CITY OF PEORIA – TRAFFIC COMMISSION

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

AGENDA

TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2014

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

COMMISSION MEETING – TO BE HELD AT CITY OF PEORIA DRIES LANE FACILITY CONFERENCE ROOM #113, 3505 N. DRIES LANE, PEORIA, ILLINOIS 61604. (309) 494-8800.

CITY OF PEORIA – TRAFFIC COMMISSION

AGENDAS AND MINUTES

ISSUED BY:

JOE HUDSON, CHAIRMAN

VIA TRAFFIC ENGINEER NICK STOFFER

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

3505 N. DRIES LANE, PEORIA IL 61604

(309) 494-8800

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*Citizens wishing to address an item not on the agenda should contact a commission member prior to the meeting. All other public input will be heard under public comment near the end of the committee meeting.

Note: The order in which agenda items are considered may be moved forward or delayed by at least 2/3 vote of the commission members present.

The City of Peoria – Traffic Commission meets in regular business sessions the Third Tuesday of the month at 3:00 PM at 3505 N Dries Lane Conference Room #113, Peoria, Illinois. (309) 494-8800.
NOTICES OF ANY SPECIAL MEETING ARE POSTED AT LEAST 48 HOURS PRIOR.

CITY OF PEORIA – TRAFFIC COMMISSION
DRIES LANE, CONFERENCE ROOM
3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

ROLL CALL

ANNOUNCEMENTS, ETC.

MINUTES – APRIL 15, 2014 REGULAR MEETING

AGENDA ITEMS

ITEM NO. 1 Discussion of Proposed Ordinance Changes to Chapter 26 of the Code of the City of Peoria Renaming and Redefining the City Traffic Commission.

ITEM NO. 2 City Project Updates: Various

ITEM NO. 3 Other Items of Interest to the Traffic Commissioners

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENT

NEXT MEETING

ADJOURNMENT
A Regular Meeting of the City of Peoria’s Traffic Commission convened at 3:04 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15, 2014, at the Lester D. Bergsten Operations & Maintenance Facility located at 3505 N. Dries Lane, Peoria, Illinois.

CALL TO ORDER

Call to Order showed the following Traffic Commission Members in attendance:

Commissioners Present: Chairman Joe Hudson, Commissioner Pat McNamara, Commissioner Joe Messmore, Commissioner Michael Vespa, and Commissioner James Wolfe – 5.


Others in attendance included Council Member Beth Akeson (arrived 3:08 p.m.), Traffic Engineer Nick Stoffer; Right of Way and Permit Engineer Ken Andrejasich, Advocate for Disabled Rights Roger Sparks; and Public Works Administrative Specialist Ruth Blancaflor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Traffic Engineer Nick Stoffer announced a Public Meeting would be held April 16, 2014 from 6:00 til 7:30 p.m. at the Thomas Jefferson School’s Library regarding the proposed Forrest Hill Avenue project. He said the project extended from Sheridan Road to Knoxville Avenue.

Mr. Stoffer also announced that CityLink was holding a public meeting regarding their new CityLink Transfer Center which would also be held on Wednesday, April 16th from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at 3625 Sheridan Road, with presentations at 4:30 and 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Commissioner McNamara moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Traffic Commission Meeting held on February 18, 2014, with correction to Page 5, second full paragraph, first sentence to change “concept plans for Main Street” to state “concept plans for University/MacArthur”; seconded by Commissioner Messmore.

Approved by viva voce vote.

Council Member Beth Akeson arrived at 3:08 p.m.
ITEM NO. 1 Discussion of Proposed Ordinance Changes Relating to Sidewalk Cafés

Traffic Engineer Nick Stoffer said City Staff was looking at revising the ordinance that governs sidewalk cafés as well as having a Program Guide to give users better direction. With the changes downtown and in the Warehouse District, he said it seemed to be the right time to revisit how sidewalk cafés are addressed. He explained that proposed changes to the City Code, which were forwarded to the Traffic Commissioners for discussion, were an effort to better regulate and enhance this type of commercial use of the sidewalk and allow the expansion of restaurant use onto the right-of-way. He said the proposed changes provided for the requirements of landscaping, cleanliness, and limits of operation, as well as allowing for this type of use outside of the downtown area. The Commission was sent the current ordinance, which was last changed in 2012, a proposed revised ordinance with suggested changes highlighted, and a draft Program Guide.

