

CIRCLEVILLE SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 5/14/2024

Circleville City Service Committee convened in City Council Chambers, 127 South Court St, Circleville, OH. Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. Present at Roll Call: Chair Tom Duvall and members Sheri Theis, Zach Brooks, and Clerk Melissa Burns. Other Council members present: Tom Klitzka and John Moats. Invited guest present: Mayor Michelle Blanton, Jim Stanley, and Brian Frost.

Duvall called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Theis motioned to approve the April 9, 2024, minutes. Seconded by Brooks. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO REMOVE THE EXISTING FOUR LANE STREET MARKINGS ON NORTH AND SOUTH COURT STREET FROM PLEASANT AVENUE TO THE CONNECTOR ROAD ON THE SOUTH END AND REPLACE WITH TWO THRU LANES AND A CENTER TURN LANE WHERE APPROPRIATE.

Discussion: Stanley stated this Ordinance is to take the road from four lanes down to three with a center turn lane. This was requested a few years ago from downtown businesses for safety concerns. The traffic counts do not require four lanes. The current traffic count is about 8700 average daily traffic (AADT). The two-lane configuration can serve up to 15,000 AADT. The major concerns were no left-turns. Stanley stated it is not safe to try and turn left. The current lane widths do not meet the standard for lane width. The current lane widths are only 10ft or slightly under, but it's required to be 12ft. Court Street has had parking over the curb for safety concerns as cars were getting hit and their mirrors knocked off.

Theis confirmed if the center lane was going to be all the way down because the Ordinance references where appropriate. Stanley confirmed it will be all the way through.

Duvall stated he received 7 different letters and Stanley already spoke on five of the issues raised in those letters. Duvall spoke to the Fire Chief and he confirmed this will not impact the emergency vehicles. They already have similar roads on Pickaway and Main Street so this is not new for them. Another issue raised was the trains and grade crossings being blocked. Duvall said in the past they have been in touch with Norfolk and they since have done a better job of not blocking the grade crossing when filling trains. He understands this will always be an issue in Circleville but doesn't believe the proposed road configuration would impact that.

Jeff Coleman stated Stanley's comments were contradictory on whether the street is busy or not. He would like to be provided with the records of the studies done. He asked when the studies were performed and questions the legitimacy of the studies. Coleman believes Main Street has more side swipes than Court Street and would like to see those records. He is worried about changing the image of the city forever and would like to see the data of the dangers.

The Mayor stated she does have numbers from the Police Department. From January 1, 2023, through May 1, 2024, there was a total of 88 accidents on Court Street between Pleasant Street and Sheetz; 22 were injury accidents, 51 were non-injury accidents, and 15 were non-injury accidents considered hit skips.

Coleman stated he doesn't feel this warrants the cost for this project for a few mirrors and people parking in the grass. He referenced an online post that he saw earlier where everyone was in agreement and against the lanes changing.

Duvall said he had received correspondence from at least three downtown businesses in support of the ordinance and two downtown homeowners. He shared one homeowner's story of already having to replace 4 mirrors on their car. He said he doesn't give a lot of credibility to what is posted online. Duvall stated he wasn't trying to be critical but would not likely decide based off what was posted on Facebook. Coleman stated he wouldn't expect him too but maybe to the room. Duvall confirmed with Stanley that he did have the engineers review this and he does have data from that. Stanley confirmed and said that is where the numbers came from to support the Ordinance. Stanley did clarify that the street is busy but not busy enough to carry four lanes. Stanley stated Main and Court Street are very comparable with the amount of traffic it carries with Main Street carrying about 700 more cars a day. Stanley stated he can get the numbers out to the citizens or supply it to Council to distribute. Stanley stated the AADT's come from ODOT. ODOT has several counters we don't see in the asphalt. The numbers are available on their website.

Sonya Kneece asked why people on Court Street weren't notified but businesses seem to have been. Duvall stated no one was notified because it's the first time they are hearing about this and he did not reach out to the businesses, they reached out the same as the audience has. She raised concerns when she would try to parallel park and the car behind her not having anywhere to go. Duvall stated it would be the same as on Main Street and when people parallel park there. Kneece asked about Fire Safety and if traffic is backed up how would the Fire Department get to her house. This spoke to say that if there is a center turn lane then it would be a better chance of opening that lane up for the Fire Department to get through. Kneece asked how much this would cost the City. Duvall said they would only be changing the lines, and it would likely be less than \$70,000. Stanley agreed with that estimate but has not yet priced the project out. Kneece said this would affect the event Take Back the Street. They have an event once a month and it brings a lot of money and people into town. Duvall said that is the only concern he is unable to address. He said its only impact is it would be a single lane and not a double lane. Duvall said they have to weigh Take Back The Street vs the safety of the street. Kneece asked for the numbers since Main Street has been changed. Kneece said if they are worried about people speeding then give them tickets. Duvall stated speeding was not part of this ordinance. Kneece said it was posted in the article. Duvall stated he doesn't know anything about the article she is referring to. This asked if she was referring to a post on Scioto Post, which Kneece replied, "it might have been". Duvall stated the City has no responsibility with, for, or against the Scioto Post and he isn't trying to be difficult but he just doesn't understand since he has no knowledge of it. Duvall stated the Ordinance reads: "WHEREAS, this will allow enough room for parking on both sides of the street, allow more efficient traffic flow and safe left turn conditions. The new lane configuration will create wider travel lanes and negate the need for vehicles to illegally park over curbs as well as reduce the number of incidents involving vehicular crashes". Kneece argues people do not need to park on Court Street and they should be ticketed. Duvall explained that because of the nature of Court Street they do not ticket them. Duvall explains this Ordinance is trying to resolve that issue so they can park safely on Court Street.

