TRAFFIC COMMISSION
City Hall—Council Chambers, 590 40th Ave NE
Tuesday, September 21, 2021
6:00 PM

## AGENDA

## ATTENDANCE INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

Members of the public who wish to attend may do so in-person, by calling 1-312-626-6799 and entering meeting ID 85150202900 or by Zoom at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85150202900. For questions please call the Public Works Department at 763-706-3700.

## APPROVE MINUTES

1. ACCEPT AUGUST 17, 2021 MINUTES

## CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

## OLD BUSINESS

2. REQUEST FOR STOP SIGNS AT THE INTERSECTION OF 6TH STREET AND 41ST AVENUE

## NEW BUSINESS

3. REQUEST FOR 4-WAY STOP SIGNS AT THE INTERSECTION OF JACKSON STREET AND 50TH AVENUE

## REPORTS

City Engineer
4. MMUTCD DEFINITIONS

PAST PRACTICES FOR STOP SIGN INSTALLATIONS
PEDESTRIAN ACCESS NEAR CENTRAL AVENUE AND 40TH AVENUE CONSTRUCTION
Police Chief
5. TRAFFIC ON 49TH AVENUE AT JEFFERSON STREET

Commissioners

## ADJOURNMENT

Auxiliary aids or other accommodations for individuals with disabilities are available upon request when the request is made at least 72 hours in advance. Please contact Administration at 763-706-3610 to make arrangements.

## TRAFFIC COMMISSION

## City Hall-Council Chambers, 590 40th Ave NE

Tuesday, August 17, 2021
6:00 PM

## UNAPPROVED MINUTES

## CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Schluender at 6:01 p.m.

## ROLL CALL

Members present: Ciesynski, Davis, Finkelson, Nekora, Schluender

Staff present: David Cullen, Street \& Park Superintendent
Captain Markham, Police

Council Liaison: Amáda Márquez Simula (via Zoom)

## APPROVE MINUTES

1. Motioned by Davis, seconded by Schluender, to approve the minutes of July 20, 2021 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. DESIGNATE "NO PARKING" ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF $42^{\text {ND }}$ AVENUE FROM UNIVERSITY AVENUE TO $4^{\text {TH }}$ STREET, NEXT TO PRODEO ACADEMY; AND DESIGNATE "LOADING ZONE 6 AM TO 3 PM SCHOOL DAYS" ON THE WEST SIDE OF $4^{\text {TH }}$ STREET FROM $235^{\prime}$ SOUTH OF $42^{\text {ND }}$ AVENUE TO THE SOUTH PROPERTY LINE OF PRODEO ACADEMY.

Present: Christopher Elsenbast, Prodeo Academy (via Zoom)
At the July Traffic Commission meeting commissioners called for a Public Hearing to designate "No Parking" on the south side of $42^{\text {nd }}$ Avenue from University Avenue to $4^{\text {th }}$ Street, next to Prodeo Academy; and designate "Loading Zone 6 AM to 3 PM School Days" on the west side of $4^{\text {th }}$ Street from 235 ' south of $42^{\text {nd }}$ Avenue to the south property line of Prodeo Academy.

A Public Hearing notice was published in the LIFE newspaper on August 6, 2021 and affected residents were notified via postcard.

No residents were present at for the public hearing.
Mr. Elsenbast reiterated the importance of having the signage for their student arrival and dismissal periods. He added that Prodeo Academy wants to be a good neighbor and make sure things are as least restrictive as possible. Having these signs should make things efficient for arrival and dismissal of their students and will hopefully eliminate the hassle for residents in the area. They are enjoying their new spot in Columbia Heights and want to maintain a good relationship with the City and everyone else in the neighborhood.

Motion by Davis to designate "No Parking" on the south side of $42{ }^{\text {nd }}$ Avenue from University Avenue to $4^{\text {th }}$ Street, next to Prodeo Academy; and designate "Loading Zone 6 AM to 3 PM School Days" on the west side of $4^{\text {th }}$ Street from 235 ' south of $42^{\text {nd }}$ Avenue to the south property line of Prodeo Academy. Seconded by Finkelson. Motion passed unanimously.