Mr. Stoffer introduced Right of Way/Permits Engineer Ken Andrejasich, who has the primary Public Works Department responsibility concerning review and approval of sidewalk café permits. In discussion with Commissioners McNamara and Wolfe regarding how long the ordinance had been in place, how many applications were generally received, the current locations of the cafés and if this affected sidewalk vendors, Mr. Andrejasich and Mr. Stoffer responded that there were about 6 sidewalk cafés at this point, all downtown.

Discussion was held regarding what had changed in the 2012 revisions, which was primarily that the approval now was made by the City Manager instead of the City Council. It was explained these changes would not affect sidewalk vendors, which were handled in a different part of the City Code. Discussion was also held on the parts of the original ordinance language that related to newsstands. It was determined that this was part of the Code, but was not to be revised at this time.

Further discussion was held, including the application process and locations of sidewalk cafés. Mr. Andrejasich explained the new Code was proposed to be more formal, requiring scaled drawings to allow proper review of materials, pedestrian access and landscaping. He said the changes also allow sidewalk cafés to be installed outside the downtown (currently limited to B-1 zoning), to areas like the Warehouse District, to provide these properties the ability to expand their businesses onto the sidewalk.

Mr. Stoffer reviewed the compliance requirements as outlined in the Sidewalk Café Program included with the Agenda Packet.

In discussion with Commissioner McNamara, Mr. Stoffer agreed that, in line with the Complete Streets guidelines, the intent of the change to the ordinance was to encourage vibrant streets while maintaining some control and consistency measures.

The Commission reviewed and discussed numerous picture images of Chicago area sidewalk cafés as provided by Council Member Akeson. The images were displayed on the computer screen so that all present could see them. In introduction, she stated she had suggested to City Manager Uruch that Peoria adopt the Chicago ordinance governing sidewalk cafés. She stated she believed the most important requirement for a sidewalk café was the landscaping aspect. The sample images displayed included many types of landscaped, movable planter boxes and their locations and use as café boundaries.
Mr. Stoffer pointed out it was important to maintain uniformity in the pedestrian access route. He said the suggested minimum width of the sidewalk was 5’ but, by Federal standards, 4’ is allowed as long as the length does not exceed 200 feet. He said laying out all of the options was one of the benefits of providing the Program Guide to applicants.

Mr. Andrejasich added that Federal Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) suggested that the chair-pedestrian access route should be as streamlined and direct as possible.

Discussion was held on the landscape requirements, signage and other concerns addressed in the draft Program Guide. Examples from the Guide showing suggestions for laying out alternative designs of cafés were reviewed. These examples showed how a café could be next to the building, next to the curb, or divided so that the pedestrian way went through the middle of the café. Suggestions were made from the Commission on revisions of the examples. Ms. Akeson pointed out that, in Peoria, businesses were not allowed to open windowed areas like in other communities, which could be beneficial to the design.

Ms. Akeson pointed out the Grand Rapids, Michigan streetscape guidelines include vendor recommendations for purchase of amenities/features and she said she thought this might be considered for the Guide or a separate pamphlet. She also pointed out that Chicago Code has a lengthy section regarding PROWAG and ADA compliance, and addresses handling of trash and debris from the cafés and keeping the required landscaping alive. She said owners were required to clean every morning. Mr. Stoffer said he would review the Chicago language and see what could be added to the proposed Draft.

Discussion was held on the approval process and how the Public Works Department would be required to perform site visits to verify that they were conforming to the proposed plan, accessibility requirements, and cleanliness of the right-of-way and the appeal process. It was also discussed that the proposal contain a range of dates that businesses can have the sidewalk café open, which was thought to be a beneficial improvement to the Code.

