



# City of Harrisonburg

City Hall  
409 South Main Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

## Meeting Minutes - Final Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission

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Wednesday, May 12, 2021

8:30 AM

Virtual

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### 1. Welcome and Introductions

The Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission met on May 12, 2021 at 8:30am using a GoToMeeting. The meeting was not held in person due to the state of emergency related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Commission members attended by calling in using a phone or joining by audio/video on a computer. Information allowing members of the public to watch the meeting live was provided in the agenda and posted on the City website in the week prior to the meeting. Members of the public were given the opportunity to provide comments on the items discussed by phone or e-mail prior to the meeting.

All attendees introduced themselves.

Commission members present: William Blessing, Kyle Lawrence, Chance Ebersold, John Scherpereel, Erin Yancey (Public Works), Sgt. Wayne Westfall (Police Department)

Advisory members and guests: Jakob zumFelde (Public Works), Tom Hartman (Public Works), Paul Helmuth (Fire Department)

### 2. Sunset Heights Traffic Calming Plan

Mr. zumFelde gave a brief overview of the City's traffic calming program goals and background on traffic calming in the Sunset Heights neighborhood. He said that the neighborhood's traffic calming plan was approved by City Council in April 2019. He said that phase I of the plan was implemented in 2019, although one proposed change was unable to be

completed. Given the change that was unable to be implemented and the results of the post-implementation study that was conducted in February 2020, staff identified the need to revise phase II of the traffic calming plan. Mr. zumFelde said that to determine appropriate measures, staff coordinated with the neighborhood representative group and then conducted an online survey of the neighborhood. This survey provided information regarding challenges associated with some potential measures and general support from neighborhood residents for other potential measures. Mr. Lawrence asked if staff had held an online survey in the early stages of the traffic calming effort in Sunset Heights. Ms. Yancey said that an in-person meeting was held during creation of the traffic calming plan. She noted that more responses were received with the online public outreach than had been gathered using an in-person meeting. She said that this is helpful to know to maximize neighborhood engagement, but that in-person meetings are quite valuable for one-on-one interaction and answering questions or clarifying any confusion or concerns that people have. Mr. zumFelde then gave an overview of the measures that are being proposed for the revised phase II of the traffic calming plan. These measures are raised intersections, speed cushions, speed humps, and mini roundabouts. He then showed a map indicating approximate locations for the proposed measures. He said that Maryland Ave and Dogwood Dr have speed cushions proposed in order to accommodate the emergency vehicles that use this as a primary respond route. Mr. zumFelde said that one speed cushion would be installed to ensure functioning prior to installation of the other two speed cushions. All other measures would also be implemented this summer or fall. He said that a follow-up traffic study would be completed following implementation of all of these measures, and that a future phase may be appropriate if that traffic study indicates that some streets are eligible for traffic calming. Mr. zumFelde said that these proposed measures were described to the neighborhood using an online presentation, and a survey was used to gauge support for the proposal. He said that over 80% of respondents supported

the proposal, with no major themes of concern among those who said that they disagreed with the proposal.

After additional discussion about the proposal, Mr. Blessing made a motion to recommend that Council adopt the updated traffic calming plan with the proposed measures as described. Mr. Scherpereel second the motion, and all commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

### **3. Access Management Standard**

Ms. Yancey said that Public Works is in the process of creating an access management standard. She said that access management involves regulating the minimum spacing between intersections and entrances, in order to provide separation between conflict points and reduce the associated number of crashes. She said that the City's existing access management standard is in need of updates to bring it into alignment with current best practices.

Ms. Yancey said that staff are seeking to coordinate access management with desired land use in the City, as these two things could be in conflict if access management is not implemented appropriately. She also said that the access management standard will only apply to new development. Ms.

Yancey said that VDOT has access management standards that can be used by localities. She said that Appendix F of the VDOT Road Design Manual is what is primarily used by VDOT, but that the parcel sizes in the City make this less applicable to most parts of the City. She said that Appendix B2 of the VDOT Road Design Manual is more applicable to a multimodal road network, such as the network found in most areas of the City. Ms. Yancey said that staff are proposing that Appendix F be used in selected areas of the City, that are largely industrial, while Appendix B2 would be used in most other parts of the City.

Ms. Yancey said that staff will conduct outreach with stakeholders such as developers to identify and address potential concerns or opportunities.

Additionally, Public Works staff will work with the Fire Department, Police Department and Department of Community Development to ensure that the standard meets the needs of all departments. Ms. Yancey said that staff will

be working on these efforts over the coming months, with the goal of adoption by City Council in early 2022.

Mr. Blessing said that he was glad that the City is pursuing this effort. Mr. Scherpereel asked if there was enough development occurring at locations where the new standards would be applicable for this effort to be valuable. Ms. Yancey said that there are many places where development or redevelopment will occur, and that she would direct TSAC members to the land use map (in the City's Comprehensive Plan) to see where this may occur. Mr. Lawrence said that he sees this effort as valuable for improving safety for people walking or biking on sidewalks and shared use paths along roads in the City.

#### **4. Other Business/Announcements**

Sgt. Westfall said that he has received numerous complaints about people driving through the City Hall parking lot between Main St and Liberty St, with people driving too fast causing safety concerns. Mr. zumFelde asked if there was one direction that more people were cutting through. Sgt. Westfall said that he thinks the traffic is going both ways, but traffic going westbound - coming from Campbell St and going to Liberty St - is more of an issue. He said that the reconfiguration of Warren St and the City Hall parking lot led to this being a feasible cut-through. Ms. Yancey said that Public Works staff will set up a meeting to discuss this with Police Department and Fire Department staff.

Mr. Ebersold asked about the status of the downtown parking lot time changes. Mr. Hartman said that the planned changes were recently presented to Council. He said that staff would hold one or more presentations for businesses to ensure a full explanation of the changes being made. He let the Commission know that the changes were proposed by the completed Downtown Parking Study. He said that the general goal of the changes is to create more high-turnover spaces in the downtown core for those driving to downtown to frequent downtown business, while creating more permit parking and also creating 10-hour parking on the periphery of the downtown core. He said that staff intend to make all of the

changes over the summer, but detailed timing of the changes has not been finalized. He said that staff will ensure that this timing is communicated when it is finalized.

## **Adjournment**