## 3. DESIGNATE "NO PARKING" ON THE EAST SIDE OF HEIGHTS DRIVE BETWEEN THE DRIVEWAY ENTRANCES FOR 4617 HEIGHTS DRIVE AND 4623 HEIGHTS DRIVE

Residents Present: Mike Morris, 4713 Heights Drive
At the July Traffic Commission meeting commissioners called for a Public Hearing to designate "No Parking" on the east side of Heights Drive between the driveway entrances for 4617 Heights Drive and 4623 Heights Drive.

A Public Hearing notice was published in the LIFE newspaper on August 6, 2021 and affected residents were notified via postcard.

There were no comments at the public hearing.
Motion by Davis to designate "No Parking" on the east side of Heights Drive between the driveway entrances for 4617 Heights Drive and 4623 Heights Drive. Seconded by Nekora. Motion passed unanimously.

## NEW BUSINESS

4. REQUEST FOR STOP SIGNS AT THE INTERSECTION OF 6TH STREET AND 41ST AVENUE

Residents Present: Erikka Curran, $42206^{\text {th }}$ Street
Alexandra Evens, $40406^{\text {th }}$ Street
Mr. Nathan Maghan and Ms. Erikka Curran have requested stop or yield signs at the intersection of 6th Street and 41st Avenue. The concern is accidents and near misses at the intersection.

The visibility at the intersection is somewhat limited because of the moderate rise in ground elevations behind the sidewalk on the east side of 6th Street, similar to many intersections in Columbia Heights. On $6^{\text {th }}$ Street, traffic stops at $40^{\text {th }}$ Avenue and $42^{\text {nd }}$ Avenue. On $41^{\text {st }}$ Avenue, traffic stops at $5^{\text {th }}$ Street and Jefferson Street.

The Police Department found one reported accident at this intersection in the previous five years and four reported accidents in the previous 10 years.

Ms. Curran lives at $42206^{\text {th }}$ Street which is one block down from the intersection of concern. She has lived there four years and stated she can't count how many times she's run down the street after hearing a crash. She understands part of the requested signage is dependent on the number of reported accidents but stated many accidents go unreported for various reasons. There have been two accidents within the last 14 days, approximately 10 days apart. In one accident a minivan ended up in someone's yard three houses down and there's still chemical dust on the street from the last accident. There are lots of pedestrians and children in the area. Stated her neighbor who's lived there for 40 years said this intersection has always been an issue and there have always been a lot of accidents. Ms. Curran stated Columbia Heights has grown approximately $10 \%$ in the past
year and younger families are moving into the area, potentially meaning more friends coming to visit who don't live in Columbia Heights and know there are uncontrolled intersections. When she moved here from NE Minneapolis she had no idea there were uncontrolled intersections in Columbia Heights. Many people are moving here from the city because it's affordable so they're not used to these uncontrolled intersections; feels they seem indicative of a smaller town, which Columbia Heights is not anymore.

In reading the guidelines, besides the number of accidents-three crashes in two years or five crashes in three years, another qualifier is if it's an unsignalized intersection in a signalized area. Every other intersection within that one block range has some type of signage so it seems shocking that this intersection is unmarked, and many drivers don't know who has the right of way. Also many vehicles cut through from $40^{\text {th }}$ to $4^{\text {th }}$ on her street.

Ms. Evens lives at $40406^{\text {th }}$ Street so she's right by the intersection. She stated the two really bad accidents in the past two weeks encouraged her to come and support putting up a stop sign. She's lived here since 2013 and the seemingly random uncontrolled intersections in the city have always thrown her off. The traffic control in Columbia Heights has always concerned her.

