but it would widen up the street and allow more room to maneuver around the vehicles that are turning into the parking lot by allowing vehicles to go to the right of a vehicle that is turning into the parking lot. It will also help increase the sight distance for pedestrians so that the vehicles can see the pedestrians as they step off the curb.

C. Brockett asked about posting signs stating "No Parking Allowed Between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m." because the football games are held at night and they need all the parking available. City Engineer Benelli replied this was considered when this request was written up, but there is also the increased pedestrian traffic to consider and the fact that it will be dark during the football games and this will increase the hazard to pedestrians, so maybe even during the football games, vehicles should not be parked there.

Sgt. Rogers added that it will help the flow of traffic after the football games to have no parking because it's really a mess at that time.

City Engineer Benelli felt the no parking restriction should help, but there is a question about enforcement if the students still park there. The Police Department will have to enforce this.

Sgt. Rogers added that it would only take a couple of weeks to handle this problem, but he feels that sidewalks would be important to have at this location all the way to "F" Street.

City Engineer Benelli replied that the City might not have right-of-way in this area, but he will look into that, although the high school kids don't usually use the sidewalks.

C. Brockett moved, C. Johnson seconded the motion directing staff on the restricted parking on the south side of North Avenue as directed by staff. Motion carried as follows:

AYES: Brockett, Johnson, Young, Penner.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Kennedy.

B. Request for a Downtown Parking Study.

City Engineer Benelli reminded the Commission that this item was discussed at the last Traffic Safety meeting in April and since that meeting, staff has conducted a study of parking in the downtown area with the boundaries being on 9th Street, 12th Street, "H" Street and "F" Street.

Staff determined that there 781 public parking spaces in this downtown area. In general, during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., they are usually less than fifty percent utilized. The on-street parking on "G" Street was the most utilized and in some areas was as high as ninety-six percent occupied during the noon hour. Of the four parking lots which includes St. Anthony's which has 55 parking spaces, the lot on "F" Street which has 40 spaces, the lot on "G" Street between 10th and 11th which has 75 spaces and the other lot west of "G" between 11th and 12th that has 72 spaces. The lots were generally under-utilized, except for the lot on "G" Street between 10th and 11th. That lot was 96 percent occupied during the noon hour, but in the morning and afternoons, it decreased to about 40% to 47%. The restaurants in this area cause the parking to increase during the noon hour. The study indicates that there is adequate parking in the downtown area. However, on "G" Street between 10th and 11th, and the lot in this area, we could use more parking. Parking is also highly utilized on 12th Street west of "G" Street which is the area around Uncle Harry's. We could use more on-street parking in this area and could get more by converting the present parallel parking on 10th Street and 11th Street to be diagonal parking. The existing parking in this area was less than 50 percent utilized. Staff is looking for direction for the Traffic Safety Commission as to where staff should go with the parking study from this point. The only option that would gain significant parking stalls would be to change to diagonal parking on 10th and 11th Street which would require eliminating the left turn lane on 11th Street which is not a good idea.

C. Brockett would like to see diagonal parking on 10th Street, but 11th Street should be left as is.

City Engineer Benelli stated that the findings of this study will be taken to the City Council. He asked the Commission their feelings on changing the parking on 10th Street to diagonal.

C. Brockett replied that in front of the Opera House the charter buses unload, although they could go down the alley and unloaded. LuAnne Young stated that it was difficult for a large bus to go down the alley. C. Penner stated that the buses could access the parking lot on "H" Street to load or unloaded passengers. Sgt. Rogers added that it would be a good idea to direct the buses to "H" Street to load and unload passengers because when they are on 10th Street, it because very congested and interferes with moving traffic.

The Commission directed staff to recommend to the City Council the installation of diagonal parking on 10th Street.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request for Stop Signs on Herbert Avenue at Church Avenue.

City Engineer Benelli reviewed the staff report stating that this item was brought up at the last Traffic Safety meeting by several residents living in the area of Herbert and Church Avenues. They residents requested that a stop sign be placed on Herbert Avenue at Church Avenue. This is an area where an additional segment of Herbert Avenue was installed when the subdivision was built and this section of Herbert recently opened up and has created a continuous street between Reed Avenue and Frankwood Avenue. Herbert Avenue is the first through street on the south side

of town and there is substantially more traffic since the last section of Herbert Avenue has opened up. The traffic also travels at a higher speed. Herbert and Church Avenues are both classified as local streets in the general plan. Neither street is designed to carry through traffic. The traffic volumes on both Herbert and Church are low and do not satisfy the Caltrans warrants for four-way stop signs. Installing stop signs at this intersection would discourage through traffic and would not create any hazardous safety conditions. He stated that since Church Avenue tees into Herbert, it would be a good idea to install a stop sign on Church Avenue also since the retirement home has a stop sign at their driveway.

