A regular meeting of the Troy Traffic Committee was held Wednesday, November 14, 2012 in the Lower Level Conference Room at Troy City Hall. Pete Ziegenfelder called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call

PRESENT: Sarah Binkowski
Ted Halsey
Richard Kilmer
David Ogg
Al Petrulis
Stevan Popovic
Pete Ziegenfelder

ABSENT: None

Also present: Lori & Geir Gronstad, 1782 Boulan
Traci Peterson, 1732 Muer
Jeanne Stine, 1915 Boulan
Janice Sutherland, 1926 Boulan
Barbara Dawson, 1834 Boulan
Heather Bultynck, 3470 Alpine
Cpt. Robert Redmond, Police Department
Bill Huotari, Deputy City Engineer/Traffic Engineer

2. Minutes – October 17, 2012

RESOLUTION # 2012-11-25

Moved by Kilmer
Seconded by Halsey

To approve the October 17, 2012 minutes as printed.

YES: All-7
NO: None
ABSENT: None
MOTION CARRIED

REGULAR BUSINESS

3. Request for No Stopping, Standing, Parking – Boulan, Alpine to Dead End

Barbara Dawson of 1834 Boulan requested, through the City Manager and Police Chief, that the times listed on the existing No Stopping, Standing, Parking signs on Boulan, between Alpine and the dead end, be modified to reflect the start and end times of the

schools adjacent to Boulan (Bemis Elementary and Boulan Park Middle School). Ms. Dawson states that parents are pulling into this area to drop off children and creating a hazardous situation for children that walk through this area in the morning to the schools.

The next day, Troy Police officers checked into the validity of the concern. The officer on the scene reported that Ms. Dawson's concerns were well founded. The officer reported that the volume of cars pulling onto the dead end of Boulan was excessive, many pulling into driveways, dropping off children who were then seen walking between cars on their way to school. Several vehicles were observed backing up the entire length of the dead-end section while still more parents pulled onto the dead end to drop off even more children. These observations, combined with there being no sidewalks on Boulan for the children to walk on, and all of this occurring in total darkness, led the officer to recommend immediate action to avoid a child being injured.

A temporary traffic control order was issued on October 24, 2012 to change the times on the existing signs from 8 AM – 4 PM to 7 AM to 4 PM. A temporary traffic control order is valid for 90 days or until replaced by a permanent traffic control order. The original Traffic Control Order, from October 18, 1979, restricted No Stopping, Standing, Parking from 7 AM – 5 PM and times on the signs have changed over the years to correspond with the arrival and dismissal times at the schools.

Residents, at the meeting, in support of changing the times on the signs:

Jeanne Stine of 1915 Boulan discussed the concern for safety of children walking to and from school. She said she has witnessed several close calls between cars and children. She reports that the volume of cars dropping off and picking up children has increased and that there are at least two dozen children that walk through this area. She supports the resolution and also requests that the signs be made larger so that they can be seen from a further distance.

Janice Sutherland of 1926 Boulan supported the statements made by Ms. Stine. She also added that she has witnessed cars driving at high rates of speed while backing up from the dead end. She has also witnessed near misses and arguments between parents at the end of the street. She is concerned about the safety of the children walking in this area.

Barbara Dawson of 1834 Boulan also supports the previous statements. She added that the school does have a drop-off area at the school site. The dead end does not have a method and is not designed to allow for the drop-off/pick-up of children. She has three children that walk to school and in concerned for their safety walking amongst the cars in this area.

Lori & Geir Gronstad of 1782 Boulan added that parents appear to be in a hurry and are driving fast through the area. She wants her child to walk but is concerned for the safety of their child as well as the others that walk. She agrees and supports the previous statements.

Heather Bultynck of 3470 Alpine reports that motorists drive very fast when police are not present. There is construction in the neighborhood that is adding to the issue and forcing children to walk in the street. She has witnessed cars backing up from the dead end and almost hitting other cars. She feels this is a huge safety concern.

Resident, at the meeting, opposing the change in times on the signs:

Traci Peterson of 1732 Muer spoke about the construction in the area causing issues. She also discussed the lack of sidewalks, difficulties in getting out onto Crooks Road in the morning to travel to Wattles to Northfield Parkway to the school, bad weather, cut-through traffic speeding and suspicious vehicles in the area as reasons why she drives her three children to school. She has not witnessed any car crashes in the area. She said that the issue only exists for 10 minutes in the morning and afternoon. She is also concerned that the PUD at Big Beaver/Alpine/McClure will be adding 16 new residential units that will add to the traffic in the area as well as add children to the school. She reports that this area is one of only three Troy school locations that do not have sidewalks for children walking to school. Two other residential street locations adjacent to the school site do not have any type of parking restrictions in place. She feels that driving is the safest way to get her children to and from school.

During rebuttal, by residents in support of changing the times on the signs, the following items were discussed:

- If the dead end were to be allowed for drop-off and pick-up, then it should be redesigned as a cul-de-sac or turnaround to allow for the free movement of vehicles.

- Mailboxes in the neighborhood have been vandalized or have been damaged by motorists hitting them.

- The resident at the end of the street, 1952 Boulan, has had her mailbox damaged, has drivers turning around in her driveway, has parents block her driveway and has had parents park in her driveway while they run to the school. This was reported by residents at the meeting. The homeowner at 1952 Boulan was not present at the meeting.

Rebuttal, by the resident opposed to changing the times on the signs, followed:

- Discussed an incident at the school where a child was hit by a driver in the drop-off area, on school property, in 2010.

- Construction vehicles and equipment have made walking even more of an issue for children.

- She has noticed suspicious vehicles in the area during arrival/dismissal times while she has waited for her children.