Captain Markham had crash data dating back to 2012. There were two accidents in 2012, one in 2014 and one in 2019. He did not have anything yet for the two most recent accidents. He did state that there are more controlled intersections on $41^{\text {st }}$ Avenue because there was a school there prior to Prodeo Academy. Schluender advised he drives this road often and this intersection does cause him to slow down, but only because he knows it's uncontrolled. If you didn't live in the area he sees how it could take you by surprise, also many drivers assume they have the right of way when they come upon an uncontrolled intersection. He thinks this is the only intersection in a long stretch that does not have any traffic control which makes it a little more dangerous.

Finkelson asked if a third party can report an accident, thinking if residents report the accidents this may bring the number up to meet the MUTCD guidelines. Captain Markham stated a third party can report an accident but one or both parties involved would need to be present to qualify it as a reported accident.

Schluender questioned the MUTCD definition of reported crashes. Do they have a specific definition of reported, i.e., we have the accidents reported to the police, but if we had a report from residents of the number of crashes here at a public hearing would we, as a body, be able to take that report(s) into consideration. The guidelines do not state reported to police, it just says reported.

Commission members discussed moving the stop signs so they are more evenly distributed so there's not a stop sign on every corner-perhaps going every other. Davis questioned if we are allowed to deviate at all from the MUTCD guidelines. Captain Markham did not have the answer; he thinks they need to be followed. He advised that perhaps going with the unsignalized intersection in a signalized area and focusing on $41^{\text {st }}$ Ave may be a better option than the number of reported accidents, but would need to speak with the Assistant City Engineer to see if this is a possibility. Davis is open to installing some type of signage on $6^{\text {th }}$ Street but would need to know if we're allowed to do this because it doesn't meet the MUTCD guidelines. Schluender agrees he would like to see some control at this intersection. The guidelines are produced federally and then
passed down to the state and then the city. They provide guidance to implement safe and correct traffic safety but there's also the matter of local control; there's a reason we have a Traffic Commission and we may want to do something we feel is safer. He feels we need input from the Assistant City Engineer as to how closely we need to follow these guidelines. He would like to see a diagram at the next meeting of uncontrolled intersections in the core of the city to see if this is indeed a rare uncontrolled intersection.

Ms. Curran questioned the MUTCD guideline of three accidents in two years. The last reported accident Captain Markham had was on December 10, 2019. Ms. Curran asked if we would be at the three accidents in two years mark if you include the two accidents that just occurred. The report Captain Markham had was run on August $9^{\text {th }}$ so he would need to check his records for the two accidents on the $5^{\text {th }}$ and $14^{\text {th }}$. If they're not in the state records he will check the database.

Motion by Schluender to table this item until the next meeting pending additional information from Police, either a crash report or details of the two accidents. He would also like a report showing the location of unsignalized and signalized intersections in the general area of Central Ave and University Ave to see if there is a pattern. Seconded by Davis. Motion passed unanimously.

## REPORTS

## City Engineer

None

## Police Chief

None

## Commissioners

Finkelson advised that due to the construction of the new City Hall he sees a lot of people walking in the street where the sidewalk is closed and feels there should be more crosswalk signage for pedestrians. Davis agreed we've gone quite a while without pedestrian access. There's no easy way to get around the construction. On Central Avenue it's difficult to see pedestrians due to the turn lane and the way the fencing is put up. Davis suggested we contact the developer to get the pedestrian access back soon. Currently the only place to cross is on Gould Ave unless you walk all the way to Reservoir Blvd and come around down $37^{\text {th }}$ Ave. Commissioners would like a report from City staff showing the timeline and options to improve pedestrian safety, especially for the handicapped.

Ciesynski asked if speed monitoring was done on $49^{\text {th }}$ Avenue between University and Central Avenues. Captain Markham would need to go back and look at his notes. Ciesynski stated 49th Avenue is a very fast, high traffic street. Captain Markham advised he can request more speed enforcement there.

## ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Finkelson, seconded by Davis to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

| AGENDA SECTION | OLD BUSINESS |
| :--- | :--- |
| MEETING DATE | SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 |


| ITEM: | REQUEST FOR STOP SIGNS AT THE INTERSECTION OF 6TH STREET AND 41ST AVENUE |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| DEPARTMENT: Public Works | BY/DATE: Kathy Young/September 15, 2021 |

BACKGROUND: Mr. Nathan Maghan and Ms. Erikka Curran have requested stop or yield signs at the intersection of 6th Street and 41st Avenue. The concern is accidents and near misses at the intersection.

The Traffic Commission tabled this item to the September meeting to review updated accident information.
The visibility at the intersection is somewhat limited because of the moderate rise in ground elevations behind the sidewalk on the east side of 6th Street, similar to many intersections in Columbia Heights.

On $6^{\text {th }}$ Street, traffic stops at $40^{\text {th }}$ Avenue and $42^{\text {nd }}$ Avenue. On $41^{\text {st }}$ Avenue, traffic stops at $5^{\text {th }}$ Street and Jefferson Street. A map of the traffic control in the area between University Avenue and Jefferson Street from 40th Avenue to 44th Avenue is included in the packet.

The Police Department found the following accident records for this intersection:

| Date | Type |
| :--- | :--- |
| $03 / 05 / 2012$ | Angle |
| $11 / 03 / 2012$ | Angle |
| $12 / 10 / 2014$ | Angle |
| $12 / 10 / 2019$ | Angle |
| $08 / 05 / 2021$ | Angle |
| $08 / 14 / 2021$ | Angle |

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: With three or more crashes that involve the failure to yield right-of-way within a 2-year period, the number and type of reported accidents meet the MMUTCD guideline for installing Stop or Yield signs. To designate right of way at the intersection, staff recommends stopping or yielding the traffic on 41st Avenue.

## RECOMMENDED MOTION(S):

MOTION: Move to call a Public Hearing to install stop signs at the intersection of 6th Street and 41st Avenue, stopping traffic on 41st Avenue.

MINNESOTA MANUAL ON UNIFORM TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES SEPTEMBER 2020

The MUTCD guidelines for installing STOP or YIELD signs at intersections are listed below:

Engineering judgment should be used to establish intersection control. The following factors should be considered:
A. Vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic volumes on all approaches;
B. Number and angle of approaches;
C. Approach speeds;
D. Sight distance available on each approach; and
E. Reported crash experience.

YIELD or STOP signs should be used at an intersection if one or more of the following conditions exist:
A. An intersection of a less important road with a main road where application of the normal right-of-way rule would not be expected to provide reasonable compliance with the law;
B. A street entering a designated through highway or street; and/or
C. An unsignalized intersection in a signalized area.

In addition, the use of YIELD or STOP signs should be considered at the intersection of two minor streets or local roads where the intersection has more than three approaches and where one or more of the following conditions exist:
A. The combined vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian volume entering the intersection from all approaches averages more than 2,000 units per day.
B. The ability to see conflicting traffic on an approach is not sufficient to allow a road user to stop or yield in compliance with the normal right-of-way rule if such stopping or yielding is necessary; and/or
C. Crash records indicate that five or more crashes that involve the failure to yield the right-of-way at the intersection under the normal right-of-way rule have been reported within a 3-year period, or that three or more such crashes have been reported within a 2- year period.

YIELD or STOP signs should not be used for speed control.

6th St and 41 st Ave


## Parcel Information: Approx. Acres:

## Commissioner:

Owner Information:



| AGENDA SECTION | NEW BUSINESS |
| :--- | :--- |
| MEETING DATE | SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 |


| ITEM: | REQUEST FOR 4-WAY STOP SIGNS AT THE INTERSECTION OF JACKSON STREET AND 50TH AVENUE |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| DEPARTMENT: Public Works | BY/DATE: Kathy Young/September 15, 2021 |

BACKGROUND: Mr. David Wenzel has requested the traffic control be changed from a two-way stop to a four-way stop at the intersection of Jackson Street and 50th Avenue. The concern is accidents and near misses at the intersection. The email correspondence is attached.