C. Brockett moved, C. Johnson seconded the motion to install stop signs on Herbert Avenue and Church Avenue. The motion carried as follows:

AYES: Brockett, Johnson, Young, Penner.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Kennedy.

B. Request for Parking Restriction on Reed Avenue near Seventh Street.

City Engineer Benelli reviewed his staff report stating that staff received a letter from Vera Chavez requesting that parking be prohibited in front of her home at 281 Reed Avenue. Her home is located on the west side of Reed Avenue where a convenience store is located on the east side of Reed. There is a problem with the customers from the convenience store parking in front of the home and her primary concern is for public safety. She indicated that the parked vehicles obstruct the sight distance for vehicles entering Reed Avenue from the alley that's north of Friesen. She also states that there has been three accident that have resulted in damage to her property and those accidents might have been avoided if parking was prohibited in the area. Her secondary concern is the litter that accumulates along her street frontage and the damage to her landscaping. The area does not have sidewalks and her landscaping does extend to the curb. She feels that prohibiting parking in this area will reduce the litter and the landscape damage. City Engineer Benelli stated that north of Seventh Street on Reed Avenue is one-way traffic and very narrow, only 24-feet wide. South of 7th Street, Reed Avenue widens out to 40-feet and it is striped for a parking lane which is eight feet from the curb. There is a large driveway and an alley approach on the east side of the street by the store so there isn't much street parking on that side of the street and the parking lot at the store is always full.

C. Penner stated that there is also a Laundromat located next to the convenience store. City Engineer Benelli added that the delivery trucks also take up a lot of the parking. The City pool is also located in this area and people using the pool also park in this area during summer months.

C. Brockett stated that has been over in this area and there is a parking problem and there may not be a real answer for this problem.

City Engineer Benelli stated that it is unsafe to parking in the 24-foot lane and it should be painted red for no parking. Eliminating parking always makes for safer traffic. Staff is opposed to

eliminating parking simply because a resident doesn't like vehicles parked in front. He doesn't feel that the sight distance is a great safety concern, but the traffic coming off of "I" Street does travel very fast and the 24-foot section is really not wide enough for parked cars.

C. Penner stated that Ms. Chavez stated that trucks also park there and have more than once demolished her sprinkler system and landscaping and this would cause some monetary expense.

Sgt. Rogers stated that early in the morning and late afternoon, Ms. Chavez gets many migrant worker vans parking in this area and twelve guys will climb out through the sliding door right on to the property and she is probably losing sprinklers everyday. Regarding the safety, those 12 to 15 guys are now crossing the street right there where traffic travels at 50 to 55 miles per hour.

City Engineer Benelli added that the area that Ms. Chavez has landscaped is actually City right-of-way. The City has a sixty foot right-of-way in that area and the City right-of-way goes back ten feet from the face of curb. He stated that there might be sidewalk installed in this area someday in the future, although the landscaping looks nice right now, it doesn't solve the parking problem.

Sgt. Rogers stated it would be helpful if pedestrian did not trample her landscaping, although she will still have the accumulation of trash due to the location of the convenience store.

C. Johnson asked if when the new signal is installed, will that reduce or increase the speed of vehicles and will that reduce the safety factor? City Engineer Benelli stated that it will only reduce the speeds half the time and most likely lower because the signal will be red, but when the signal is green, the speeds will be just as high as they are now and the street will be even wider.

Jason Chavez spoke from the audience stated that he lives at 281 Reed Avenue, and he agreed with Sgt. Rogers stating that vehicles do travel at a higher rate of speed through this area. He didn't have any receipts with him to show the cost of damages so far to the landscape and irrigation, but there have been incidents where the property has been damaged because vehicles park there, back up and knock over the mailbox, and just keep on going. He stated it is worse during the summer on Friday and Saturdays when the men get paid, his family spends the next morning picking up beer bottles and cans and other trash. He understands that living so close to a convenience, the trash is inherent and that's not problem, but the beer bottles and cans are unsightly and encourage others to throw trash down.

Sgt. Rogers asked Mr. Chavez if sidewalk installed at this location and the placement of a City trash can would help the situation. Mr. Chavez responded that it might help. He asked City Engineer Benelli if sidewalk would be installed there someday. City Engineer Benelli replied that the City does have the right-of-way and the City is doing a lot of sidewalk in-fill projects and with Jack-in-Box so close, we are getting more pedestrian traffic and there is a greater need for sidewalk in the near future when funds are available. There are also plans for a new traffic signal at Reed near 7th Street and the frontage road will be eliminated.

