

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF BRAZORIA

CITY OF LAKE JACKSON

BE IT KNOWN that the Traffic Commission of the City of Lake Jackson met on Tuesday, February 8, 2022, at 6:30 P.M. for regular session at 25 Oak Drive, Lake Jackson, Texas, in City Hall Council Chambers with the following in attendance:

Michael Cloeter, Vice Chair
Shannon Biar, Secretary
Doug Smith
Ravi Singhanian
Brad Whitehead

Modesto Mundo, City Manager
Meagan Borth, Asst. City Manager
Sabrina England, PW Director
Anamaria Acuña, Asst. City Secretary
James Cromeenes, LJP

ABSENT:

Larry Stanley

Council Liaison – Matt Broaddus

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Cloeter led the Pledge of Allegiance.

SWEAR IN NEW MEMBER

Ms. Acuña administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Whitehead.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 14, 2021

On motion by Mr. Smith second by Mr. Biar with all present members voting “aye,” December minutes were approved as presented.

VISITORS’ COMMENTS

Mr. Singhanian brought a few items to attention:

- The left turn from Lake Road to the This Way Street: the signal trips even when there is no vehicle on the turning lane.
- There is a speeding issue from 288 South exit to FM 2004 and would like to see more patrolling in that area during afterwork hours (5:00 P.M.)

Mr. Cloeter commented that all citizens can submit their traffic reports or concerns on the official city website.

DISCUSS AND CONSIDER TRAFFIC CONTROL MEASURES NEAR CENTER WAY AND JALAPENO COURT – JERRY SCHAFFER

Jerry Schaffer – 52 Jalapeno Court

Mr. Schaffer mentioned that he has recently moved onto this street and was concerned about speeders near Jalapeno Court and Center Way. He believes that the speeders are using Center Way to get on to the main roads like Sycamore and Dixie. He is not sure how or what the city can do to reduce the speeding especially during early hours and after work hours. He has noticed that some vehicles have lifted off the road with the high speeds they are travelling due to a small hump in the road.

Mr. Schaffer stated that although his house is on Jalapeno Court his garage access is on Center Way and he finds it difficult to exit at times due to the speeders.

Mr. Schaffer asked if there were any speed studies completed and wanted to hear the findings.

Ms. Borth shared that staff conducted a traffic study and read the findings.

- Maximum speed: 80.3 mph
- Minimum was at 5.8 mph.

Staff usually focuses on the 85 percentile and the average (31.5mph) is not at a concern since the posted speed limit is 30 mph. Ms. Borth commented that there does seem to be a high amount of traffic.

Mr. Cloeter asked if he thinks Center Way is used to bypass any intersections and Mr. Schaffer believes that they are all using the road to get onto Dixie.

Mr. Cloeter advised Mr. Schaffer that the 85 percentile is not high.

Mr. Whitehead asked how the speed is measured on the traffic study. Ms. England answered that they place two metal plates on the street, and it calculates the speed from there.

Mr. Cloeter asked the commissioners for any suggestions.

Mr. Whitehead mentioned a recent study in Europe, where the city placed some of their traffic fine/citation money into something like a lottery and will give it away to the good drivers. Doing something similarly can give speeders an incentive to drive safely.

Mr. Schaffer thanked the commissioners for their time and for running the study.

Mr. Cloeter asked Lt. Cromeenes if he could have additional patrolling at midnight to 1:00 a.m. due to the high speeders being prominent during those hours.

DISCUSS AND CONSIDER TRAFFIC CONTROL MEASURES ON 100 ANY WAY STREET – JOSHUA MCCAIN

Joshua McCain - 110 Any Way Street

Mr. McCain stated that he has come before the commission to request speed humps due to a major accident that occurred on January 22, 2022. He shared that the vehicle was traveling over 60 mph on the residential roadway and lost control, hitting his neighbor's parked car, flipping it around and getting it stuck into the resident's garage.

On his last visit Mr. McCain shared that he and his wife were concerned about a potential accident that the speeders could cause. He is aware that the city has placed the flashing speed limit sign and added more patrolling after he shared his concerns. Mr. McCain mentioned that although they did not see the flashing sign originally, he did notice the sign was placed after the accident.

Mr. McCain shared that he is thankful for the extra patrolling but as a fellow police officer he is aware that the city cannot promise to patrol the same neighborhood all day and believes the street needs a permanent solution. His neighborhood feels that speed humps would be beneficial. He expressed that if nothing is done, they fear that another similar accident could occur again.

Jeff Dodson – 223 Any Way Street

Mr. Dodson and Mr. McCain handed the commissioners a copy of the petition for the request of placing speed humps.