Staff reviewed visibility at the intersection and found it to be good.

On Jackson Street, traffic stops at 49th Avenue and 51st Avenue. On 50th Avenue, traffic stops at Central Avenue and Monroe Street. Supplemental "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" signs were recently added to the stop sign posts on 50th Avenue.

The Police Department found one reported accident in both 2014 and 2016, two accidents in 2019 and one accident in 2021. Two accidents were angle collisions, two were rear end collisions and one was listed as other.

The most recent accident was after the supplemental signs were installed. The driver on 50th Avenue failing to stop indicated she was not able to see the sign because the sun was in her eyes.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends denying the request for a four-way stop at the intersection of Jackson Street and 50th Avenue based on not meeting the MMUTCD guidelines for Multi-Way Stop. The most pertinent guideline is listed below:

Five or more reported crashes in a 12-month period that are susceptible to correction by a multi-way stop installation. Such crashes include right-turn and left-turn collisions as well as right-angle collisions.

## RECOMMENDED MOTION(S):

MOTION: Move to deny the request for 4-way stop signs at the intersection of Jackson Street and 50th Avenue based on not meeting the MMUTCD guidelines for Multi-Way Stop.

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ATTACHMENT(S): MMUTCD Guidelines for Multi-Way Stop and Yield Signs
Aerial
E-mail
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## MINNESOTA MANUAL ON UNIFORM TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES SEPTEMBER 2020

The MUTCD guidelines for installing MULTI-WAY STOP signs at intersections are listed below:

The decision to install multi-way stop control should be based on an engineering study.
The following criteria should be considered in the engineering study for a multi-way STOP sign installation:
A. Where traffic control signals are justified, the multi-way stop is an interim measure that can be installed quickly to control traffic while arrangements are being made for the installation of the traffic control signal.
B. Five or more reported crashes in a 12-month period that are susceptible to correction by a multi-way stop installation. Such crashes include right-turn and left-turn collisions as well as right-angle collisions.
C. Minimum volumes:

1. The vehicular volume entering the intersection from the major street approaches (total of both approaches) averages at least 300 vehicles per hour for any 8 hours of an average day; and
2. The combined vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle volume entering the intersection from the minor street approaches (total of both approaches)averages at least 200 units per hour for the same 8 hours, with an average delay to minor-street vehicular traffic of at least 30 seconds per vehicle during the highest hour; but
3. If the $85^{\text {th }}$-percentile approach speed of the major street traffic exceeds 40 mph , the minimum vehicular volume warrants are 70 percent of the values provided in Items 1 and 2.
D. Where no single criterion is satisfied, but where Criteria B, C.1, and C. 2 are all satisfied to 80 percent of the minimum values. Criterion C. 3 is excluded from this condition.

Other criteria that may be considered in an engineering study include:
A. The need to control left-turn conflicts;
B. The need to control vehicle/pedestrian conflicts near locations that generate high pedestrian volumes;
C. Locations where a road user, after stopping, cannot see conflicting traffic and is not able to negotiate the intersection unless conflicting cross traffic is also required to stop; and
D. An intersection of two residential neighborhood collector (through) streets of similar design and operating characteristics where multi-way stop control would improve traffic operational characteristics of the intersection.

## Kathy Young

From: David Wenzel [mailto:dawenzel14@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2021 10:30 AM
To: Kathy Young
Subject: Re: Stop Sign Issue
Hi Kathy,
Although I think the "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" addition has cut down on honking, there was a fairly serious crash this morning at the intersection. Cops and tow trucks were called, although the people looked to be okay.