C. Johnson asked Mr. Chavez how many vehicles park north in that area and would no parking in that area help? Mr. Chavez replied that if the area was reduced by half, that would possibly deter enough traffic so that they wouldn't need to pull over, however, if the no parking was further down in front of the house and only left a couple parking spaces, that would still be convenient for most vehicles.

C. Johnson moved, LuAnne Young seconded to install no parking north of the Chavez driveway at 281 Reed Avenue, and to watch the activity south of the driveway so see if the alleviates some of the parking problem. Motion carried as follows:

AYES: Johnson, Young, Penner, Brockett.
NOES: None.
ABSENT: Kennedy

6. Request for Parking Restriction on Manning Avenue, West of Eleventh Street.

City Engineer Benelli reviewed his staff report stating that this request originated with Council Member Gobby, as well as receiving a phone call, prohibiting parking on the south side of Manning, west of 11th Street. The striping in this area was modified recently when the doctor's office was built. The striping was changed and this has made it an unsafe area for parked vehicles. Staff recommends that parking be restricted in front of the gas station and in front of Alta Propane and in front of the lot which is actually the back yard of a home. This is a distance of approximately 275 feet on the south side of Manning. Staff recommends to restrict parking in this area for a total of 275 feet.

C. Brockett asked if the Linzmeiers, property owners of Alta Propane, had been notified? City Engineer Benelli stated that he hasn't contacted them, and their driveway extends the entire length of the gas station, and no one parks in front of the gas station at this time. Staff will contact the property owners in this area and see if there is a problem with installing no parking.

It was decided to table this item until the next meeting until staff has the opportunity to contact the property owners in the area.

7. COMMISSION COMMENTS AND REPORTS

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

City Engineer Benelli notified the Commission that the Planning Commission has asked that the Traffic Safety Commission discuss the parking problems on "I" Street at the frontage road where vehicles are for sale. Several Planning Commissioners spoke that they feel it's a problem and asked that the Traffic Safety Commission place this item on our next agenda. Some of the things that the Planning Commission talked about were possibly restricting parking for a few hours of the

day in that area so those people that are trying to sell their vehicles would be forced to move them at least a couple of hours in the day so that they wouldn't stay there overnight, day after day. An example would be 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. They would like to restrict or eliminate parking on one side or the other of the frontage road. This problem will eventually be solved when the frontage road is eliminated, but this won't happen until next spring.

C. Penner asked if some of the trucks that park there overnight will be forced to move to the residential areas where they are actually prohibited to park? City Engineer Benelli replied that it depends on what staff decides to do. If parking is prohibited altogether, it would. The options are prohibiting all parking, or maybe just one side of the frontage road. Vehicles could still park next to the businesses. The other option would be to post it all for parking only certain hours of the day. It would be nice to prohibit parking early in the day so that the street sweeper could occasionally sweep in this area.

Sgt. Rogers stated that when a trucker is looking for a place to park his rig overnight, he is directed to the frontage road. C. Penner stated that there is also an area to park behind Pioneer Equipment's tractor lot on "H" Street. Sgt. Rogers replied that he doesn't think the truckers would like to park their rigs in the dirt. C. Brockett stated that Reedley should have a parking lot for truckers since we are the fruit capital as well as truck route maps available for the truckers.

C. Johnson stated that if parking is restricted on the frontage road for people selling vehicles, they will move to another location. He suggested an ordinance restricting vehicles for sale on public property, or something similar. This item will be placed on the next agenda.

B. C. Brockett asked the status of the no left turn lane on Frankwood Avenue at Manning Avenue? City Engineer Benelli replied that the City still does not have enough money to build the left turn lane completely, but the loops have been installed. City is still planning on the left turn lane and does have the right-of-way for this project. C. Brockett also asked about a continuous left turn lane down Manning Avenue from Reed Avenue to Columbia Avenue? City Engineer Benelli replied that a bike lane might have to come out to accommodate the left turn lane because the width of Manning changes in different locations. C. Johnson stated that there has to be two bike lanes because the traffic flows both directions. His concern about a continuous left turn lane is that vehicles can make U-turns which poses a traffic hazard. A continuous left turn lane could be discussed at a future meeting.

C. C. Penner asked if "No U Turns" could be painted on the road in the middle of the blocks downtown? He stated that vehicles constantly make U-turns in the middle of the block to get a parking space on the opposite side of the street.

D. C. Penner stated that there is a fire hydrant at the alley at 11th Street, west of "G" Street and there is a green curb there and vehicles pay no attention to the green curb or the fire hydrant. Fire hydrant curbs should be red instead of green and will be repainted by the Public Works Department.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Penner adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Jim Penner, Chairman
Traffic Safety Commission

ATTEST:

Kay L. Pierce, Secretary