Traffic Committee member discussion:

Mr. Ziegenfelder reports that he drove the area and was not able to make a simple U-turn at the dead end in a small SUV without using a driveway. He also drove to the school using Crooks and then alternately using the Big Beaver route and times to get from the area to the school were 4 minutes and 8 minutes, respectively, under ideal conditions.

Mr. Kilmer thought that the signs should be moved further to the east on Boulan and should start at Alpine. He also believes that signs should be installed along Alpine.

Cpt. Redmond said that the Police Department has been at this location for the past two weeks talking with parents and encouraging them not to use the dead end as a drop off area due to safety concerns. To date, they have not been issuing tickets but rather are trying to educate parents. They will be enforcing the signs in the future to try and get compliance from parents who continue to use this area. He reports that this same issue was present back in 1979, when the original Traffic Control Order was issued, but has not been as severe until recently as new residents now have school age children in the area again causing the increase in children walking along with more cars in the area. Cpt. Redmond also reported that the Police Department did an informal license plate survey and found that approximately 50% of the cars are from areas outside of the immediate subdivision.

Mr. Ogg reports that he sees similar situations in the school by his house (Barnard Elementary). Parents are driving children short distances when they could easily walk and reduce the congestion at the schools and on the roads. He agrees that any situation that requires parents to turnaround in driveways or backup is unsafe. He recommended blocking off Boulan at Alpine and only allowing residents who live in the section from Alpine to the dead end with access. This is not feasible as: one it is a public road; two it would create a new drop off area at the intersection of Boulan and Alpine where the potential for high speed issues and children crossing from Boulan and Alpine would exist; and finally there is not a physical barrier that could be installed that would allow unfettered access to the existing homes at the end of Boulan while still restricting other motorists from accessing the same area.

Ms. Binkowksi asked about posting signs that would prohibit vehicular access to the dead end. Boulan is a public road and as such is open to use to all vehicles subject to the traffic control signs in place.

Cpt. Redmond added that the major issue is vehicles turning around at the dead end. He believes that the Police Department will need to enforce the signs in order for parent behavior to change.

Mr. Popovic discussed similar issues at Morse Elementary.

Mr. Petrulis asked about the possibility of removing the walkway to the school at the dead end. This is on school property and as such would need to be an item that the school

would undertake if it were considered an option by the district.

Mr. Halsey asked about removing the gate at the end of Boulan and allowing traffic to access the school site. This creates a secondary access point causing circulation issues on the site as well as creating a cut-through to Northfield Parkway through the school parking lot. Again, this would involve school property which would need to be approved and carried out by the school district.

RESOLUTION # 2012-11-26

Moved by Popovic
Seconded by Binkowski

RESOLVED, that the Traffic Committee recommends that the No Stopping, Standing, Parking signs on Boulan, from Alpine to the Dead End be revised to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. School Days Only.

YES: 6
NO: 1 (Ogg)
ABSENT: None
MOTION CARRIED

4. Establish Fire Lanes at 651 Robbins

Section 8.28, Chapter 106, Troy City Code, provides for the establishment of fire lanes on private property. The Fire Department recommends that fire lanes at 651 Robbins be provided to allow proper deployment of and travel by emergency vehicles (fire, police, medical).

RESOLUTION # 2012-11-27

Moved by Kilmer
Seconded by Halsey

RESOLVED, that the Traffic Committee recommends establishing fire lanes at 651 Robbins.

YES: All – 7
NO: None
ABSENT: None
MOTION CARRIED

5. Discussion of Rochester/Stephenson No Right/Left Turn on Red

Information was provided on the history of the No Right Turn on Red signs at the northbound Rochester approach to Stephenson Highway and the No Left Turn on Red

signs at the double-left crossover from southbound Stephenson Highway to northbound Stephenson Highway.

The general consensus from the Traffic Committee members is that the signs are no longer needed as drivers have to sit at both locations for excessive amount of time causing many drivers to disobey the signs and turn on red regardless. Sufficient gaps in northbound and southbound traffic are available for turning traffic along with the residents of the mobile home park and neighboring businesses to safely pull out onto Stephenson Highway.

General discussion among the members ensued.

RESOLUTION # 2012-11-28

Moved by Popovic
Seconded by Ogg

RESOLVED, that the Traffic Committee directs the Traffic Engineer to conduct a mail poll of the Troy Mobile Home Villas on Stephenson Highway along with surrounding businesses to ascertain if the No Turn on Red signs are still needed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Traffic Committee directs the Traffic Engineer to conduct a traffic study at both locations to verify current traffic volumes if a majority of the respondents to the mail poll respond in the affirmative.

YES: All – 7
NO: None
ABSENT: None
MOTION CARRIED

6. Public Comment

There was no additional public comment.

7. Other Business

Mr. Halsey requested that the traffic signal operations at Maple and Livernois be reviewed. He reports that there is not sufficient green time for the left turn from eastbound Maple to northbound Livernois. Traffic Engineering will refer this item to the RCOC Traffic Safety Department for further investigation.

Mr. Halsey also asked if the Police Department could review the traffic at Wattles Elementary. Traffic Engineering will work with the Police Department to review the traffic concerns at this location.

Ms. Binkowski requested that the December 2012 Traffic Committee meeting be

cancelled. Traditionally, the Traffic Committee has not met in August or December.

RESOLUTION # 2012-11-29

Moved by Binkowski
Seconded by Petrulis

RESOLVED, that the December 2012 Traffic Committee meeting be cancelled.

YES: All – 7
NO: None
ABSENT: None
MOTION CARRIED

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Pete Ziegenfelder, Chairperson

Bill Huotari, Recording Secretary

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