

Traffic Control Board Minutes Tuesday, October 23, 2007

Angela Cimmino
Doug Kary ✓
Keith Lang ✓
Walt Willett
Steve Zeier ✓

Capt Vladic
Sondra Baker
Judge Knisely

✓ = Present

Staff Support: Terry Smith, John Gibson, Lora Mattox, Debi Meling

Call to Order: At 12:16 pm by Doug Kary

Minutes: Motion for approval of minutes from the September meeting was made by Steve Zeier, Second by Keith Lang. Motion carried on voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

STAFF REPORTS:

Zoo Drive & Gabel Traffic Signal: Terry reported that construction is in progress and no delays are anticipated. Terry noted the Police Department has been very supportive in providing enforcement for the construction zone speed limit.

King Avenue West Construction: The project to widen King Avenue West between 31st St. West and Shiloh will start on November 5th, 2007. A second public meeting with area residents & businesses is scheduled for October 30th, 2007. Debi noted the street will be closed in phases to complete the work. The segment between 32nd and Shiloh could be closed for as long as six months. The intersection of King & 32nd would remain open during that time and access to all businesses will be maintained during the project. Keith asked about educating Billings' drivers on roundabouts. Debi responded that a public education campaign prior to opening the roundabout being installed with this project would be a good idea. Debi noted that the State and Engineering Inc have collected a lot of good material on roundabouts, including educational materials from other states, which could be used for such an effort.

BOARD REPORTS:

Lora Mattox reported that subdivision and zoning activity has been slow this month. There are no new major projects to report on.

OLD BUSINESS

Lewis Avenue Traffic Calming:

Residents attending last month's public meeting on Lewis Avenue were divided on the proposal to stripe bike lanes and parking lanes along Lewis as a low cost way of encouraging slower travel speeds along Lewis. In an attempt to get more comprehensive input on the staff proposal for bike lanes, a ballot was mailed to all property owners along Lewis between Division and 24th

Street West. A copy of the letter that went to property owners was distributed to Board members. A total of 385 ballots (letters) were mailed out. Debi stated that of the 135 ballots returned, 44% were in favor of the striping proposal and 56 % were opposed. Doug asked about the cost of the proposed striping. Debi responded it would cost \$5,000 to \$10,000. Keith asked if the “no” votes came from those residents that would lose parking. Debi responded that residents losing parking were not necessarily the ones that voted “no.” Keith moved that the Traffic Control Board support the staff proposal for striping bike lanes and parking lanes along Lewis. Steve seconded the motion. In seconding the motion, Steve noted that owners seem reluctant to pay for more expensive traffic calming measures, that the proposal is a cost effective means of reducing speeds, and that the striping could be a temporary measure. If it didn’t work out, it could always be removed. Terry noted that on-street bike lanes along Lewis are part of the adopted Heritage Trail Plan. No formal vote was taken on the motion, but the Board members present all supported the proposed striping plan.

West Interchange project. Doug asked when the new traffic signals at the West Interchange would be in full operation. Terry said he was unsure, since this was a State project, but that it should be soon.

NEW BUSINESS

November Meeting: Doug asked if a November meeting would be held. Terry noted that as has been done in the past, a combined November-December meeting will be held. This seems to fit everyone’s holiday schedule better. The next meeting has been scheduled for Dec. 11th.

Traffic Impacts from Cabela’s: Doug inquired if any traffic studies have been completed for the proposed Cabela’s development along King Avenue East, off South Billings Boulevard. He noted there is already a need for a signal at South Billings Boulevard and Midland Road. Terry reported that traffic studies have been submitted to both the City and the State. Initial estimates are that 80% of the traffic generated by the development would come & go from I-90. Terry reported that design work for signalization of South Billings Boulevard and Midland Road is in progress. This signal is separate from the Cabela’s project and was already in progress. With the installation of a signal at Midland Road, the City & the State will work together to operate the signals at King Avenue East, the interchange ramps, and Midland Road in a coordinated system.

Development near 32nd & Hesper: Steve reported that the Big Sky EDA is in negotiations for a major development near the intersection of 32nd & Hesper. He cannot reveal what the development is, but it could have significant traffic impacts in the area.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM