



AGENDA

TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 24, 2018
6:30 p.m.
2nd Floor Council Chamber
1095 Duane Street, Astoria OR 97103

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. MINUTES
 - a. October 24, 2017
4. PROJECT UPDATES
5. NEW BUSINESS
6. REPORT OF OFFICERS
7. PUBLIC COMMENTS
8. ADJOURNMENT

**THIS MEETING IS ACCESSIBLE TO THE DISABLED. AN
INTERPRETER FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED MAY BE REQUESTED
UNDER THE TERMS OF ORS 192.630 BY CONTACTING
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, 503-338-5183.**

ASTORIA TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Astoria City Hall

October 24, 2017

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice President Easom called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Vice President Kent Easom, Jennifer Cameron-Lattek, Sean Fitzpatrick, Daryl Moore, Jan Mitchell and Brookley Henri.

Commissioners Excused: President David Pearson

Staff Present: Planner Nancy Ferber, City Engineer Jeff Harrington, and Police Sergeant Brian Aydt, Senior Engineering Technician Steve Ruggles, consultant Hannah Dankbar. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Mitchell moved that the Traffic Safety Committee approve the minutes of July 25, 2017 as presented, seconded by Commissioner Fitzpatrick. Motion passed unanimously.

PROJECT UPDATES:

Item 4(a): Public Works Updates

City Engineer Harrington and Sergeant Aydt updated the TSC on the following projects:

- Bond Street Retaining Wall – Sight distance improvements were made at the 2nd and 3rd Street intersections.
- 16th Street/Hwy. 30 Intersection – After discussing issues with Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), directional signs were installed.
- Coxcomb Hill – Chevron guidance signs were installed at the bank. Staff is working on installing a guardrail as well.
- Oregon House Bill 2597 on Distracted Driving – He handed out a fact sheet on the bill, noting that more copies were available in the lobby.

Item 4(b): Police Department Updates

Sergeant Aydt said the portable speed board had been placed in various locations according to citizens' requests. Some of the deployments have verified that drivers are speeding in certain areas.

NEW BUSINESS: There was none.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS: No reports.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lois Dupey read a memorandum she had written to the Traffic Safety Committee, noting she had testified about the same issue in February. (See attached letter) She read:

"To Whom It May Concern:

It has come to the attention of those of us who drive public service transport vehicles that there is an issue in the city of Astoria regarding safety at crosswalks. As most of you know, people have been killed in Astoria's crosswalks. In February of this year, I testified before this committee that the City's crosswalks are not in compliance with State law, in so far as the City allows parking within inches of them. I testified before you that there are many designated parking places so close to the crosswalks that it is literally impossible to see pedestrians because many vehicles are right on top of crosswalks. Several parking spots are only an inch or two away.

My main point in February was 'The good news is that there is an opportunity for the City of Astoria to bring its parking spaces next to crosswalks into compliance with State law before another catastrophe occurs and someone sues the City.' Although I was promised an answer on this seemingly important public safety and City liability issue, none was forthcoming. Moreover, although my testimony was clearly enunciated, neither my name, nor address, nor the main point, were made a part of the transcription service's text of the minutes you are paying a contractor to produce. This too, is a liability it would seem, both the City and the public. In the interim, I did verify with the State of Oregon Administrative Services Department that Oregon Administrative Code does in fact require that parking be at least 20 feet away from crosswalks and that allowing it closer is a violation of State law.

I have this recorded testimony from Ms. Dorothy Upton if you would care to access it.

Once again, on behalf of the public transport operators and all drivers and the public at large, we are seeking only that the crosswalks be brought into compliance with State law. As well, it may be a good idea to consider developing a public City safety board so that things like this can be more easily solved as it is easy to overlook them while attending to seemingly more urgent public safety issues.

Thank you for your attention."

Ms. Dupey noted her address was also included on the memorandum.

Commissioner Moore noted Ms. Dupey's name, address, and comments were transcribed into the February meeting minutes.

Commissioner Mitchell said she remembered when Ms. Dupey spoke in February and was aware of the crosswalk accidents that resulted in deaths. She thinks about the safety issues as she parks downtown because Astoria is an old city without adequate parking, particularly during tourist season. She believed the only way to solve this problem would be to remove eight parking spaces from each block downtown.

Commissioner Moore noted that at the July meeting, he requested an update from Staff on the required distance between parking spaces and crosswalks. He read from the minutes of the July meeting, which indicated that one of City Council's goals for this fiscal year was to evaluate the downtown parking supply and traffic safety issues, and that State standards are not enforced in many cities throughout Oregon. This is an ongoing issue that has not been discarded and the City continues to address this on multiple levels.

City Engineer Harrington updated the TSC on the City's efforts to address parking and safety issues downtown. Engineering Staff had confirmed that 132 parking spaces would need to be eliminated in the downtown area and they were still evaluating whether bus and taxi stops would need to be relocated. Staff was also updating signage indicating that vehicles above a certain height are prohibited from parking near certain crosswalks. He had spoken to traffic engineers in other cities, who said they were faced with the same issues. This is one of many City Council goals and he could recommend it be made a priority. He was amazed at how many Oregon Revised Statutes were not enforced. Along with the 20-foot rule, parking is required to be 50 feet away from every stop sign, which would eliminate many more parking spaces. Fire hydrant spacing requirements are enforced and Astoria has a low pedestrian crash rate.