Ms. Borth discussed some of the suggestions that staff felt could be potential solutions to the speeding issue. Ms. Borth stated that staff is aware of the petition and request of the speed bumps but gave other recommendations and information below:

1. The possible solutions discussed with staff:
 - Permanent flashing speed bumps
 - Speed bump
 - Chicanes for traffic calming
 - Rumble Strips to avoid speed bumps due to:
 - Any Way being a collector road
 - Increase emergency response time - access road for two apartment complexes
 - Hiring a traffic engineer to look at other options for the entire street
 - Have one on retainer already and waiting for proposal/quote
2. Solutions currently in place:
 - After the November 9, 2022, Traffic Commission Meeting
 - Solar flashing sign
 - Increase patrolling and traffic enforcement
3. The two serious, recent accidents:
 - January 2022 - Vehicle hit home
 - December 2021 - Vehicle ran into the ditch
4. Seen from recent traffic enforcement:
 - Lt. Cromeenes shared that he would have a zero tolerance for speeding (after meeting 01/18/2022) to check who the speeders were (local / neighborhood speeders)
 - Last year's traffic stops on Any Way Street totaled to be 33
 - Stops from January 29, 2022, to today:
 - 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. daily patrol when most traffic in area
 - From 29th to today we have 14 traffic stops on that street, both warnings and tickets
 - 11 of 14 are speeding
 - 2 others were potentially speeding but cited or given warnings only for other offenses
 - 7 of the 14 live on or right off Any Way Street
 - Most stops are between 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Mr. Dodson shared that he has lived on Any Way Street for about 8 years. He also shared that he is a police officer and has stopped speeders during early hours. He believes that the speed issue is not specific to certain hours. He was advised not to patrol on his own street because of retaliation. He shared that speeding also happens during the mornings as well not just during after work hours.

Ms. Borth shared that the overall staff recommendation is to bring in the traffic engineer. The city

manager is in support of the rumble strips; however, staff does not entirely support speed bumps because traffic codes have found that it is not the best way to reduce speed in neighborhoods.

Ms. Borth wanted to clarify that staff is aware that there is a speed problem but wants to be open to other options.

Mr. Cloeter asked if they could present where the accident occurred and if the pictures Mr. McCain brought could be shared.

A large concern that was brought forth from his neighborhood is there might be a problem of agreement of having anything installed in front of their houses. Mr. McCain and Mr. Dodson wanted to clarify that should anything be installed to reduce the speeders that they are willing to have speed humps, rumble strips, etc. installed in front of their houses. Mr. McCain also shared that although a few more of his neighbors were not able to attend the meeting, they have also volunteered.

Mr. Singhanian shared that there are speed humps installed on Walnut Street. Mr. Cloeter shared that he believes three speed humps were installed on the road.

Ms. Borth shared that although speed humps can be installed, they are not recommended anymore.

Mr. Cloeter asked how the installation of the speed humps on Walnut came about.

Ms. England stated that Walnut had an issue at the location where the neighborhood requested speed humps but, the process was elongated because nobody wanted to have the installation in front of their house. A house finally volunteered to have it installed at their location.

Mr. Cloeter asked if emergency vehicles could get through the speed humps easily. Mr. McCain and Mr. Dodson both expressed that a speed hump has never been an issue crossing over them while on patrol when an emergency has occurred.

Mr. Dodson voiced his concern, noting he believes the street is no longer safe as he has noticed that there is an increasing number of families with small children that are now living near the street.

Mr. McCain commented stating that if the speeding truck would have shifted over maybe even just 15-ft. the truck would have landed near his bedroom window possibly killing him and his wife in his sleep. The accident woke them up as the accident was awfully close. Even shifting the opposite direction could have caused the truck to go into his neighbor's bedroom window. Mr. Cloeter questioned if the driver that caused the accident was intoxicated. Ms. Borth responded the driver was sober but was speeding recklessly.

Mr. Biar asked to open a map of the street to show where the houses were located. He shared that if there are concerns of placement there seems to be enough open space to have either speed humps or rumble strips installed near the ditches where there is plenty of space between houses.

Mr. Cloeter asked if Any Way is a bypass street. Both Mr. McCain and Mr. Dodson both agreed that it might be.

Mr. McCain wanted to clarify during the accident the driver was speeding on the curb and continued to

speed and ended up near his yard. In the video Mr. McCain brought the truck was traveling at a high speed and you could hear when the truck made impact.

Mr. Biar asked why the speed humps were not effective. He asked if they were not effective in general or not effective on bigger vehicles. Ms. England stated that the speed humps are most effective on lower vehicles. Mr. Biar mentioned that the speeders he has encountered are usually in larger and higher vehicles like that truck.

