

Traffic Safety Committee Meeting Minutes
November 14, 2022
DPW
4 Industrial Park Drive

Mayor Butler called the meeting to order at 4:16 PM.

Mayor Butler announced they are there to discuss four (4) items for the Traffic Safety Committee and hopefully the members will vote on them. He added when they are done with the agenda items, they will open it up for discussions for topics to bring up at the next meeting.

Mayor Butler stated the first agenda item is parking on one side only of Maple Street and parking would be on the west side of the street. Mayor Butler asked Police Chief Rabbitt if he had anything to add to it.

Police Chief Rabbitt stated he agrees with Mayor Butler's recommendation.

Motion was made by: Tom Richardson

Seconded by: Mayor Butler

Mayor Butler: Yes

Police Chief Bill Rabbitt: Yes

Supervisor Tom Richardson: Yes

Detective Sergeant Alex Dunn: Yes

Timothy Hipwell: Yes

Police Chief Rabbitt asked what the next steps were to implement this.

Mayor Butler stated he spoke with City Attorney Lyn Murphy and she will review the Charter but believes it can be implemented pretty quickly.

Tom Richardson stated they made Leonard Street one way a few years ago, and asked if there were going to be too many one-way streets over there.

Mayor Butler stated this is not going to be one-way it will just be parking on one side of the street. Mayor Butler went on to say they are looking to get it done quickly as there is work that is going to be done on Brickyard Road that must cause some congestion. He stated they will now move to the next agenda item of school zone speed reduction. He added it is on Main Street from Tallmadge Place to Hill Street and they would like to reduce the speed limit to 20 MPH, with the Community Center, Post Office, CVS, the Methodist Church, and the School on

the corner there is a lot of activity in that area. He went on to say that he has spoken to a few bus drivers who stated that when they are trying to pull out some of the traffic is moving very quick to make it dangerous for them. He is recommending making is 20 MPH.

Supervisor Tom Richardson asked if they needed to get something special from DOT to do this.

Mayor Butler stated they did not since it was a City street and not a State street.

Commissioner Fred Hosley asked if the speed zone change would be for 24 hours.

Police Chief Rabbitt stated it would be during school days and school hours, the signs would be similar to the ones near the high school.

Kim Dunn stated they are considering that a school zone but the school is moving.

Mayor Butler stated they are possibly moving; they have had the land for over five (5) years but don't have the money to build the building.

Kim Dunn asked if hypothetically they built a building quickly and moved and the area was no longer a school zone would it revert back to the regular speed zone.

Mayor Butler said they could but would leave it up to the Boards discretion, although they couldn't call it a school zone, they could reduce the speed with the Community Center expanding.

Tom Richard stated that there are some options being discussed and the school that is located in the old bank may some day move into the old elementary school on Main Street.

Tim Hipwell asked if the area would include the church on Main Street near Hill Street.

Mayor Butler stated that would be included in it.

Mayor Butler asked if there were any other questions.

Police Chief Bill Rabbitt added that he was approached by the school and they were the ones that requested this and added there are a lot of kids on the road in flux between the two (2) buildings.

Mayor Butler asked for a vote.

Police Chief Rabbitt: Yes

Supervisor Tom Richardson: Yes

Detective Sergeant Alex Dunn: Yes

Timothy Hipwell: Yes

Mayor Butler:

Yes

Mayor Butler stated they would now be moving on to Park Avenue which has been recommended to be made one-way from Central to Main Street, and to make commercial parking fifteen (15) minutes only for loading and unloading. He added there has been problems with parking and with congestion, he added this was suggested with the Downtown Revitalization group about ten (10) years ago. He added diagonal parking would increase the number of parking spots available. No commercial vehicles would be able to park there for long periods of time.

Supervisor Richardson stated it will help with the campers coming off Central Avenue.

Fred Hosley asked if all the parking spots are filled will a truck unloading block the road, close the road.

Police Chief Bill Rabbitt stated he could not answer that, it would depend on the size of the cars parked and the angle in which they are parked.

Mayor Butler stated ideally, he would like the drivers to unload on Central Avenue and come down the street but is not sure they would do that, which would make parking on Park Avenue easier.

Police Chief Bill Rabbitt asked which way the flow of traffic would be going.

Supervisor Richardson stated it would be going down the hill from Central to Main.

Police Chief Bill Rabbitt stated he agreed with that.

Kim Dunn stated she does not think it is a good idea to make that a one-way street because there are a lot of people that come off of Main Street and go up that road every day, and it will create a bigger problem at the Hill Street intersection.

Supervisor Richardson stated the people on Main Street would still have two (2) options, they could go under the Dutch Gap to Central Avenue or they could use Hill Street.

Kim Dunn stated you are forcing traffic in areas that are making another problem.

Mayor Butler stated he is not sure how much congestion it will cause and added there have been a lot of complaints on the road. He asked Police Chief Bill Rabbitt his opinion.

Police Chief Bill Rabbitt stated he is in favor of the one-way from Central to Main coming down the hill, and although it would divert traffic to Hill Street you are only talking one (1) City block and there is still a light at Central Avenue to control the traffic, the only people that are going right on red to get to Central Avenue would be eliminated because you won't be able to go up

Park Avenue. He added Hill Street is probably one of the widest streets in the City and would be able to accommodate the traffic.

Kim Dunn stated what is talking about is there is a huge problem with people taking right on red even though there are huge signs hanging from the lights, if you make it no turn on red on the bottom of Park Avenue to Main people are still going to do it. She added as far as Hill Street someone needs to go sit there and see the traffic and now more traffic will be forced there.

Dave Hicks stated he suggested before to put a mirror on the sign to see what is approaching. He asked if the diagonal parking would be from left to right or right to left and asked what the dimensions of the street were.

