

City of Birchwood Village
Traffic Calming Task Force
Monday, August 17, 2020
7:00 PM

Members in Attendance: Cora Hankins, Sheri Stronach, Carl Bayley, Steph Oyloe, Randy LaFoy

Non-members in Attendance: Justin McCarthy

CALL TO ORDER: Read by Cora Hankins.

APPROVE AGENDA

1. Stronach asked to add discussing email received from Birchwood resident Bryan McGinnis.
2. With the addition of discussing the email, Stronach motioned to approve the agenda. Bayley seconded. Unanimous decision to approve agenda.

AGENDA

A. Review & Approve July 20, 2020 Minutes

1. Stronach motioned to approve the July 20, 2020 minutes. Hankins seconded. Unanimous decision to approve minutes. Oyloe will send minutes to Tobin Lay to be posted to city website.
2. The minutes from July 27, 2020 were revised to indicate that the task force would make recommendations to the city council regarding new members for the task force. These minutes will also be sent to Lay.

B. Review & Approve August 3, 2020 Minutes

1. Hankins motioned to approve August 3, 2020 meeting minutes. Seconded by Oyloe. Unanimous decision to approve.

C. Discuss & Recommend Bylaws

1. Bayley motioned to approve the bylaws. Seconded by Hankins. Unanimous decision to approve bylaws.

D. Discuss and Recommend New Members

1. Justin McCarthy attended tonight's meeting as he is interested in joining the task force.
2. McCarthy introduced himself, and share his interest in the task force.
3. Task force can accept up to 7 members. Currently have 4 members.
4. Hankins motioned to recommend to the city council that McCarthy be added to the task force. Seconded by Oyloe. Unanimous decision to recommend McCarthy be added to task force.

E. Discuss Radar Speed Monitor Results

1. Task force received results from Washington County Sheriff's Department for speed box that was placed at 154-168 Wildwood Avenue for 8/8/2020-8/12/2020. The time period covered Saturday through Wednesday.
2. Approaching data: 15 vehicles, average speed 11.73 mph, max speed 16 mph.
3. Receding data: 157 vehicles, average speed 15.94 mph, max speed 27 mph.

4. Discussed the significant difference in number of vehicles approaching vs receding. Bayley noted that vehicles traveling below 10mph are not recorded by the speed box, which may impact results. Hankins also asked if placement of the box affected the number of vehicles for which data was obtained.
5. Task force agreed it would be helpful to have someone help us interpret the data.
6. Hankins will follow up with Sergeant Lombardi to better understand how to interpret the data.
7. Task force members agreed that it is positive to see the average approaching speed of approximately 12 mph and receding speed of approximately 16 mph, as these are both lower than the posted speed limit of 20 mph.
8. Based on the data received, not many drivers are speeding through this area.
9. McCarthy asked if the Hall Avenue construction has affected the traffic data. The local construction on Hall Ave and E County Line was discussed, but no conclusion determined regarding how construction has affected the area.

F. Research Traffic Calming Measures

1. Stronach asked to review community member's letter regarding children playing in the street.
2. Stronach noted that with the data received from speed box, safety is not about slowing drivers down, but making sure drivers are attentive.
3. Bayley noted vehicle have the right to travel at 20 mph on our roads. Recommended task force looks at the safety issue from both angles, signage for awareness for vehicles/drivers and also providing awareness/education for children, rather than blocking traffic.
4. Hankins does not think roads are safe for children at 20 mph.
5. Task force discussed that it would not be safe for children to be in the streets even if vehicles are slowed down. Bayley recommended anything the task force can do to inform parents and children that vehicles are traveling below the speed limit and to help minimize the risk.
6. Discussed strategies to increase attention of drivers for children in the neighborhood, but also minimizing children playing or being in the streets.
7. LaFoy recommended getting info from county about education they recommend for teaching kids about safety in the roads.
8. Possible educational sources and programs were discussed. McCarthy will get more info on education options/programs for children.
9. Previously discussed Stronach creating newsletter information for the community/neighbors regarding task force's work and data we've received. Bayley suggested drafting information for community, and Stronach agreed to draft communication.
10. Washington County provided LaFoy and the task force with an engineer contact at the county who may have recommendations for traffic safety measures. However, it was also noted that there is "no silver bullet to solve this issue," and traffic/pedestrian safety is a concern many communities have been working to address.
11. Hankins will contact the engineer again.

12. Children-At-Play signs were discussed. Hankins shared with the task force that she read online that these signs are not very helpful.
13. LaFoy stated there is the possibility of moving a slow children sign from the entrance of the city to closer to the area being reviewed.
14. The Federal Traffic Control handbook recommends pedestrian signs rather than Children-At-Play signs.
15. LaFoy shared with the task force that a community member on the 400-500 block did not think "Slow Children" signs made a difference with traffic when posted.
16. Solar powered flashing lights are \$1500.
17. Speed doesn't seem to be the issue so having a radar sign likely not the need.
18. "Local traffic only" signs were discussed, and task force members are curious if these have had success in other locations. The thought is to minimize non-Birchwood Village traffic from cutting through Birchwood.
19. Speed bumps are \$200, and would have to be bolted into the ground. These would need to be removed during winter months.
20. Bollards were discussed, but not liked by members.
21. The city calmed traffic on Cedar/Hall by using more stop signs. Also narrowed road to calm traffic. This has increased traffic some on Wildwood Avenue.
22. Discussed option of stop sign and crosswalk at Owl and Wildwood. However, this is also where traffic circles around because separated into 1 way roads.
23. Task force discussed current parking along Wildwood Avenue. Parking on the streets limits the space to travel in the street, but also complicates safety more if children are in the streets. Also don't have sidewalks or places for kids to walk. The roadways are already narrow, which affects the ability to put in walking/biking space.
24. LaFoy informed the task force that one of their tasks may be to identify if one of the issues is parking on both sides of the street and risks with emergency vehicles.
25. Bayley would like to discuss parking restrictions. Stronach and LaFoy recommended further investigation into parking and getting more specific recommendations before recommending to council.
26. LaFoy also asked about an area with brush/shrubs that comes up to the street and if this is impacting safety for drivers/children.
27. Task force members will each observe this area prior to the next meeting. Hankins will provide more direction as to the fire numbers of this location.
28. LaFoy shared with the task force that the Lake Links trail will be along Wildwood until Cedar/Cedar-Hall. The trail will then follow Cedar/Hall. Part of the money requested would be put a bike lane on Hall.

G. Discuss Next Meeting Agenda

1. Next meeting scheduled for 8/31/2020.
2. Stronach will set up Zoom link again.

ADJOURN

1. Stronach motioned to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Hankins. Unanimous decision to adjourn meeting.