



**Streets and Roads Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday January 28, 2025
7:00 p.m. – In Person at Town Hall**

I. Call to Order and Pledge

- a. Meeting called to Order at 6:55 PM. Present for the meeting were Luci Riegel, Zach Fanning, Sean Kelly, Erich Stockdale, and Council Liaison Steve Domotor. Not present: Sergeant Brooks.

II. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Minutes from last meeting reviewed. Kelly motioned to approve the minutes; Stathis seconded.

III. Public Comment Pertaining to Non-Agenda Items:

- a. Gary Fry, a Town resident, reported on an accident on Ridgeville Blvd, at the back entrance to Davita Dialysis, which tore up the guardrail. The guardrail has yet to be repaired. Mr. Fry wondered if the height of this guardrail is appropriate and perhaps should be verified, prior to any repair.
 1. There was also some discussion about the appropriate guardrail height.
 2. Ted asked if Erich's team has to repair it. Erich said the guardrail is not Town property and was not sure who needs to repair it.
 - i. Chair Luci took an action to follow up on this issue.
 3. Ted also asked Erich which guardrail height standard does the Town follow. Erich said we follow the State standard, for the guardrails the Town is responsible for maintaining.

IV. Staff Updates

- a. Sergeant Brooks was not present.
- b. Erich Stockdale, from public works, reviewed these items from his report:
 1. Various snow removal efforts in Town during the last few months.

V. Councilman Domotor presented the Council Liaison report.

- a. There were no "big" issues to report.
- b. The Master Plan has been completed and the Town Council will be voting to approve the plan during the February meeting.

- c. There are two (2) council seats vacant. The Town Election for those and for Mayor is on May 6th. There will be two (2) nomination dates in February.

VI. Councilman Domotor presented the Main Street Safety Report.

- a. There are no new issues to report.
- b. Regarding a lighted pedestrian crossing sign at N. Main Street, we are on the list for someone from MDOT to collect data and review the location prior to any approval for this sign. The sign will be a new LED flashing-type warning light.
- c. Sean Kelly asked about expediting this activity; Steve was unsure.
- d. Ted Stathis asked about how this is funded. Steve said that with the Mayor's support, he was able to budget \$20k for these kinds of tasks, such as the electronic speed limit signs, patrol time on Main street, etc. He took the opportunity to mention that shortly, the next Town's budget cycle is coming up in April and suggested that S&R should identify anticipated needs.
- e. Ted Stathis asked Erich if his needs were already covered separately, i.e. outside the budget item Steve referred to; he concurred.

VII. Sean Kelly reported on the Town's website updates.

- a. There has not been a website update. Sean reported about the inclement weather messaging and solicited comments as to its effectiveness.
- b. Sean asked if the Town staff could publicize about open seats on various committees on the website; Chair Luci said S&R has two (2) vacancies. Steve said he would mention this at the next Council meeting.

VIII. Old Business

- a. Pedestrian Crossing Sign at N. Main Street
In progress, as Steve reported earlier.

- b. Merridale Speed Limit Signs

Chair Luci reported to the Mayor regarding our recommendation the 15 MPH speed limit signs be changed to 25 MPH signs. She said the Mayor was inclined not to follow that recommendation, as the area residents have no complaints with the current speed limit.

1. Steve wondered if the Mayor is aware that, according to Sergeant Brooks, any speed restriction under 25 MPH cannot be enforced.
2. Ted mentioned the speed limit signs need to be trustworthy with enforceable limits and not used to "artificially" compel drivers to slow down.
3. Steve asked to members how they felt and if we should have a meeting with the Mayor. He elaborated there is a "no-action, politically correct" approach (leave it at 15 MPH) and the "legal" approach (change it to 25 MPH).