I would like to formally request that a 4 way stop be put in at this intersection.
Thank you,
David

On Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 11:16 AM Kathy Young < KYoung @ columbiaheightsmn.gov> wrote:
Hello-
Thank you for the email concerning the intersection of $50^{\text {th }}$ Avenue and Jackson Street. The City will add "Cross Traffic Does Not Stop" signs to the existing stop signs on $50^{\text {th }}$ Avenue at Jackson Street.

A request to change the location of Stop signs or to add Stop signs would need to be submitted to the Traffic Commission for review.


Kathy Young| Assistant Oity Engineer
City of Columbia Heights| Public Works Department
Direct: (763) 706-3704
$63738^{\text {th }}$ Avenue NE | Columbia Heights, M N 55421
Main: (763) 706-3700
KYoung@ ColumbiaHeightsM N.gov
From: David Wenzel [mailto:dawenzel14@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, July 26, 2021 4:55 PM
To: Publicworks
Subject: Stop Sign Issue
Hi,
I live on the intersection of Jackson Street NE and 50th Ave NE in Columbia Heights. I work from home and sit in front of the window and hear about one incident per day, with tires screeching and horns honking. The stop signs at the intersection just don't really make sense, as the busy road is required to stop while the side road isn't. It seems like the stop signs should either be switched from 50th onto Jackson instead, or else it should be a four-way stop. There are also a lot of kids running around the area. Is this something that can be changed?

Thanks,
David

Jackson and 50th


## Fサム/ NER

| Survey Name | 49th Ave and Jefferson ST NE | Location | 49th Ave and Jefferson ST N... | Speed Unit | Miles/Hour |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Start | 2021-08-26 18:28 | Traffic Direction | Undefined | Speed Limit | 30 |
| Stop | 2021-08-29 10:50 | Zone | None | Min Speed Threshold | 10 |
| Operator | 000 | Min Following Time | 0.0 | Max Speed Threshold | 120 |
| Survey Direction | Both | Time Resolution | 1 | Speed Resolution | 1 |


| Total Vehicle Connt | 11931 | $100 \%$ | Average Speed | 29.4 | MPH | In Pace Count | 7284 | $61 \%$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Under Limit Count | 6415 | $53 \%$ | Minimum Speed | 10 | MPH | 10 mph Pace | $25-34$ | MPH |
| Over Limit Count | 5516 | $47 \%$ | Maximum Speed | 112 | MPH | Standard Deviation | 7 | MPH |
| 10 Over Limit Count | 419 | $3 \%$ | 85Speed Percentile | 35 | MPH | Average Speed Over Limit | 34.7 | MPH |

## FHALNER Radar | Lidar

49th Ave and Jefferson ST NE-Chart-2


## F FLNEF Radar | Lidar

49th Ave and Jefferson ST NE-Chart-3


## STALKER ratare luar

49th Ave and Jefferson ST NE-Chart-4


## 4 P CHEFR Radar | Lidar

| Survey Name | 49th Ave and Jefferson ST NE | Location | 49th Ave and Jefferson ST N... | Speed Unit | Miles/Hour |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Start | 2021-08-26 18:28 | Traffic Direction | Undefined | Speed Limit | 30 |
| Stop | 2021-08-29 10:50 | Zone | None | Min Speed Threshold | 10 |
| Operator | 000 | Min Following Time | 0.0 | Max Speed Threshold | 120 |
| Survey Direction | Both | Time Resolution | 1 | Speed Resolution | 1 |


| Total Vehicle Connt | 11931 | $100 \%$ | Average Speed | 29.4 | MPH | In Pace Count | 7284 | $61 \%$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Under Limit Count | 6415 | $53 \%$ | Minimum Speed | 10 | MPH | 10 mph Pace | $25-34$ | MPH |
| Over Limit Count | 5516 | $47 \%$ | Maximum Speed | 112 | MPH | Standard Deviation | 7 | MPH |
| 10 Over Limit Count | 419 | $3 \%$ | 85Speed Percentile | 35 | MPH | Average Speed Over Limit | 34.7 | MPH |