Discussion was held on the next steps. Mr. Stoffer said that, after revisions and comments by the Traffic Commission, the ordinance changes would go to City Council for the first of three required readings. He said the target would be to have the ordinance to Council in May. No motion was offered by the Commission but, overall, the Commissioners’ responses were positive toward the proposed changes.

**ITEM NO. 2 Discussion of Proposed Roadway Diet along University Street/MacArthur Highway from Jefferson Avenue to Bourland Avenue**

Mr. Stoffer explained that, with the design-build construction project at University and Main, city staff started reviewing University’s connection to MacArthur for improvement of that section going south, as well. He said the intent was to have this work done this year, after the opening of Main and University in May. He explained MacArthur was a five-lane highway with about 8000 cars daily and, from University/Moss to Jefferson, it was under the City’s jurisdiction.

Mr. Stoffer displayed a computer image view of the area. He outlined the plan of reducing the 5-lanes to 3 lanes, accommodating left-turning traffic, and adding parking on the east side of the roadway and then a small buffer between parked cars and a 10’ bike lane with two-directional traffic. He said that could be accommodated throughout the entire corridor up to Bourland.
Commissioner Wolfe stated that, with the parking lane on the east, all the businesses are on the other side, so pedestrians would have to walk across three lanes of traffic.

Commissioner McNamara stated it was a very positive measure to continue the improvement through the Main/University corridor and he thought it was good to keep the bike lane next to Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. He confirmed with Mr. Stoffer that the bike lane would go over the MacArthur Highway Bridge, as well.

Chairman Hudson stated it was a good idea to have the bike path continue all the way from the south end of town and he said he didn’t think the improvements would negatively affect traffic flow.

Mr. Stoffer advised that as soon as he received these comments from the Traffic Commission, he would be planning a public meeting to discuss the proposed changes to MacArthur Highway.

**ITEM NO. 3   PROJECT UPDATES:**

**University and Main Street Project**

Mr. Stoffer advised that the project was proceeding according to schedule with a goal of opening the road by May 10th. He said the contractor was pouring curb and the traffic calming speed humps in the surrounding neighborhoods had been installed. He said all but one of the speed humps had been painted with warning striping and that all had signs, with an extra warning sign placed on Columbia Terrace, because that was more of a connector road. He said weekly meetings were being held with the entire construction team to make sure everything was being addressed.

In discussion with Commissioner McNamara regarding the success of the detours, Mr. Stoffer stated a few traffic counts had been done which showed traffic down by 30%. He said it seemed that the news releases were effective in communicating the detours and the Police Department was addressing the cut-through traffic, as well.

**Bicycle Master Plan**

Mr. Stoffer advised the Commission that there were 10 submittals to the Request for Proposals for a Bicycle Master Plan. He said that Alta Planning and Design, from Chicago and St Louis, was the team’s selection, and a contract was in negotiation. He said the schedule was proceeding slowly but it was hoped to have the Plan in place this year, so when new projects were planned it will be considered in their design.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Street Asset Inventory**

In discussion with Commissioner McNamara, Mr. Stoffer explained the process the street asset vendor would use to create a street asset inventory for the City of Peoria. He said they will drive every street and perform a roadway condition survey and, based on that, determinations would be made of what methods to use to repair what streets, depending on their ratings. He said it would help set priorities for the type of maintenance that could be accomplished according to the amount of funding available. In addition, he said a sign survey would be also completed that would include location and condition of every type of city sign on city roadways.
NEW BUSINESS

Future Commission Agenda Items; Expanding the Commission’s Role; and Providing Weekly Updates to the Commissioners

Commissioner McNamara reiterated that the commissioners should provide input to staff regarding issues for the Traffic Commission to discuss. He said the City’s FY 2014-2018 Community Investment Plan was a good source of information from which the commissioners could choose and prioritize projects they wished to discuss and they could give that information to Staff. In addition, he stated he looked forward to clarification on the Commission’s area of authority for transportation and he discussed the importance of making that kind of change. He pointed out the importance of formalizing the Complete Streets concept.