Mayor Butler stated he does not have those calculations.

Dave Hicks stated he did some calculations and at a forty-five (45) degree angle it would be approximately twenty-eight (28) feet, that is one (1) car from the curb out on the diagonal. He added they may have to decrease the angle. He added the dimension of the road will dictate the angle of the parking spaces. He added that there are a lot of tractor trailers that drop stuff off there and if the unload on Central Avenue how much will it block that road.

Mayor Butler stated the only tractor trailers he has seen there are the ones to back in to pick up the deposits from the bottle return. He added it is a difficult area, and he knows the way it is now it has been an issue and he has discussed this with Bill and Matt and Alex concerning the firetrucks and they all felt this was a better option.

Detective Sergeant Alex Dunn asked if the sidewalks were going to stay as wide as they are now.

Mayor Butler stated that for right now they would, he added it would be good if they could make them a little smaller but it was not in the budget. He went on to say he has no problem voting on it the way it is.

Supervisor Richardson stated that Bill and Alex seem to think this is the way to go and he didn't even think about firetrucks.

Commissioner Hosley stated they should make sure the road wouldn't be closed down before they voted on it.

Mayor Butler stated right now they park on the sidewalk of the no parking side to unload and he is not sure how to stop it.

Kim Dunn stated there are too many questions and should not be voted on.

Mayor Butler stated they would table this agenda item and he would get the dimensions and would also vote on the no turn on red at the next meeting.

Tom Richardson stated he would like to discuss some things that were brought up in the past and one of them was diagonal parking in front of City up to Kennedy Gardens, he thinks since the road is so wide there, they could get more cars parked there. He added it would be beneficial with the small businesses in the area plus people visiting City Hall. He added it has been brought to his attention that the street coming off Harris Avenue on to Central Avenue by LaVigna Insurance, might want to take a look at making that one-way because it is hard to turn off there with no light.

Dave Hicks stated he suggested in the past to move the sidewalk back in front of City Hall to allow for more parking.

Supervisor Richardson stated the City had a \$240,000 grant that was lost because of previous administration that was supposed to correct that sidewalk but there still may be room there to do diagonal parking.

Dave Hicks asked if he realized how much room he would create if they made that a six (6) foot sidewalk.

Supervisor Richardson stated that what was going to happen but the grant was lost and the State took the money back.

Mayor Butler stated he made a call about a sidewalk program but something like that wouldn't happen for at least a year. He added Tom and him meet CDTC is starting a sidewalk program but it is just getting off the ground and a lot of it is State and Federal funding but it all takes time; he is going to have them come look on Main Street which will help with ADA. He added it takes a lot because the streetlights need to be moved.

Eric Ramnes stated there has been change over time on Saratoga Avenue and the alternate parking on Saratoga Avenue is not working.

Police Chief Rabbitt stated he does not know what everyone else's opinion is on it but alternate parking is not a good idea anywhere and should all be made parking on one side.

Eric Ramnes stated that would be a good idea because everyone treats it like there isn't a car parked on the wrong side and there is going to be a pretty serious accident there one day, especially in the afternoon with the school buses.

Police Chief Rabbitt stated one side parking is easier to enforce.

Eric Ramnes stated he has off street parking but the problem begins in front of Chris Sgambati's old house.

Supervisor Richardson stated he thinks on the side Eric lives on he believes there is mostly off-street parking from Viall Avenue until you head out of the City but it is something they need to look into.

Mayor Butler asked Police Chief Rabbitt if there were any other streets in the City that have alternate parking.

Police Chief Rabbitt stated East Saratoga Avenue and Frances Street have it.

Mayor Butler asked if he thinks they should pick a side on all of the streets?

Police Chief Rabbitt stated he personally thinks that would be the best route.

Eric Ramnes added the Police Department has better things they need to be doing then driving down the street writing tickets for people parked on the wrong side off the street.

Mayor Butler stated they would have to go to the streets and look on what side of the street would be better for parking.

Eric Ramnes stated another thing to look at is snow melt.

Dave Hicks stated another thing to look at is in the winter DPW will need to be able to push the snow to the side of the road where there are no cars parked.

Police Chief Rabbitt added that snow emergencies supersede all parking regulations anyway.

Mayor Butler would like to look into one-side parking as opposed to alternate parking.

Dave Hicks asked about a sixteen (16) foot arrow on First Avenue with a splitter at the end for cars to turn right or left.

Mayor Butler stated they will look into arrows for First Avenue, he asked what side parking is on First Avenue.

Dave Hicks stated parking is on his side of the road.

Mayor Butler stated they will table agenda items 3 & 4.

Tim Hipwell stated that no one pays attention to the no turn on red signs coming out of Price Chopper.

Eric Ramnes stated that intersection is tough and he understands no right on red there but he can't understand why there are no right on reds at any other traffic lights in the City. He went on to say he can't understand why he can make a right hand turn on red in the middle of rush hour traffic from Route 9 onto Route 146 but he can't make one from Central Avenue to Mabbett Street.

Police Chief Rabbitt stated he does not know what the process is on the State Road and who puts those signs up.

Supervisor Richardson stated he thinks DOT put them up for traffic patterns but not is 100% sure of that but it is something they can investigate.

Dave Hicks stated the light coming out of Price Chopper does not recognize you if you are trying to go on Main Street.

Mayor Butler stated he would talk with DOT and stated they changed the traffic path at the bridge to three (3) seconds, it used to be 1 ½ seconds.

Dave Hicks stated the arrow light going from Central Avenue to Price Chopper is ridiculous that it goes from green to yellow to green again.

Mayor Butler stated he will mention all of the concerns to DOT.

Mayor Butler made a motion to adjourn.

Supervisor Richardson seconded the motion.

Mayor Butler stated they do not yet have a date for their next meeting.