

Traffic Committee
MINUTES
March 19, 2013

Committee Members

Present:

Chairman Susan Ruinen, Secretary Karen Hanner, Town Engineer Rosemarie Nuzzo, Randy Edwards, Parks Streets and Sanitation Director Dan Walker, Frank Berry, Planning Commission Liaison Lisa Gibson, Rosemary Wilson, Larry Yon, Lt. Matt Davis

Attending:

Town Administrator Britt Poole, Police Department Major Jay Koon, Director Planning, Building and Technology Director John Hanson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 AM in the Courtroom/Council Chambers by Chair Susan Ruinen.

February Minutes:

Chair Susan Ruinen asked if there were any corrections or comments about the February minutes. Frank Berry made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Lisa Gibson seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed.

Relocation Corley Mill Rd:

Britt Poole reported the property owners at Corley Mill Road were working with their lease holders. There were no other new developments.

Phase 1:

Mr. Poole told the committee that asphalt has been put down on West Butler Street. Stormwater work is being done. The project is reported to be 19% complete.

Insync Signal:

The report from SCDOT on the Insync System is expected soon. A visit to Columbia County, Georgia is being planned for senior staff and Council members to see a signal system implemented for that county.

**Interchange at I-20 & 378:
SC6/Parker Rd/
Middlebrook/Gibson:**

Britt Poole reported the project plan is waiting for SCDOT approval.

Dan Walker stated that SCDOT has not reported on the study of this area.

Vision Plan:

Britt Poole told the committee that asbestos studies were started on the structures in the Icehouse Project except for the building still occupied. A structural engineer is looking at the buildings. The Town would like to keep the buildings as a tie in to the park area using the facades facing Main Street.

Chair Ruinen asked about the plans for planters along the 100 block of Main Street. Mr. Poole stated the architect is working on a concept using planters and benches to create a visual barrier separating the

sidewalk and the road. A wrought iron fence is planned for the islands to discourage pedestrian crossings except at the crosswalk. Mr. Poole reported some of the trees in the block are not thriving and will be replaced by raised planters.

Mr. Poole told the Committee about the public meetings for the Icehouse Project taking place on April 16 and 24. A notice will be included in the next water bill

Old Cherokee Rd: Dan Walker told committee members he drove the section of Old Cherokee Road between North Lake Drive and Pilgrim Church Road. The speed limit increases from 35 mph to 45 mph as you head away from the Town. SCDOT has made improvements to the ROW and has cut back overgrowth.

Butler Crosswalk: Copies of the St Stephen Lutheran Church Preschool Safety Audit were distributed to those present (attached). Chair Ruinen said copies were emailed to the Committee. She stated there didn't appear to be problems with the street or crosswalk but with parking issues and pedestrians. The audit concluded with a number of suggestions the school could implement to improve safety.

Roundabouts: The discussion on Roundabouts will be deferred to the April meeting.

Coventry Stop Sign: Jay Koon read the speed study conducted on Coventry Lakes Drive between February 21 and March 3, 2013 (attached). The 85th percentile showed 28 mph. Dan Walker commented that the accident report attached to the All Way Stop Application was due to a right turn into the yard and a stop sign would not have changed the outcome. Mr. Walker made a motion to deny the request for an All Way Stop at Coventry Lake Drive and Widgeon Drive. Randy Edwards seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Mr. Walker will contact the resident.

S Lake No Right Turn: Dan Walker reported that the signal poles at all four corners of the intersection at South Lake Drive and East Main Street have been damaged by tractor trailer trucks attempting to turn right. The granite curbing is chipped. There is a plan for the pole at the corner near the new courthouse to be moved back. Jay Koon commented that a viable alternative route would be required in order to restrict turns at that intersection. He added the trucks being detoured from I-20 due to an accident made the problems at this intersection much worse. Dan Walker made a motion to ask SCDOT to limit trucks turning right from North Lake Drive onto East Main Street. Larry Yon seconded. There was no further discussion. The vote was unanimous in favor. Dan Walker will contact SCDOT.

Left Turn at Industrial: Chair Ruinen said she had received an inquiry about a left turn signal from southbound South Lake Drive onto Glassmaster Road. She stated she hadn't noticed vehicles waiting to turn at that intersection. Britt Poole commented that the new Avtec manufacturing facility is under construction there and a warrant study would be indicated after they open. John Hanson stated a new road is being built to access the facility, Innovation Place. The parking lots would be interconnected between the two roads. Chair Ruinen agreed that no action is needed at this time.

Chair Ruinen commented that she will add another item to the next agenda regarding the intersection at Cedar Road and Mineral Springs Road. Dan Walker commented that there are visibility issues there. Jay Koon said traffic stacks up at that intersection during rush hours.