Commissioner Mitchell stated that Astoria has many pedestrians. She did not believe that signage would help. In the summer, there are many people who are not familiar with what traffic does, so drivers must be very conservative on Commercial and Marine. She recommended a safe driving campaign.

Vice President Easom added that pedestrians will walk out in front of cars. Instead of paying attention to traffic, pedestrians will simply put out their hand, expecting drivers to stop within 10 feet of an intersection. Pedestrians are told that cars have to stop. However, there is not a reasonable amount of education going out to pedestrians about what it really takes for a vehicle to stop. He believed the issue should be addressed with both drivers and pedestrians. He also believed the 20-foot rule would be very difficult to accomplish in Astoria.

Commissioner Henri recommended flags be made available at intersections for pedestrians to carry across the crosswalk.

City Engineer Harrington confirmed that Astoria had already tried this, but tourists were taking selfies in the middle of the highway and flags were stolen. Drivers need to look out the front window and pedestrians need to be defensive. When both the driver and pedestrian fail to do the right thing, an unfortunate interaction occurs.

Sergeant Ayd confirmed the City had been working on sight distance and pedestrian problems for many years. When pedestrians have to walk 10 feet out into the crosswalk just to get past a parked car, it gives drivers the impression they have jumped out into the crosswalk.

City Engineer Harrington added that the State highway has the majority of violations. He also noted the 20-foot rule does not apply to marked parking spaces and recommended that City Council consider removing the markings downtown.

Ms. Dupey said she was glad that TSC confirmed the 20-foot rule was law and that Staff recommended the City address the issues. If someone is killed in a crosswalk, they could bankrupt the City. Public transport operators drive throughout the city every day and they cannot see pedestrians. Cruise ship visitors do not care to pay attention and they jump out into traffic. She believed it was just a matter of time before one of them was killed. She requested that her written memorandum be made a part of the minutes.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned to convene the Planning Commission Meeting at 7:09 pm.

ATTEST:

Secretary

APPROVED:

City Manager

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM

TO: ASTORIA CITY COUNCIL PLANNING COMMISSION/ SAFETY COMMITTEE

FROM: LOIS DUPEY

DATE: OCTOBER 24, 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

IT HAS COME TO THE ATTENTION OF THOSE OF US DRIVING PUBLIC SERVICE TRANSPORT VEHICLES, THAT THERE IS AN ISSUE IN THE CITY OF ASTORIA REGARDING SAFETY AT CROSSWALKS.

AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED IN ASTORIA'S CROSSWALKS.

IN FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR, I TESTIFIED BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE, THAT THE CITY'S CROSSWALKS ARE NOT IN COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LAW, IN SO FAR AS THE CITY ALLOWS PARKING WITHIN INCHES OF THEM. I TESTIFIED BEFORE YOU THAT THERE ARE MANY DESIGNATED PARKING PLACES SO CLOSE TO THE CROSSWALKS THAT IT IS LITERALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE PEDESTRIANS, BECAUSE MANY VEHICLES ARE RIGHT ON TOP OF CROSSWALKS. SEVERAL PARKING SPOTS ARE ONLY AN INCH OR TWO AWAY.

MY MAIN POINT IN FEBRUARY WAS: "THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE CITY OF ASTORIA TO BRING ITS PARKING SPACES NEXT TO CROSSWALKS INTO COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LAW, BEFORE ANOTHER CATASTROPHE OCCURS, AND SOMEONE SUES THE CITY."

ALTHOUGH I WAS PROMISED AN ANSWER ON THIS SEEMINGLY IMPORTANT PUBLIC SAFETY (AND CITY LIABILITY) ISSUE, NONE WAS FORTHCOMING. MOREOVER, ALTHOUGH MY TESTIMONY WAS CLEARLY ENUNCIATED, NEITHER MY NAME, NOR ADDRESS, NOR THE MAIN POINT WERE MADE A PART OF THE TRANSCRIPTION SERVICE TEXT OF THE MINUTES YOU ARE PAYING A CONTRACTOR TO PRODUCE. (THIS TOO IS A LIABILITY, IT WOULD SEEM.)

IN THE INTERIM, I DID VERIFY WITH THE STATE OF OREGON ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT THAT OREGON ADMINISTRATIVE CODE DOES IN FACT REQUIRE THAT PARKING BE AT LEAST 20 FEET AWAY FROM CROSSWALKS, AND THAT ALLOWING IT CLOSER IS A VIOLATION OF STATE LAW. I HAVE THIS RECORDED TESTIMONY FROM MS. "DOROTHY UPTON", IF YOU WOULD CARE TO ACCESS IT.

ONCE AGAIN, ON BEHALF OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS, AND ALL DRIVERS, AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE, WE ARE SEEKING ONLY THAT THE CROSSWALKS BE BROUGHT INTO COMPLIANCE WITH LAW.

AS WELL, IT MAY BE A GOOD IDEA TO CONSIDER DEVELOPING A PUBLIC/CITY SAFETY BOARD, SO THAT THINGS LIKE THIS CAN BE MORE EASILY SOLVED, AS IT IS EASY TO OVERLOOK THEM WHILE ATTENDING TO SEEMINGLY MORE URGENT PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION. PLEASE RESPOND TO THIS REQUEST AT: P.O. BOX 1282, ASTORIA.

LOIS J. DUPEY/

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES VEHICLE OPERATOR

CC: MAYOR OF ASTORIA