

CITY OF NEWARK
Newark, Delaware

Traffic Committee Minutes
November 19, 2024
3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chief Mark Farrall, Tim Filasky, Dave Gula

Guests: Capt. Scott Rieger

Members Absent: Marvin Howard, Tom Parkins

Virtual Attendees: Christine Lashbrook, Newark Resident

Chief Farrall, Chairman called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Chief Farrall stated Capt. Scott Rieger will begin chairing future Traffic Committee meetings. Chief Farrall introduced Capt. Rieger and stated he is a long-term employee of the Newark Police Department that oversees both the Special Enforcement Division that includes the Traffic Unit as well as the Patrol Division.

1. Request for a no left turn restriction on eastbound Cleveland Avenue at Rose Street and southbound Rose Street at Cleveland Avenue, Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Chief Farrall said this request was brought to the Traffic Committee through Mayor Clifton. It is unknown whether this was initiated by a constituent. This request was not brought to the committee from a traffic crash standpoint, but rather from a traffic flow standpoint. Vehicles turning left onto Rose Street can impede the flow of traffic due Cleveland Avenue being a very high-volume roadway.

Chief Farrall said Alicia Cash mailed meeting notice letters to all property owners fed by Rose Street. Letters were mailed to homes on New London Road, Cleveland Avenue, Rose Street and the Mt. Zion Union American Methodist Episcopal Church and Ray Street, including the St. John's AUMP Church.

Chief Farrall stated there isn't a high volume of vehicle accidents at this intersection and there also isn't a high volume of vehicles turning on and off Rose Street. He said the restriction is similar to northbound S. College Avenue at Ritter Lane that has a similar restriction.

In this case, part of the restriction is the line-of-sight issue with vehicles queuing up behind a car turning left onto Ritter Lane. This same issue exists for vehicles traveling eastbound on W. Cleveland Avenue from New London Road and beyond. Mr. Filasky said he supports the request due to traffic flow and congestion in this area.

Mr. Gula said he is familiar with the area and it is a short queue to New London Road. He said it makes logical sense to approve the request as this isn't the only road in and out of the neighborhood.

Mr. Filasky agreed with Chief Farrall that Rose Street southbound probably isn't utilized much due to the issue getting out and approving this request would just formalize what is being done.

Chief Farrall also relayed that with the current configuration, there is the potential for a T-bone crash when vehicles on Cleveland Avenue westbound leave a gap to allow eastbound vehicles to turn left onto Rose Street. Those left turning vehicles would have their visibility restricted and may not see westbound vehicles approaching in the right turn lane for northbound New London Road.

Chief Farrall will notify the City Manager requesting city council approval.

2. Request to convert the intersection of Old Oak Road and Hullihen Drive from a two-way stop to a four-way stop.

[Chief Farrall read all public comments into the record.]

Ms. Lashbrook said she lives on Briar Lane which is the next block from Hullihen Drive. Ms. Lashbrook said she was traveling on Briar Lane a vehicle speedily heading from Hullihen Drive approached the intersection unaware of potential traffic coming from either direction. After the third instance, she felt it was time to address this concern with her councilmember.

Chief Farrall said all the other intersections on Old Oak Road are governed by four-way stops; this is the only road that does not. Chief Farrall said this creates driver confusion by assuming there are stop signs on Hullihen Drive in either direction like other intersections that motorists would encounter on Old Oak Road.

Mr. Filasky thanked Ms. Lashbrook for the concern. Mr. Filasky said if Old Oak Road and Hullihen Drive would be approved as a new subdivision design today, the recommendation would be to install stop signs along the main road (Hullihen Drive) and not Old Oak Road. Generally, guidelines for new subdivision designs allow the main roads flow and smaller roads should have stop signs in either direction approaching the main road.

Mr. Filasky said the stop signs for this neighborhood were installed many years ago and all the stop signs are in municipal code and that's why we're here today to make a recommendation to change the municipal code to add the stop signs.

