

La Porte City Traffic Commission

The February meeting of the La Porte City Traffic Commission was held at the La Porte City Hall Council Chambers on February 7, 2023. The following members were present:

Karyl Feikes – Chairperson
Paul Brettin
Laura Konieczny

Andy Snyder – Secretary
Rip Ludlow
Mike Frazee

Sarah Ford
Paul Vincent

The following items summarize the meeting:

1. The minutes of the January 10, 2023 meeting were approved. Motion by Laura Konieczny and seconded by Paul Vincent.
2. **Public Comment** –
 - Rick Ogle of 1902 Indiana Ave. attended the meeting to thank the Street Department for removal of trees in his neighborhood.
 - Bert Cook attended the meeting to request consideration for a parking space in the 700 block of Clay St. to be designated as a Loading/Unloading Zone. The requested parking space is the first spot north of the alley on the east side of the roadway. This request will help to facilitate the receiving and delivery of merchandise for a new business which is opening at 520 Lincolnway. Currently vehicles parking in this spot block access to a set of double doors at the rear of the structure. The business owner, Scott Bauchman also spoke to the Commission to justify the request. The Commission agreed and Mike Frazee made a motion to recommend this change to the City Council. Paul Brettin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
 - Bert Cook also requested support from the Commission for the vacating of a section of the 900 block of State St. The requested section will aid the parking and re-development of the property at 910 State St, the old Fire Station #1 Building. This property has recently been purchased from the city and is being developed into retail space. Paul Brettin made a motion to support vacating of this property and forward the recommendation to the City Council. Paul Vincent seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
 - David Heinold, Assistant City Planner, attended the meeting and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed Slicer Pathway Project. This project will implement changes to the route between La Porte High School and the Intermediate/Kesling Middle School. It will consist of constructing some sidewalks as well as a pedestrian/bicycle lane on the west side of A St. Part of the proposed changes will incorporate restricted parking on the west side of A St. between 10th St. & 18th St. David will have more information and a formal request for parking restrictions to be shared with the commission at their March meeting.

3. Karyl reported that she has had further discussion with Austin Epple, La Porte County Sheriff's Office School Resource Officer for La Porte High School, regarding concerns with the High School parking lot exit onto 10th St. Karyl indicated Deputy Epple felt he may have a suggestion to help alleviate the problem, but he wasn't quite ready to present this to the Commission yet. This will remain on the agenda for future discussion.
4. The recommendation to request restricted parking for a distance of 30' from the corner on the east and south side of Stanley Ct. had not yet been forwarded to Nick Otis. Andy Snyder will get this to City Attorney Otis so it can be drafted into ordinance form and presented to the City Council.
5. The Commission again discussed the concerns of Daniel and Carol Biggs (1610 Indiana Ave.) regarding speeding and the number of accidents at the intersection of South Ave. & Indiana Ave. Jeff Batchelor had indicated at the January meeting that he would follow up with Mr. & Mrs. Biggs to help facilitate some corrective action. Since Jeff was unable to attend the meeting, the Commission decided to hold this item to March and discuss it further at that time.
6. Regarding the request for a stop sign somewhere on Polk St. Karyl indicated she had not yet confirmed the details with Nick Minich pertaining to the extension of Polk St. She will try get more information to report at the March meeting.
7. Nick Otis has been in contact with Jordan and Tucker King (620 North St.) regarding their request to vacate the dead-end section of North St. adjacent to their property. He had forwarded the procedure to them which requires public notice and a survey. Once these items have been accomplished, he will prepare the appropriate documents for City Council consideration.
8. Nick Minich is continuing to work with INDOT regarding the proposed projects involving Indiana Ave. and Pine Lake Ave. There were no additional updates available for this meeting.
9. The Commission will continue to monitor the parking situation and the dangers of pedestrians crossing roadway in the area of The Dunes Event Center on Clear Lake Blvd. The Clear Lake Loop project should accommodate pedestrian traffic better. This project is expected to begin in the spring.
10. Nick Otis has been working with property owner of 66 Toronto St. for the vacating of the termination points of Cable St. and Toronto St. The owner needed to secure a survey and a period of public notice had to be given. Once these items have been accomplished Nick will prepare the appropriate documents for City Council consideration.
11. It was determined that there has never been previous approval by the City Council to place stop signs at the intersections of Eason Ct. & 9th St. and D St. & 15th St. Mike Frazee made a motion that the Commission recommend to the City Council placement of stop signs at each of these intersections. It was seconded by Laura Konieczny and passed unanimously. Andy Snyder will seek Board of Public Works approval for temporary stop sign until this can be considered by the Council.

12. The Handicap parking space at the intersection Scott St. & Woodson St. which was previously reported as no longer being needed will be forwarded to Nick Otis to investigate how to repeal this item.
13. Laura Konieczny reported that Jeff York of 1006 W. 20th St. had forwarded concerns to her regarding the lack of street lighting at the intersection of Andrew Ave. and W. 20th St. The Commission will look at this and discuss it further at the March meeting.
14. Karyl forwarded a concern which was presented to the City Council, from Brian Kajer of 406 Niesen St. Mr. Kajer requested that the 2-way stop at the intersection of Newporte Blvd and N. Madison be changed to a 3-way stop. He suggested the additional stop sign be designated as a stop for the westbound lane of Newporte Blvd. The Commission decided to take this under advisement and discuss it further at the March meeting. It was noted that there are some planned improvements to the landscaping at this intersection that may help with driver attention.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Laura Konieczny and seconded by Mike Frazee. The Commission members moved into a joint workshop with the Redevelopment Commission and City Council for a presentation of the Downtown Parking Study.

The next Traffic Commission will be held Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 5:00 PM in the conference room of the City Police Station.

Respectfully submitted,
Andy Snyder, Secretary