

TRAFFIC COMMISSION MINUTES

December 8, 2021- 10:00 a.m.

3rd Floor Council Chambers – City Hall

CITY CLERK

2021 DEC 14 PM 2:42

	Name	Members' Term Attendance (mtgs attended-mtgs absent)	End of Current Term of Office
MEMBERS PRESENT:	John Reese	(24-00)	12/04/2022
	Robert Douglass	(18-00)	02/11/2024
	Mike Voltz	(02-01)	06/28/2026
	Randy Parlett	(20-09)	07/11/2023
	Keith Marriot	(18-05)	08/27/2023

STAFF PRESENT: Andrew Clements, Director of Public Works, and Transportation
Ashley Parker, Recording Secretary
Brady McKinley, Assistant Director of Public Works
Keven Schneider, Superintendent of Streets
Scott Gatewood, Traffic Supervisor

Call to Order.

John Reese called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Item 1-Approve November 10, 2021 minutes. Randy Parlett moved to approve the November 10, 2021 minutes and Robert Douglass seconded. By general consent, the minutes of the November 10, 2021 meeting were unanimously approved. **Motion Carried.**

Item 2- Discuss formal request received from Hazels Coffee and Roasting Company: Requesting 2-hour parking spots as a loading and unloading area for shipments and parking for customers and residents, placed outside of the American Electric Lofts and Hazels building on the west side of 3rd Street, between Jules and Faraon. There were no negative comments regarding this agenda item. A Hazels coffee employee attended the meeting. It was explained that this change would benefit the business, as well as American Electric Lofts to have 2-hour parking for residents and customers. It was also said that the parking lot to the north of the building may soon be used for private parking only and not available for use by customers.

Randy Parlett motioned to place 2-hour parking on the west side of 3rd St. between Jules and Faraon. Mike Voltz seconded the motion. By general consent, the motion was unanimously approved. **Motion Carried.**

Item 3- Discuss formal request received from Scott Schneider: Requesting to change State Street from a two-way to a one-way street, west bound from Ashland Avenue to 26th Street, due to accidents and the street being narrow. Several residents from State St., along with a few surrounding streets, attended the meeting to voice opinions on this matter. The residents stated their concern for the narrow road that included excessive speed, too much truck traffic, multiple accidents and with cars parking along both sides of the road it makes it hard to see oncoming traffic traveling over the hill.

Andy Clements stated that a traffic data collection was conducted to capture traffic count, volume, and speed. To be considered high volume, the average count should be 400 or more, but for State St. the average daily count was about 117 cars per day, which is a low count compared to other residential neighborhoods.

The data indicates that State is an exceptionally low volume street and that reports of cut-through traffic and unusual usage were not supported by the data. The 85th Percentile was calculated by measuring the speed of vehicles traveling at about 25 mph, which means most of the drivers were traveling the posted speed limit. This is an outstanding example of compliance with posted speed, meaning that the reports of excessive speed are not supported by the data.

Relative to the report of accidents on State, Scott Gatewood added that an accident report was pulled and there have been no accidents on State Street in the last 5 years, but a few along Ashland Ave. This data does not support the report of excessive accidents on State. Residents stated a lot of the accidents occur at the east end of State Street turning onto Ashland Ave due to drivers having a hard time seeing oncoming cars traveling along Ashland. However, the intersection of State and Ashland does not demonstrate an unusual number of accidents between local and collector traffic and the sight triangle obstructions reported are not unusual for the corridor.

Staff had identified at the time of the request that to address such a problem (narrow street), the best method would be to restrict parking on one side of the street or the other. However, that solution would pose significant problems for the homes located along the street. Staff concern with changing the street to one-way was that such an operational change would likely increase travel speeds (based upon national studies that have researched direction of travel changes). Given that the speed limit is being complied with, traffic volumes are exceptionally low, and accident rates were zero in the last five years, the analysis of State does not point to a need for a change. A change to one-way would not improve the reported problems as the data has not identified a problem to resolve. The street is simply one of many streets in St. Joseph that are narrow, and it is operating safely.

If the street becomes a one-way, the residents stated it would be nice to not worry about oncoming traffic or removing any parking. Removing parking along one side would open the street up a bit but give residents less parking. There are alleyways located in the back, although it was reported they are in poor shape and most residents cannot travel along them to access the property from the back. Changing the direction of travel can impact travel patterns, school bus route/service, emergency services and can be confusing and take a while to adjust to but again it does not eliminate parking.

One resident submitted a letter in opposition to the proposal, stating that the suggestion would negatively impact he and others by disrupting the natural circulation of traffic.

Randy Parlett motioned to change the direction of travel on State Street from two-way to one-way travel, traveling east to west. Mike Voltz seconded the motion. By general consent, the motion was unanimously approved. **Motion Carried.**

With no other items on the agenda, John Reese, Chairperson, motioned that the meeting be adjourned. **Meeting Adjourned.**

Next regularly scheduled Traffic Commission meeting: January 12, 2021

Minutes respectfully submitted

/s/ Ashley Parker

Ashley Parker, Recording Secretary