

At 6:30 p.m. Council President Tom Eichinger called the Hillsboro City Council meeting to order. The following were present for the meeting: Mayor Justin Harsha, Safety and Service Director Brianne Abbott, Auditor Dawson Barreras, Clerk Whitney Aliff and Police Chief Eric Daniels.

ROLL CALL

Dan Baucher, Jason Brown, Jo Sanborn, Mary Stanforth, Don Storer and Adam Wilkin were present.

MOTION: Jason Brown moved to excuse councilmember Greg Maurer, seconded by Don Storer. Vote: all yeas. Greg Maurer excused.

Mr. Eichinger led council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

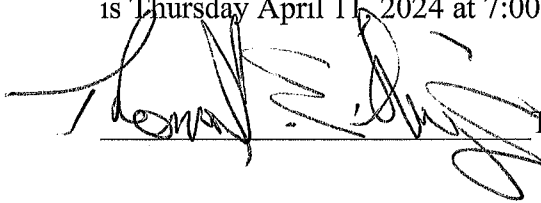
• SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS –

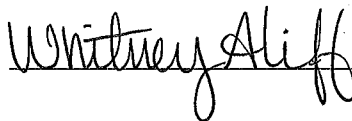
Resolution 24-07 An ODOT Resolution for pedestrian crosswalks, PID number 117314

DISCUSSION: Council President Tom Eichinger shared Resolution 24-07 is presented as a second reading and administration shared an informational document with councilmembers prior to the meeting. Mr. Eichinger called for questions or comments. Councilmember Jason Brown asked the Chief of Police, Eric Daniels, if any issues could be created with the island, accident wise, and asked for his opinion if it is wise to move forward with the project. Chief of Police Eric Daniels fully supports the project for the safety of pedestrians and residents. A citizen attending the public meeting asked if public comments would be accepted. Mr. Eichinger called for public comments. Heather Hughes, owner of Twisted Violet Homestead, shared Leesburg installed a crosswalk and did not remove any parking stalls. Ms. Hughes also questioned why a public hearing was not held for the project. Mr. Eichinger asked administration to address the questions asked by Ms. Hughes. Safety and Service Director Brianne Abbott shared she is unfamiliar with the project in Leesburg. Ms. Abbott shared Hillsboro must be in compliance with Ohio Revised Code and stated “the city is not above the law.” Citizen Steve Wilkin spoke to council regarding the ODOT project. Mr. Wilkin shared ODOT does not understand Hillsboro’s traffic flow and Hillsboro needs to figure out the problem, not ODOT. Council President Tom Eichinger addressed Mr. Wilkin’s statement and shared the City of Hillsboro does not have the expertise on payroll, unlike ODOT. ODOT has several safety committees that review proposed projects. Mr. Eichinger concluded by stating the plan has been proven to be effective in several other locations. Citizen Steve Wilkin noted the plans aren’t transparent. Mr. Eichinger shared the plans are engineered drawings. Mayor Justin Harsha asked to read a document with factual information to council and the public to help provide a better understanding of the project. See attachment #1 for the report. Citizen Heather Hughes interrupted Mayor Harsha during his report. Mayor Harsha responded, “How about you let me finish? Thank you.” Mayor Harsha also included the importance of safety of pedestrians while we continue to grow the uptown with the farmers market, DORA events, festivals, etc. Mr. Harsha also pointed out the increase of traffic with the proposed amphitheater. Michael Flowers addressed council by stating eliminating parking is detrimental and stated the downtown is exempt from being in compliance with Ohio Revised Code. Mr. Flowers

asked Chief Daniels if anyone has been killed in the crosswalks. Uptown business owner Rachelle Trefz stated if parking becomes much more of a problem, the customers will start ordering online.

ADJOURN: Don Storer moved to adjourn, seconded by Adam Wilkin. Vote all yeas. Council adjourned at 7:04 p.m. The next scheduled meeting of the Hillsboro City Council is Thursday April 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall, 130 North High Street.


Tom Eichinger, President


Whitney Aliff, Clerk

Below is a summary of the Systemic Safety Project that was presented and awarded by ODOT. Below are a few scenario's of pedestrian interactions that are common and were considered while evaluating the best practices for pedestrian crosswalk upgrades.

Scenario 1) Pedestrian trying to cross mid-range crosswalks without high visibility lines, and no way to notify drivers they are about cross.

Scenario 2) Pedestrian crosses to centerline but oncoming traffic doesn't see pedestrian.

Scenario 3) Pedestrian crosses to centerline but because the length and placement of our turn lanes, car jets over to turn lane and does not see pedestrian.

Scenario 4) Pedestrian attempts to cross crosswalk and car exits turning left out of alley which is lined up with existing crosswalks.

