

Public Safety & Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes, 1/28/13, City Hall Council Chambers

Present: Michael Halley, Connie Boyer, Kevin Flanagan, Julie Harvey, Scott Vaughan, Darrel Bisgard, Daryn Hamilton, Jason Jones, Scott Clements, Justin Clements

Points of discussion

Fire Chief Vaughan described a potentially dangerous parking situation on Southview Circle where vehicles parked on both sides of the street create a bottleneck too narrow to allow fire trucks through. It was reported that Waste Management has recently had trouble getting their trash/recycling trucks to the end of the cul-de-sac. One recent issue is the parking of large commercial vehicles at the Clements residence: previously a large trailer and currently a snowplow. It was noted that even without the large equipment the number of cars parked on both sides of the street makes it difficult for any large vehicles to pass between them. After some discussion it was decided that the most appropriate and effective recourse is to close parking on one side of the street. The city will send letters to each resident on the street to alert them of this intent and ask for their feedback. It wasn't decided which side of the street would be closed to parking and no committee action was taken.

The list of uncontrolled intersections compiled by Darrel Bisgard was reviewed. He and Police Chief Harvey recommend adding numerous yield signs and 4 stop signs to enhance safety at those intersections. Boyer moved to bring an ordinance change as recommended by Bisgard and Harvey to the full council. Halley seconded, motion passed.

Halley described the current situation at four of the city's seven railroad crossings where pedestrians must enter the road to cross the tracks due to the lack of connected sidewalks. This has been a safety issue for years but is now exasperated by the limited space created by the quiet zone medians. In 2010 representatives from Burlington Northern Sante Fe (BNSF) Railways told city officials that they would provide walking surfaces between the tracks if the city extends the sidewalks to the tracks. Since this was never a formal agreement Halley proposed that city administrator Kevin Flanagan write an official letter to BNSF regarding this topic, the ongoing use of train horns within our quiet zone, and the smoothing of the 4th St crossing. The letter will be copied to the Iowa DOT and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Flanagan and Bisgard expressed that they would like to see all crossings include an extended sidewalk on at least one side of the street yet this year. Committee concurred.

Recommendations/Actions

Committee recommends an ordinance change for the list of uncontrolled intersections be prepared and presented to council at the next council meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Michael Halley.