4. Luci asked if anyone felt passionate about changing the 15 MPH signs to 25 MPH. Ted mentioned that if we don't change the signs, we are setting a precedent where any resident can ask for their own speed limit in Town. Chair Luci said that we do not know why these signs were set to 15 MPH many years ago, and no one questioned it.
 5. Zach Fanning mentioned in the State of Maryland, except for alleyways in Baltimore and Baltimore County, is 25 MPH; this is also the pedestrian right-of-way speed. Also, lower speed limits around schools, are only enforceable during school hours. If an infraction is issued to a motorist, it can only be for the portion of their actual speed over 25 MPH, in areas where the posted speed limit is lower than 25 MPH.
 6. Ted asked if the 15 MPH signs on Merridale can be removed; Erich and Chair Luci said they cannot be removed.
 7. Chair Luci will go back to the Mayor for reconsideration on this issue.
- c. E. Ridgeville and Laurel Court No Parking signs
1. Erich reported he has the signs but they have not been installed.
- d. Traffic Circle
1. Chair Luci reported the decided upon plan for the traffic circle does not have a median running from the circle to the intersection at Route 27. This means that drivers may attempt U-turns toward Route 27, prior to reaching the traffic circle, for expediency.
 2. There were two (2) traffic circle plans, one with the median and one without. In order to incorporate the median, that portion of S. Main Street would have to be widened.
 3. Sean wondered if the space made available by eliminating one of the two lanes that exist on the Northbound side of S. Main Street, could be used for a median.
 4. There was a long discussion about the traffic circle.
 5. Zach mentioned the introduction of the traffic circle is not convenient for people exiting Ridgeside Drive to go to Route 27/I-70.
 6. Chair Luci asked if the Town owns any stop lights. Erich responded the only stop light the Town owns is the one at Route 144 and Rising Ridge Road.
 7. Chair Luci intends to speak in-person to Barney about this issue.
- e. Weather Updates from Town
1. Completed, as reported earlier by Sean.
- f. Site Plans
1. Chair Luci referred to the list of issues compiled by Sergeant Brooks (hardcopy distributed during meeting), regarding the Town Site Plans.

2. Steve recommended this list be forwarded, unfiltered, to the Planning Commission.
3. A discussion followed about how to implement these recommendations, the role of MDOT, etc.
 - i. Ted offered to look at the site plan drawings to better understand the impact and changes for the items on the list compiled by Sergeant Brooks.

IX. New Business

a. Back Acre Speeding

1. Resident complained about speeding vehicles. The resident suggested the installation of speed bumps, lowering the speed limit from 25 MPH to 15 MPH or both.
2. Chair Luci had a speed study conducted at two (2) locations:
 - i. Back Acre Circle at number 106, Westbound, 12/10 through 12/23. (Hardcopy report issued at the meeting).
 - ii. Back Acre Circle at 1427 Searchlight, Eastbound, 12/10 through 12/23. (Hardcopy report issued at the meeting).
 - iii. It showed a few outliers and higher traffic volume than expected, which might explain the resident's concern (more vehicles speeding).
 - iv. Chair Luci will ask Sergeant Brooks if his team can increase traffic enforcement in that area.

b. Teen Safe Driving Event

Scheduled for April 12, 11 AM to 2 PM.

c. Traffic Model

1. Chair Luci defined the traffic model as a mathematical representation of traffic, with algorithms to depict various traffic situations.
(Note: This is something that Steve Domotor had asked about during the November 2024 S&R meeting).
2. Steve elaborated on the recommendation he made at the first Town Council workshop on the Master Plan. He had recommended the Town invest in the creation of a traffic model, in addition to conducting traffic studies, in order to better anticipate and plan for traffic growth. It would be useful for making changes during the ten (10) year Master Plan life and could be adjusted based on future housing or commercial developments.
3. The Master Plan includes an action step to look at available traffic models and do a cost/benefit analysis.

4. The formation of a Traffic Model Panel to seek available models, do the cost/benefit analysis and make recommendations, would be the first step, as outlined in the Master Plan.
5. Responding to a question from Sean, Steve read the definition of the task to create a traffic model, as stated in the recently-updated Ten (10) Year Master Plan (Note: Town Council to vote for approval of the Master Plan in February, as stated earlier).
6. Zach mentioned this model could indicate how the major traffic arteries in Town would be affected. Previously he had mentioned the road system in Town is based on the needs of Sixty (60) years ago, not today's needs.
7. Ted said that based on his experience with modeling, a model must be simple and easy to update and produce executable results in short order.
 - i. Ted offered to reach out to the MATLAB corporation to see if they offer traffic model software.
8. Steve mentioned that, in lieu of a model, funds for a traffic study consultant could be set aside. That could be one of the recommendations of the Traffic Model Panel.

X. Adjournment and Next Meeting

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM, motioned by Ted, seconded by Sean. The next meeting will be 3-25-25 at 7 pm in Town Hall.