Dennis Hemming spoke to state he lives on Watt Street which is one block north of the main road. He believes traffic will be diverted onto his road if the Ordinance passes. He doesn't want to be inconvenienced with the additional traffic. He asked what the distances and widths are for both Court and Main Street. Hemming suggested taking away parking on one side of the road and leaving it a four-lane road to correct the lanes to 12ft. Stanley said that configuration is possible and has been done elsewhere. He said it would still require restriping the road and you would lose the left-turn lane. This stated you would end up with a lot of unhappy people if they lost their parking. Duvall said the left-turn lane is the biggest safety factor. Stanley also stated the left-turn lane and lane width are the biggest safety factors. Hemming proposes a center turning arrow with the lights.

The Mayor stated she received the numbers for the same time frame for Main Street from the Police Department; 19 total accidents, 7 non-injury, 9 injury accidents, and 3 hit skip accidents. Stanley spoke to say the right of way widths are 90ft on both Court and Main Street. Aaron Barthelmas is worried impatient drivers would use the center lane as a passing lane. He believes there will be a bottleneck unless there is a signal light for the center lane. He believes more police presence would be beneficial and for the police to start enforcing the rules. Coleman asked how many of the 88 accidents on Court Street are from the Sheetz area. The Mayor said she would investigate that question.

Joseph Bocook said he would like to see a study from the city not the state. He works from home and sees the traffic backed up in the 400 block of Court Street from trains. He would like to know how many of the 88 accidents are from left hand turns. He says Court Street has a lot of people speeding and believes the center lane will just become a passing lane. Theis asked Bocook if he has witnessed any drag racing in the 400 block. Bocook said yes and he doesn't think the lane change will stop it. Barthelmas said the drag racing on Nicholas drive after school lets out is bad, 65-70 mph. Barthelmas states people are frustrated with the the golf cart drivers and are impatiently passing them.

William Haddox says it's a waste of time if the police don't enforce anything. He thinks the center turn lane will just become a U-turn Lane. He would like to leave this decision to the citizens to make.

Helen Maddox spoke to state she has never seen more what ifs in her life. She hears drag racing every day of the week. Maddox states there is considerable speeding and one driver hit her van that was parked in front of her house. A few years later her mirrors were hit on that same vehicle. Maddox also said her household had someone hit a truck's mirror that was parked due to the limited space. Maddox said the cars at Everts park in the tree line because there is not enough space. If the cars parked on the street, then they would be taking up half the lane that cars drive in. Maddox states cars are wider than they used to be. She is nervous about the risk of getting in and out of her car. She is in support of the ordinance, and it makes sense to her when trying to go to the post office or putting a child in a car seat. This would give both the parked cars and the passing cars wider lanes.

Linda Chancey spoke to say she has trouble crossing the street with four lanes because one lane will stop and the other won't. She also has a problem with the golf carts. Stanley stated he will confirm how ODOT receives their information. He said Pickaway County also has traffic counters. He will get whatever information is needed to help with the decision. Duvall said we will also have more details from the police department.

Klitzka states he had someone fly by and hit a door while he was trying to get his grandkid in the car. Klitzka believes there is definitely a safety concern. Klitzka received a message from Janet Fee stating she doesn't want angled parking.

The Mayor stated this started a few years ago over; people parking more than 2 hours in the 2 hour parking spots; peoples mirrors being knocked off; and people scared of getting in and out of the cars. The City did review options for angled parking at that time, and it was decided it's not a great idea. She talked about the bump out with a clock and statue to give the downtown a more historic feeling.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE: Brooks motioned to amend the Ordinance title to replace Pleasant Avenue to Pleasant Street. Theis seconded. Roll call (3 Yeas – 0 Nays) Motion carried.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE: Theis motioned to amend the Ordinance body to replace Pleasant Avenue to Pleasant Street. Brooks seconded. Roll call (3 Yeas – 0 Nays) Motion carried.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE: Theis motioned to amend the Ordinance to remove the wording “where appropriate”. Brooks seconded. Roll call (3 Yeas – 0 Nays) Motion carried.
MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE: Brooks motioned to table the Ordinance to the next Service meeting. Theis seconded. Roll call (3 Yeas – 0 Nays) Motion carried.

b) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO A WATER POLLUTION CONTROL LOAN FUND (WPCLF) AGREEMENT TO FUND THE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR MONTCLAIR AVENUE PROJECT CONSTRUCTION; TENTATIVELY AWARD THE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR MONTCLAIR AVENUE, CONTRACT 1-2024 TO THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER; AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN.

Discussion Stanly spoke to state this is the second Ordinance in this phase. There will be a total of three Ordinances and is required when entering into a WPCLF loan. Stanley states this ordinance is to state the City will award the contract to the lowest bidder.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE: Brooks motioned to forward the Ordinance to the next Council meeting on May 21, 2024, with a recommendation for passage. Theis seconded. Roll call (3 Yeas – 0 Nays) Motion carried.

c) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO PURCHASE A KUBOTA L3902DT TRACTOR AND FINISH MOWER ON BEHALF OF THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT THROUGH THE SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM AND DECLARING THIS AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion. This Ordinance is to replace a 1992 John Deer tractor that doesn’t shift into high range and needs retired. The new tractor has been budgeted. The old tractor will go on govdeals to sell.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE: Theis motioned to forward the Ordinance to the next Council meeting on May 21, 2024, with a recommendation for passage. Brooks seconded. Roll call (3 Yeas – 0 Nays) Motion carried.

Old or Any Other Business

Brooks motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m. Theis seconded. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by: Melissa Burns, Clerk