The next Traffic Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 16, 2013, at 8:00 AM in the Eli Mack Room at the Lexington Municipal Complex, 111 Maiden Lane, Lexington, SC.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Dan Walker seconded by Rosemary Wilson with unanimous approval by members present.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Hanner,

Approved By: _____

Susan Ruinen, Chair

Memo

To: Chief Green
From: Ptl. Wise
CC: Lt. Davis
Date: March 4, 2013
Re: Speed Count Coventry Lakes

From February 21 – March 3, 2013 a traffic study was conducted on Coventry Lakes Drive. There is a posted speed limit of 25 mph on Coventry Lakes Drive. Below are the findings:

Coventry Lakes Drive toward Teesdale Court

Average speed:	18 mph
Total vehicles:	1,275
The 85th percentile:	28 mph
Number of vehicle between 21-30 mph:	636 (49.9%)
Percentage of vehicles below 25 mph:	73.7%
Percentage of vehicles below 30 mph:	93.8%
Percentage of vehicles below 35 mph:	99.6%

Coventry Lakes Drive toward Mallard Lakes Drive

Average speed:	20 mph
Total vehicles:	1,151
The 85th percentile:	28 mph
Number of vehicle between 21-30 mph:	625 (54.4%)
Percentage of vehicles below 25 mph:	73.1%
Percentage of vehicles below 30 mph:	94.1%
Percentage of vehicles below 35 mph:	99.4%

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Preschool Audit Report

The following are a simple list of advantages, disadvantages, and recommendations based on a community assessment. It is not intended to be a list of complete recommendations and is in no way exhaustive. No set of recommendations can absolutely prevent accidents, injuries or even death from occurring, but we believe that the list of recommendations will help create a safer place for children while going to and from school. Please be sure to consult with SC Department of Transportation, school transportation officials, city, county, council of government, and/ or other municipal transportation staff regarding the transportation issues and recommendations outlined below.

Walk Audit

Tuesday, February 19, 2013

12:00-1:30 pm

Participants:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Email</u>
Beth Haggard	St. Stephen's Lutheran Church	Preschool Director	Beth@ssl.org
Benjie Rhoad	St. Stephen's Lutheran Church	Church Council President	Email - rhoaddr@pbtcomm.net
Dennis Bolton	St. Stephen's Lutheran Church	Pastor	dennis@ssl.org
Branden Hassler	Lexington Police Dept	Traffic Safety Division	bhassler@lexsc.com
Officer Peyinghaus	Lexington Police Dept		803-359-6260
Jay Daniels	DHEC	Office of Healthy Schools	danielje@dhec.sc.gov
Neil Martin	DHEC	Office of Injury and Violence Prevention	martinco@dhec.sc.gov



Existing Procedures:

- A. Student Drop-off
 - a. Occurs between 8:55- 9:05. The doors are locked at 9:20. There are approximately 120 students in the school from ages 12mos to 4 years old.
- B. Student Pick up
 - a. Starts at 11:55 and lasts until approximately 12:10.
 - b. Staff indicated that they do not open any doors or buckle any children up during pick-up, but allow parents to do that.

Note: There are currently no walkers or cyclers coming to the school from any adjacent neighborhoods.

Existing Infrastructure and Behavior:

- A. Butler Street entrance is used for student drop-off in the morning and pick-up in the afternoon for ages 12-24 mos. In the morning parents walk their children into the school and go to their classes.
 - a. High speeds were observed along this corridor of Butler Street, moving from #378 toward Church Street. The intersection and Stop signs at Church St. tends to slow traffic moving from Church St. toward #378 along Butler. According to the traffic study done on Butler St. by Town of Lexington Police Dept, traffic does tend to exceed the speed limit by about 2-3 miles/ hour.



- B. There is a large parking lot adjacent (below left) to the cemetery and across the street from the church where parents may park and use the high visibility crosswalk (below right) to access the school. There is crosswalk signage at the crosswalk as well as at the entrance to Butler St. where it intersects with Church St. There is minimal crosswalk usage due to people not parking in the parking lot and using either illegal or “no Parking” designated areas to park and simply walking across the street from that specific location.