The above scenario's capture the current state of the mid-range crosswalks. The mid-range crosswalks are not the main intersection crosswalks but can be identified on the last page of this document. The current state of the mid-range crosswalks and concerns with pedestrians are; lines are faded, they are not ADA accessible, lack of notification to drivers when crossing, turn lanes are extended too far, turning left in and out of alleys and parking patterns too close to crosswalks causing site visibility issues. The current state of our crosswalks is alarming. Past countermeasures were the installation of in-street pedestrian signs / delineators that were damaged within one month. These outdated measures did not provide pedestrians the safety they need nor meet ADA compliance.

ODOT came out with an application that focuses on preventing injuries related to pedestrian and roadway departure crashes. The improvements that are promoted through the grant are meant to be proactive and widely implemented measures. Again, these are ODOT promoted as 'proven countermeasures'. ODOT encouraged project applications to be focused on the proven countermeasures in the fact sheet.

Applications that were submitted were coordinated with the District Safety Review Team and a presentation was given for a final signoff on the project before ODOT district 9 submitted the project to the state on our behalf. ODOT staff from districts and Central Offices reviewed all Systemic Safety Applications and any questions were forwarded to the primary contact on the application and responses were quickly returned.

The countermeasures chosen for the mid-range crosswalks were;

- High-visibility crosswalks (high-visibility crosswalks use patterns that are visible to both the driver and pedestrian from farther away compared to traditional transverse line crosswalks. The location of the crosswalk and high-visibility lines doesn't remove the risk of the extended turning lanes, and prevention of cars jetting into turn lanes.
- Refuge Islands. Refuge islands will allow pedestrians to cross one lane of traffic at a time, and also prevent cars from jetting over into the turn lanes which currently extend past the crosswalks giving drivers the opportunity to enter into a lane that is 253 feet away from the light. It also allows handicap pedestrians a place to rest before making the next stage of the crossing (if needed) Pedestrian refuge island can reduce pedestrian crashes by 32%. Refuge island are highly desirable for mid-block pedestrian crossings on roads with four or more travel lanes or where

annual average daily traffic (AADT) is 9,000 or higher. In this case all four mid-range crosswalks have an AADT over 10,000.

- Solar Pedestrian Signage. Push button flashing beacons will allow pedestrians to notify drivers when they are ready to cross. High visibility flashing signs will be activated upon button and will be double sided. Solar powered was the only option in this case due to inability to run electric lights in the current mid-range crosswalk locations.

Removal of 15 parking stalls has nothing to do with implementing upgrades to our crosswalks. Research of our current crosswalk scenario lead us to ORC portion that the city is not in compliance with. Reviewing this research, yes we are losing parking stalls, but more importantly these Revised Codes of Ohio are there for a reason. It is another countermeasure that promotes pedestrian safety; Parking stalls HAVE to be so many feet away from crosswalks, lights, stop signs, etc.

Complaints we hear are;

- If we lose parking stalls people won't walk to come our store.
 - People will walk from a parking space at Walmart, Kroger, Lowes, Marshalls into the store. We understand the fear, but people will walk to shop.
 - We have 180 parking stalls uptown, and a combined 45 stalls in two public parking lots. (that are rarely filled up)
- We don't want the mid-range crosswalks.
 - Crosswalks are a feature in downtowns to give shoppers/pedestrians an area to cut across to shorten length of time walking. If we eliminate crosswalks it will be detrimental to the retail stores. The accessibility is still needed – they just need upgraded to provide pedestrians a safer way to cross.
- We don't want the refuge islands.
 - The whole purpose of this grant is to mitigate pedestrian accidents. By not installing refuge islands it gives motorists the capability to turn left out of an alley, turn left into an alley, and get into the turn lane prior to the crosswalk versus after the crosswalk.
 - We should not compromise safety over accessibility. And we should be taking advantage of any opportunity to make upgrades to our uptown for future growth.

Reason for keeping mid-range crosswalks and implementing upgrades.

The Historic District is a major arterial, and is the main intersection of six state routes. We have over 70 active businesses in the uptown which means approx. a couple hundred employees that serve and walk in the uptown each day. The uptown has a continual pattern of growth. The Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area was implemented which will draw crowds to local DORA events, Farmers Market, festivals, etc. The proposed amphitheater uptown will also have a huge impact on our growth and being proactive with safety measures is and should always be the priority. Parking problems and lack of parking can be addressed with studies and other tactics to improve the availability of parking, but never should be at the expense of promoting pedestrian safety upgrades.

The city has applied for a parking study and has plans to work on upgrades with public parking signage. If the parking study grant is approved, the study will be reviewed with the professionals to determine best scenario's for the uptown in terms of parking.

Again, we cannot compromise safety over accessibility and we are not above the law when enforcing Ohio Revised Codes.

Below in the RED rectangles are the project locations.

The main intersection crosswalks are not part of this grant. The main intersection crosswalks will not be affected by refuge islands or any lighting upgrades.

