

## **SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**JULY 21, 2020**

The meeting was held at the Hilton Garden Inn because it was held prior to the Committee of the Whole meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Chairman Barry VanHoozen. Committee members present were Deborah Born and Barry VanHoozen. Jim Matuszak was absent. Also present was Laura Alkire, Law Director.

### CITIZENS' CONCERNS/MAPLE STREET

Tim Goligoski, 8 Maple Street, thanked City Council for their support, and he said he hopes the 15-mph speed limit is approved at the next City Council meeting. Mr. Goligoski said he would also like flashing lights to be installed year-round. He said that he believes the flashing sign says thank you if cars are under the speed limit or slow down if they are over it. Mr. VanHoozen said that it was a unanimous decision at the City Council meeting to lower the speed limit. Ms. Alkire said that there is an ordinance on the City's books about City Council having the authority to change speed limits, but after the last City Council meeting, Chief Jones did quite a bit of research and the ODOT guidelines and Ohio Revised Code section 4511.21(I)(1) state that municipalities can increase the speed limit, but to lower it below the prima facie requires a study that has to be submitted to ODOT. This state law supersedes our ordinances. Ms. Alkire said that we have to go through the due diligence to find out the appropriate speed limit. She called attention to a proposal from DGL that was distributed to the Committee. The quote from DGL is \$21,000 which is below the Administration's threshold for Council approval, but is being presented to the Committee as a courtesy. Ms. Alkire said that the proposal includes a review of not only the speed limit, but looking at the width of the street and additional amenities to make it safer.

Ms. Born said that she disagrees with doing the study and the issue needs to be dealt with now. She said tax revenues are down, this is ridiculous, and it is a lawsuit waiting to happen. Ms. Alkire said that as chief legal officer of the City, it is her opinion that if we lower the speed limit without getting the study done and submitting it to ODOT, we will be breaking the law.

Mike Cousino, 26901 Eckel Road, said that during the Covid-19 pandemic the CDC and FDA have taken shortcuts, and he wonders why we can't do that too. He asked why the Law Director can't just write to ODOT and ask them to change the speed limit without a study.

Mr. VanHoozen said that he realizes this is an urgent issue and we need some quick wins. He said that there are still things we can do like the rumble strips and the speed monitors. However, there are other safety issues to be looked at such as the grade because they've heard from several of the residents about drivers not being able to see.

Mr. Goligoski said that he is disappointed but not surprised. He said that City Council and the Administration seem to be on different paths. He said the problem is not going away and the residents will not stand for it. He said that 25 mph is not a solution and the City is putting its residents at risk over paperwork. Ms. Alkire said that the rumble strips have been ordered and the speed monitors have arrived. She said that the items in the speed study are a la carte so the first part of the traffic study can be done within a couple of weeks of being approved. She said that they are trying to employ intermediate tactics and Chief Jones is still having patrols in the area.

Sally Goligoski, 8 Maple Street, said that she thinks the volume of traffic has doubled this year. She asked about the speed bumps because in the past she was told they could not be used because of the snow plows.

Mr. VanHoozen said he is still in support of lowering the speed limit, but based on the legal advice that has been given, he feels we need to move forward with the traffic study. Ms. Born disagreed and said that ODOT is used on state routes and state roads. She added that DGL usually does roundabouts.

Maya Fish, 5 Maple Street, said that the speed study needs to be done now. She said that her three-year-old ran into the street the other day and there's only so much she can do as a mother. She said she does not want to put a fence around her entire property. She said that the speed monitoring signs do make a difference; the visual reminders help. Ms. Fish's daughters also expressed their concerns about the traffic on their street.

Ms. Born said that the proposal from DGL adds a sidewalk, multi-use path, and widens the street. Mr. VanHoozen said the current plan is to temporarily install the speed monitors and put down rumble strips on a seasonal basis – they will be removed because of the snow plows. Mr. VanHoozen said that in terms of the study, it's comprehensive and the scope of work has to do with the grade because of walkers and bikers and it is a safety issue. The Committee vote was 1-1 to recommend approval of the traffic study. Ms. Born said that she does not believe it moves onto City Council without an affirmative vote. Mr. VanHoozen said that he would like the full Council to consider the issue.

## SKUNKS

Mr. VanHoozen said that there are a growing number of skunks in town. He said it is his understanding that the Safety Director has the prerogative to have the Animal Control Officer remove them, but skunks are not currently on the list of animals that he deals with. Mr. VanHoozen asked what other options are available. Ms. Alkire said that the Animal Control Officer has the authority to act as the dog warden within the City. He has the authority to deal with domesticated animals. She said that she is aware of only a couple of complaints about skunks, and she recommended checking with the Ohio Division of Wildlife before we expand the role of the Animal Control Officer. Mr. VanHoozen asked if she meant contact the Division of Wildlife about the City as a whole, or on an individual basis. Ms. Alkire said that either she, Ms. Kabat, or Chief Jones can contact them and get

back to the Committee at the next meeting. Ms. Born asked that Jeff Sailer at the Toledo Zoo also be contacted.

### STREET LIGHTING

Mr. VanHoozen said that a resident on Hufford Road has requested that a street light be installed near his home. Ms. Alkire said that a request was received for an additional street light on Hufford about half way down the road. There are currently lights at the intersections. She said that the resident asking for the light had some incidents occur back in 2016 according to Chief Jones. Ms. Alkire said that in 2001 City Council passed an ordinance placing street lights where they felt they were necessary, but they can add to it. Ms. Born asked if this portion of Hufford is in the City. Ms. Alkire said that it is her understanding that it is, and she believes Chief Jones would have referenced it if it wasn't. Not seeing an immediate need for a street light at this location, the Committee agreed 2-0 to table the issue.

### USE OF CITY RIGHT OF WAY

The Committee decided to table this topic due to time constraints.

### OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry VanHoozen, Chairman  
Safety Committee

***Next meeting: Tuesday, August 25, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.***