Council Member Akeson stated the City Manager and the Director of Public Works had been charged with bringing an Ordinance before the City Council to amend the Code in order to expand the Commission’s role.

In discussion with Commissioner McNamara, Mr. Stoffer stated Staff would forward the City Manager’s weekly Issues Update to the Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Advocate for Disabled Rights, Roger Sparks, expressed concern regarding the corner at State and Water Streets near Kelleher’s, as he said there was very limited space on the sidewalk for wheelchairs and the area was definitely not straight-flowing. He said it was also near a bus stop. Further, he expressed concern that, at Sacred Heart Church, blacktop had been placed over a hump, thereby intruding over the right of way and that could cause a trip hazard for the blind.

Council Member Akeson said Chicago’s ADA compliance code paragraph governing bus stops was very good.

Mr. Sparks also expressed concern with chairs being chained to the fence along Water Street, as he said that interfered with the bus stop.

Regarding a question about the access around the street light at the corner of State and Water Streets, Mr. Andrejasich stated that there was a 36” minimum PROWAG standard at the time that improvement came through, and that this met the standard.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Traffic Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2014 at 3:00 p.m.
Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the Regular Meeting of the Traffic Commission adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

_________________________________ _______________________________________
Chairman Joe Hudson   Nick Stoffer, Traffic Engineer

/rmb
AGENDA DATE REQUESTED: May 20, 2014

ACTION REQUESTED: DISCUSSION REGARDING AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 26 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF PEORIA TO AMEND THE CITY TRAFFIC COMMISSION’S NAME, REDEFINE ITS PURPOSE, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, AND AMEND ITS MEMBERSHIP.

BACKGROUND: For some time now, changes to the Traffic Commission have been discussed. These changes require an amendment to the Code of the City of Peoria. The focus is for the Commission to have a better defined purpose, amend its membership to give a broader exposure of the community, and give a more complete listing of its duties and responsibilities. The changes are meant to better serve all transportation functions within the community and help enact Complete Streets Concepts.

Staff submits the attached Amendments to the Code for discussion by the Commission.
Sec. 28-61. Creation and purpose.

The traffic-transportation commission of the city is hereby created for the purpose of studying and surveying all matters pertaining to pedestrian and vehicular traffic transportation in the city of Peoria, and to make recommendations and proposals to the city council and the city administration. Transportation shall include pedestrians, bicycles, vehicles and mass transit systems, as well as the movement of freight, and shall promote complete streets ideals within the City. The commission shall also provide input concerning transportation items contained in the annual Community Investment Plan (CIP), maintain an educational program and campaign for better highway traffic safety and traffic law compliance by the public.

(Code 1957, § 2-108)

Sec. 28-62. Membership.

The traffic-transportation commission shall consist of eleven (11) nine voting members, appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council. The terms of the commissioners shall be three years in accordance with the terms set forth in section 2-162 of the Code; however, initial appointments will be made to stagger the terms as follows: three members shall be appointed for a one-year term; three members will be appointed for a two-year term and three members will be appointed for a three-year term. The mayor shall select a member to serve as the chairman on an annual basis, with the approval of the council. Said membership shall include the following:

1. At least four (4) of said members shall have professional expertise in the various facets of the duties of the commission, by virtue of their training and/or employment. Said areas of expertise shall include, but are not necessarily limited to: engineering, the law, transportation operations, mass transit, marketing, financing, environmental management and safety.

2. At least two (2) of said members shall have demonstrated interest in pedestrian or bicycle issues thru professional expertise or participation in various civic organizations, clubs or committees/boards/commissions that have a pedestrian or bicycle focus.

3. At least four (4) of said members shall represent a broad social and geographical components of the City of Peoria. Said representation shall include, but not necessarily be limited to students, retired persons, the handicapped, homemakers, the business community, newly developed areas, and low and moderate income persons.
Sec. 28-63. Meetings.