- C. There is handicap parking along Butler St. closest to the church with appropriate entrance ways. See picture below. During drop-off, parents repeatedly used the handicap parking to drop off children and walk them into class. In addition to being dangerous to back out of, parents made left-hand turns across traffic to get in a spot that was designed for traffic coming from the opposite direction. This backed up traffic along Butler but also on to Church St. Church leaders indicate that sometimes parents stop in the middle of the intersection of Church and Butler and no traffic can pass through the intersection. (On this particular morning there was a “near miss” during one of these left-hand turns across traffic. A car, desiring to turn left across traffic had to stop and wait for traffic coming from the other direction and another car backing out. The driver behind them became impatient and passed on the opposite side of the road. The person backing out had to be stopped by one of the auditors in order to prevent the accident.)
- D. The loop at the front of the school is used for parent pick up in the afternoon for ages 2 to 4 years.

- E. The angled parking spaces along Butler Street and beside the church are dangerous to pull out of because other vehicles often block visibility. Drivers end up backing up “blindly” into the intersection. Those near the crosswalk also have the tendency to back out onto the crosswalk, which could endanger pedestrians.



- F. There is a sidewalk beside the church along Butler St. The sidewalk is “flush” with the pavement and cars have a tendency to drive onto the sidewalk. Again, there was a driver who made a left-hand turn across traffic into a parking space and almost hit someone walking on the sidewalk.



- G. The Speed limit is marked for 30 mph and the sign is across from the church.



- H. There are “No Parking” signs as well as pavement markings across Butler Street from the church. However, parents still park here in the morning (see the picture below right) and do not use the crosswalk. Only approximately 25-30% of the walkers actually use the crosswalk. This increases the ambiguity for drivers as to where to expect pedestrians and increases the likelihood of a potential conflict.



- I. At the Fountain area loop, there was minimal traffic back-up observed on Church Street at the beginning of pick-up. The curb in the front loop extends too far causing issues with traffic flow (several drivers had issues maneuvering around the curb extensions). Several cars had to go onto the curb to get around.

Child Passenger Safety Observations at the Fountain area

- (15) drivers were wearing their seat belt
- (4) drivers were **not** wearing their seat belt
- (2) front seat passengers were wearing their seat belt
- (24) children were restrained in child safety seats

DHEC's Office of Injury and Violence Prevention (Neal Martin) or Emily Marr with Midlands Safe Kids would be happy to assist with a free child safety seat inspection at the church if interested.

Opportunities:

- A. To help slow traffic down prior the crosswalk, several possibilities exist.
 - a. Contact SCDOT to see if it would be possible to reduce the speed to 20 mph near the school. (I believe the standard is 10 mph under the posted speed limit which is 30mph here.)(Most school zones are 25mph)
 - b. In addition, several devices may be helpful. Consult with SCDOT to see if options such as a yield bar prior to the crosswalk, plastic bollard on either side of the crosswalk in the middle of the street, flashing school signage (can this be done at a non-public school?), or a sign indicating a fine for not stopping for pedestrians could be a possibility.
 - c. Talk with local law enforcement about coming out intermittently to monitor the situation and possibly provide incentives to drivers to obey the posted speed limit, not park in handicap spaces, and to slow for pedestrians.
- B. Consider mandating parent parking to the large parking lot. The church/school leaders have asked parents repeatedly to use the parking lot across the street but parents have not been compliant. They have continued to park on the "shoulder" of Butler across from the church and walk children in without the crosswalk. Several options that may be helpful in enforcing this procedure may include:
 - a. Restripe the "No Parking" street marking as it is severely faded and add it to the other areas on the shoulder
 - b. Use orange cones to block off those areas for parked, but parents may move these.
 - c. Tear up the parking area by removing the asphalt and placing plantings there to take up that space and keep them from parking on the grass/ground.
 - d. Open up the Fountain loop area at the front of the church to drop-off. This would help alleviate the amount of traffic along Butler and minimize the number of children having to cross Butler.
 - e. Eliminate the angled parking altogether and turn this area into a drop-off pickup zone where parents don't have to get out of the car and children can be loaded into the car directly beside the church, preventing them and parents from having to walk across the street.
 - f. Realign the parking to parallel. This would eliminate the necessity to back "blindly" out of the parking space into active traffic areas by active use of side view mirrors. This would be good for the handicapped parking as well as senior parking during church. When church was not in session, it could be converted into a drop-off/pick-up line as outlined in "e." above.

- C. To eliminate drivers from parking on the sidewalk and injuring walkers, parking bumpers could be installed.
- D. Parent education is going to be important. Most of the unsafe practices identified were due the parents dropping off children. I would recommend contacting Neal Martin with DHEC's Division of Injury and Violence Prevention (on the roster above) or local law enforcement regarding proper child safety seat restraint use, and work with parents and provide some educational session to them, especially prior to any law enforcement action being taken. The Buckle Buddies Program offered by Midlands Safekids might also be an option. Midlands Safekids contact is Emily Marr at safekidsmidlands@gmail.com.