Ordinarily, he would recommend not having stop signs on Old Oak Road as this could create a speeding issue. However, he believes because of how this was designed it's strange Hullihen Drive wouldn't have stop signs when every intersection leaving the neighborhood is a four-way stop. Mr. Filasky said adding a stop sign may not stop the individual from speeding or pulling out in front of other vehicles, but this could be enforced. He's in favor of making this recommendation to city council.

Mr. Gula said continuity and predictability in the neighborhood is important and makes sense.

Chief Farrall inquired to Mr. Filasky when this is presented to city council would a new sign be added to the stop signs. Mr. Filasky said in this case they would more than likely add a "new" sign and there would also be the expectation that there is a 4-way rider underneath. There may be a no parking sign in the area to attach a new signal ahead sign to. The new signal is supposed to go up for 6 months to a year. The new signs are a good suggestion.

Chief Farrall informed that this item will be added to a city council agenda and that Ms. Lashbrook would be advised on the dates for the 1st and 2nd reading.

Ms. Lashbrook said she appreciates the consideration from the committee.

Mr. Filasky said Public Works Department completed a full review of the neighborhood regarding stop signs and this location was missed. The review consisted of Public Works installing stop signs that were listed in code that didn't exist in the field and vice versa adding the stop signs that existed in the field that were omitted from the municipal code. Mr. Filasky said he appreciated Ms. Lashbrook bringing this location to their attention.

3. Request to add stop signs in both directions on Lenape Drive at Minquil Drive.

Chief Farrall read an email into the record from Laura Horah. "I wanted to provide some information relative to the stop sign situation where Lenape Drive and Minquil Drive intersect. There are actually two areas where Lenape Drive intersects with Minquil Drive and stop signs are absent at both intersections. The incident that caused me to write concerning these stop signs pertains to the intersection closest to West Chestnut Hill Road, as follows:

On October 17, I emailed Tim Filasky after I narrowly avoided a school bus hitting me, as I drove down Minquil Drive headed towards West Chestnut Hill Road. As I approached the second intersection of Lenape Drive and Minquil Drive (the one closest to West Chestnut Hill Road), I noticed a school bus was not slowing down while turning left from Lenape Drive onto Minquil Drive - right as I approached that intersection. Fortunately, I was paying attention and was able to brake before an accident occurred. If I had proceeded - thinking this bus was going to stop since they were entering the roadway - a serious accident would have occurred. To make matters worse, a woman and small children were standing on the curb right at that same intersection.

I'm greatly concerned that it is only a matter of time before an accident occurs at either of these two intersections. I strongly urge you to place stop signs on Lenape Drive at both intersections with Minquil Drive as soon as possible."

Mr. Filasky said this is a similar situation to the previous request where stop signs were never added to Lenape Drive. Her initial request was to fix a stop sign that was knocked over and upon further review it was discovered stop signs never existed and was not in code.

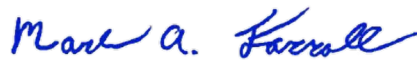
Mr. Filasky said in subdivision design it isn't necessary as the smaller roads yielding is expected upon entering the main road. Mr. Filasky said this is a neighborhood with two entrances one on S. College Avenue and E. Chestnut Hill Road and may be used as a cut through and poses as a concern. Mr. Filasky is not opposed to adding stop signs at this location to provide more continuity. Chief Farrall agreed.

Mr. Gula said he would also agree and mentioned he has witnessed more aggressive driving since COVID and when there is a decision point the drivers don't wait around as long.

Mr. Filasky said in areas of Old Newark such as Manns Avenue and Park Place had tighter curb radiuses which force you to the end before you make the turn without clipping the curb. The new norm is to widen the radiuses to move vehicles faster. Mr. Filasky has had discussions to change this within the subdivision regulations. It is more pedestrian friendly to put curb ramps closer to the intersection instead of further back because of the wider curb radius. Mr. Filasky said having that here will encourage drivers to move faster on Minquil Drive and installing stop signs here will help to deter this.

Chief Farrall said a recommendation will be made to install stop signs on both sides of Lenape Lane.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.



Chief Mark Farrall, Chairman