The traffic transportation commission shall meet at least once each month and at the call of the chairman of the commission or upon the written request of at least five members of the commission delivered to the chairman.

Sec. 28-64. Chairman; secretary; other officers.

(a) The chairman of the traffic transportation commission shall be elected by the members for a term of one year, annually, beginning November 1, 1971.

(b) A vice-chairman and such other officers as the commission may deem necessary may be elected for terms running concurrently with that of the chairman.

(c) The secretary of the commission shall be the traffic engineer of the city and shall maintain all records of the traffic transportation commission.

Sec. 28-65. Rules of order and procedure.

(a) The traffic transportation commission shall adopt such rules of order and procedure as it deems advisable and necessary. No rule of the traffic transportation commission concerning its order of business or procedure shall be effective until a copy thereof is placed on file with the city clerk.

(b) Absent any rules to the contrary, Robert's Rules of Order, as revised from time to time, shall control the conduct and order of the meetings of the transportation commission and its members.

Sec. 28-66 Areas of concern.

The basic areas of concern of the transportation commission shall consist of the following:

1. Streets and highways within the City of Peoria, which shall include city streets, county roads, state and federal highways, recreational drives, bridges and grade separations.
2. Mass transportation, which shall include buses, taxis, trains, and such other forms as may be developed or proposed.
3. Pedestrianways, which shall include sidewalks, grade separations, shopping areas, and recreational pathways.
4. Bikeways, which shall include on- and off-street routes for transportation; and recreational uses.
5. Multi-use trails, which shall include off-street trails for non-motorized uses, such as pedestrians and bicycles.
6. Materials and handling and movement of freight, which shall include truck routes, truck terminals and airport access.
7. Transportation policies and practices, such as complete streets concepts.
8. Safety programs, which shall include promoting mass transportation, bicycle use and walking.

Sec. 28-67 Powers and duties.

With regard to the above areas of concern, the transportation commission shall serve in an advisory capacity to the city council and city administration regarding the following:

1. To prepare, review, and recommend comprehensive plans based upon adopted goals and strategies, as directed by the city council.
2. To coordinate with other local, regional, state and national agencies and private transportation organizations, such as PPUATS, Illinois Department of Transportation, Peoria Park District, Peoria County, in the adoption of goals and strategies in the city and surrounding are, or in reviewing or proposing specific projects or programs.
3. To review, suggest and coordinate policies, programs, and marketing proposals and strategies for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including, but not limited to, bicycle routes, multi-use trails, bicycle parking, the sidewalk network, and school walk routes.
4. To conduct public hearings on proposed policies and plans when considered necessary by the commission, the city council, or as required by city, state, or federal law or regulation, except where a hearing on the same subject is planned or required to be conducted by another body and where the commission finds that said hearing will be an unnecessary duplication.
5. To supervise and encourage a program of dissemination of information regarding transportation programs, problems, policies or goals, to the citizens of Peoria.
Sec. 28-68 City council referrals.

All transportation matters coming directly to the city council or related transportation matter may be referred by the city council to the transportation commission for consideration.

1. All referrals to the transportation commission shall specify the date and source of the proposal, whether from staff or private citizens.

2. After consideration by the transportation commission, the transportation matter shall be forwarded to the city council for final consideration, evaluation, and determination.

Sec. 28-69 Assistance and cooperation from city officials

1. All departments of the city under the direction of the city manager, and other officers and agencies of the city shall assist and cooperate with the commission and, upon request of the commission, shall furnish information, advice, and access to facilities respecting subject matters as the commission may reasonably require in order to fulfill its functions as set forth herein. The city shall provide clerical services to the commission where possible.

2. In the conduct of the work of the commission, it is anticipated that certain city employees will be required to advise and otherwise support the activities of the commission in carrying out the obligations as provided herein.

3. Expenses for the operation and conduct of the affairs of the commission shall be paid from a separate transportation commission line item in the city budget or where appropriate from specific budgeted projects.