Council Liaison Broaddus shared that Any Way is such a large street that he would find it difficult to know what placement would be most effective to install any of the suggestions mentioned. He advised that the traffic engineer be called to do a study on the entire street. Ms. Borth suggested that Any Way would be studied entirely.

Mr. Cloeter asked if an example of a chicane could be presented. Ms. England shared that they are used to narrow the street to slow the vehicles down. Mr. Dodson shared that there was a median that narrowed where the accident occurred and that it did not stop them.

Mr. Whitehead asked if there were any statistics that would show which suggested solution is most effective or if that would be for the traffic engineer to conclude. Ms. Borth responded that if there is any information on what is most effective the traffic management manual would be the best to reference, but staff would rather have the traffic engineer advise.

There was discussion of whether the installation of a chicane would require the road to be widen or if the road will stay the same.

Mr. Dodson asked if there are certain types of speed bumps that the city would consider purchasing. Both Mr. McCain and Mr. Dodson mentioned that they would prefer the rubber speed bumps. They suggested to scatter them throughout the road. Mr. Cloeter mentioned he has noticed the rubber speed bumps at the H-E-B property and likes how they are dispersed. Mr. Cloeter asked Ms. England if the city had any of the rubber speed bumps in stock or if that is something that could be purchased. Ms. England clarified that they do not have any in inventory and she would not purchase them without consent and approval from the City Council.

There was discussion amongst the Traffic Commission as to what the motion should be. The commission would like to keep the solar flashing light sign until the study was completed and to continue to patrol. Mr. Singhanian wanted to ensure that a temporary solution be in place if the traffic study takes a long time. He suggested a temporary solution, such as the rubber speed bump. Ms. Borth advised that the rubber speed bumps, or rumble strips are permanent.

On motion by Mr. Smith seconded by Mr. Whitehead with all present members voting "aye" the commission agreed to consult with a traffic engineer on the entire length of Any Way as soon as possible and report to either the next City Council or Traffic meeting on what the best solution would be, while keeping the current practices of the solar flashing sign and the patrolling in place.

Ms. Borth advised that staff also touch base with Mr. McCain and keep him updated.

DISCUSS AND CONSIDER REQUEST FOR RIGHT TURNING LANE ON PLANTATION DRIVE/ UPDATES – MATT BJUNE

Ms. England refreshed the commission about the last meeting over the different solutions for Mr. Bjune's concerns of the right turn lane request on Plantation Drive. She shared that a traffic count was completed to see the amount of traffic coming through Plantation Court. The problems were found to be most prominent during school hours.

One potential solution was blocking off Plantation Court near the feeder, making the traffic turn back around to catch the light on Plantation Drive. Ms. England has touched base with TXDOT for the possibility of this solution. They advised that they do not see any issue with doing that, but they have not received a permit.

Matt Bjune – 119 Flag Drive East

Mr. Bjune commented that 41,101 vehicles have gone through that intersection during the three-week study on a dead-end court.

Mr. Biar questioned how many houses were on that street. Mr. Bjune answered stating that there is a total of 15 houses.

Council Liaison Broaddus wanted to clarify and refresh what the issue at hand was. Mr. Bjune advised that many drivers use Plantation Court to cut through to get onto 288 faster instead of waiting at the light on Plantation Drive. He shared that it is dangerous because this causes those exiting to speed to get onto entrance ramp of 288 HWY.

Ms. England commented that turning the existing right lane into a right-hand turn lane, was not approved by TXDOT. They insist on adding another lane, which would be changed into the right-turn only lane. Ms. England shared that this would be an expensive route because of all the utility lines that will need to be moved. Ms. England advised that if the city would go through the process of adding an additional lane that it would be at the city's expense as TXDOT will not cover any expenses.

Mr. Biar asked if Mr. Bjune could refresh the commission over how many people on Plantation Court, he talked to about regulating the street to reduce the amount of traffic going through. Mr. Bjune stated that out of the 13 residents he spoke to 11 supported that something needs to happen and would approve blocking the exit and allowing them entry onto their street.

Mr. Biar asked Ms. England how accurate the vehicle counts are. Ms. England shared that the units are older, and she has requested to get more information before she agrees on updating the equipment. The counters have been reset and cleaned; therefore, she believes that they are functioning as best as they can.

Mr. Biar shared that because there are 15 houses each house would have at least two vehicles, making them leave about three times a day but the data is significantly showing that traffic is using Plantation Court with 41,101 cars over a three-week span.

Mr. Biar shared that if Plantation Court exit would be blocked it would cause Plantation Drive to back up which would inevitably cause them to find a different route.

Travis Pate- 302 Caladium Street

Mr. Pate shared that if Plantation Court is blocked off then there will be a plethora of people travelling down Magnolia. He is aware that people are dangerously exiting Plantation Court and rushing to get onto the highway, and it could cause an accident. However, if Plantation Court is blocked then traffic could affect the school traffic. Mr. Pate believes that the cost of a permanent right hand turning lane will be well worth it. Mr. Pate believes closing either entry or exit of Plantation Court would not be a good idea.

Mr. Broaddus commented that he is aware that the city did not control the expansion of that road but believes that TXDOT would not make any changes without some type of traffic study. He asked if staff could get with TXDOT for that study or information in hopes that they had a reason why they created the roads the way they currently are.

There was discussion between Mr. Pate and the commission over the effects of closing off the entrance of Plantation. Mr. Pate suggested that closing off the street could cause other neighboring roads to have similar speeding issues as Any Way. He concluded that closing off Plantation Court would worsen the problem by forcing traffic into residential areas because they are used to going higher speeds. He believes that opening the right-turn only lane would be the most practical thing to do.

Mr. Broaddus mentioned that TXDOT has forced the city into a predicament because they are granting the city permission to add an additional lane but at our expense. Mr. Bjune stated that engineering wanted to proceed with a test run of allowing the current right lane to be turned into a right-hand lane only, but TXDOT did not approve it. Mr. Pate shared that TXDOT doesn't care because they do not have to deal with the constant complaints from the city.

Mr. Bjune shared that he was informed that the utilities that would need to be moved are not just electrical but there are civil utilities such as sewer lines for the neighboring streets. The cost of the additional lane would not only be the cost of the road, but it would also cost to replace and move all the utility lines that run through.

Mr. Cloeter suggested expanding on the opposite (left) side of the road and asked if there were any utilities on that side of the road. Ms. Borth stated that staff would need to reach out to either TXDOT or have engineering answer.



Mr. Biar asked why TXDOT would not allow to turn the existing right-hand lane into a right-turn only lane, Ms. England stated that this was addressed at the last meeting but will get more data as to why it was not approved.

Ms. England said that she would look at Mr. Cloeter's request and get with TXDOT about possibly expanding the left side.

Ms. Borth stated that this discussion was formatted similarly to a workshop rather than a meeting and suggested that if they have exhausted their ideas that they can send this to council.

Mr. Pate asked if there was a possibility of adding an entrance through the park or if there were utilities throughout that side that would enable that suggestion. Ms. England shared that if there is any road that will exit onto the feeder roads the city will have to have permission granted by TXDOT.

Mr. Cloeter would personally favor having a workshop with City Council to further discuss more options. Mr. Broaddus agreed that council may be interested in having a workshop with the Traffic Commission as any solution may be costly to the city.

Ms. Borth suggested that if they cannot agree what the best solution would be, then the Traffic Commission can send this concern to council without a solution.

Mr. Cloeter recommended sending this request to council, as the Traffic Commission cannot agree on a solution.

Mr. Cloeter commented that he believes any type of solution would need to be approved by council because of the cost and budget funds needed. He also added that he would like to attend the next council meeting and asked for details.

Ms. Borth advised that this concern will be added to the agenda and be discussed at the next City Council meeting, which will be held on February 22, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

TRAFFIC LIGHT UPDATES – SABRINA ENGLAND

Ms. England updated the commission on the traffic light problems. Mr. Cloeter commented that all the lights seem to be in progress. Ms. England shared that they are all in progress due to weather or are waiting on certain items to arrive.

Mr. Cloeter and Ms. England discussed the temporary solution for traffic light on OCD and Sandalwood. Mr. Cloeter stated that the solution was for the flashing but did not seem like an overall fix. Ms. England shared the estimated cost to replace the entire back panel would be about \$13,000 and it is not under warranty. The cost of this repair is also not within budget this year. Ms. England will also look for other recommendations.

ACCIDENT REPORTS – LT. CROMEENES

Lt. Cromeenes read over the December and January reports. He stated that the December traffic reports have increased.

Lt. Cromeenes shared that a major car accident occurred on January 26, 2022 – on FM 2004 at 1 :00 a.m. The car hit a UHAUL truck head on and the car driver had to be life flighted. This incident is still under

investigation.

ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

- Mr. Broaddus shared that early voting starts on February 14, 2022
 - New location will be at the annex building
- Mr. Bjune shared that there are complaints about the annex directing light near the surrounding residential area
 - Ms. England shared that code enforcement can investigate for Mr. Bjune

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m. These minutes read and approved this _____ day of _____ 2022.

Michael Cloeter, Vice Chair

Shannon Biar, Secretary