

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC HEARING - SHEFFIELD ROAD)**

November 21, 2023 at 6:00 PM

In the absence of Mayor Craig, Chairman Long called the meeting to order.

Chairman Long called on Alderman Kantor to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was observed with Chairman Long asking that everyone keep Chief Haas and his family in their thoughts and prayers.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Cavanaugh, Stewart, Long, Fajardo (late), T. Sapienza, Kantor, Trisciani, Levasseur, Heath, E. Sapienza, Burkush, Barry, Gamache, George-Kelly

Chairman Long advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to receive public input regarding changing Sheffield Road to a one-way, westbound, from South Willow Street to Harvey Road; that anyone wishing to speak must first step to the nearest microphone when recognized and give his/her name and address in a clear, loud voice for the record; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; and any questions must be directed to the Chair.

Chairman Long called for those wishing to speak.

Matthew Normand, City Clerk, stated we did have one written communication that has been passed out to you this evening from Peter Doyle who represents Granese-Sheffield, LLC.

John Cronin stated I am here on behalf of Nuria Energy who have a property on the corner of Harvey Road and Sheffield. They participated in the committee meetings and they are opposed to making this a one-way and think it is a decision of last resort. From their perspective, changing a roadway that provides access, meaningful access, limits

property values not only for the current use but future use and increases operating costs. They are not disputing that there are issues at this intersection and since the committee meetings I have had an opportunity to review the safety assessment that was done for the city by VHB. I think it is an important document and I am not sure if you get it or Highway gets it or who reviews it but when you look at Page 8 in the crash analysis, it was a 10-year period that was studied at this intersection and it doesn't distinguish between impacts between the east side and the west side of Sheffield but interestingly, the one-way request is only for the west side. When you look at the crash data, what sprung out to me the most over a 10-year period was you had an average of six crashes a year. Now I expected it to be much more for a roadway like South Willow that is highly traveled. In that period of time, only one of those collisions was a Class A injury. The great majority were property damage and a high percentage were activities that related on South Willow like fender benders and various things. I can read them for you. There was right-turn at 2%, run off the road at 5%, side swiped at 5%, single vehicle at 5%, backing up at 2%, head-on at 3%, left-turn at 14%, and rear enders at 32%. Those are not going to have any change based on a one-way designation. You take a look at the injury data that is on page 9 of the study and it talks about that Class A injury and only one collision. If this is going to be the new standard for one-way streets, you are probably going to have a lot of requests in each of your districts. More importantly, when you go out to the assessment findings, it is pretty clear that the issue that is driving it...to make it a one-way might be a partial solution but what is driving it is site distance and VHB makes that clear. When you are coming down Sheffield heading eastbound, if you look to the left there is a stand of trees there that do block the site distance. AASHTO and ITE, the traffic standards, layout a distance that you should have for clear site distance and that doesn't meet those. The good news is that when I was before the committee I said I also spoke for Thibeault Corporation. The owner is open to having a discussion about creating that site distance by giving the city an easement to do the clearing which not only is a fix but is a real solution because it takes care of the big problem. He is willing to do that. VHB in their report also go through a list of issues and recommendations for a fix. One-way is the recommendation of last resort. In the near term, on page 19 of the report, they talk about removing the trees and doing trim back, making an effort to get easements, there are signage issues and

the stop bar coming down Sheffield is back too far and there are photographs in the report that show people stop at the stop sign and the stop bar and then they roll forward so they can get a look into the intersection. They are recommending that that be moved and redesignated. There are also some conflicting signs in that area that should be relocated. They list seven different near term solutions. I will defer to Highway on this but I think when they were at the committee meeting they said we are not here taking a position to make it a one-way but we prefer to wait and see what the state study comes back with. I don't know if you make this one-way permanently now whether you will lose the opportunity to get state money and benefits for a greater fix. I have no idea on that but it is something that you folks or Mr. Clougherty might now. It seems to me, and my client's preference would be, why don't we work on solving the real problem of site distance and get those easements and cut those trees back and see how it works and let the state do their thing. Maybe at the end of the day you need to do it but the fear is that once it is closed and once it is a one-way for a while, it is really hard to change it back. We appreciate your consideration. I hope you have had an opportunity to take a look at the VHB report for yourselves and look at the crash data and turning movements. Thank you.

Vincent Iacozzi, Thibeault Corporation, stated Thibeault Corporation had written a letter I think last August concerning our opposition to hanging a one-way street sign and turning Sheffield into a one-way. We are probably the largest land owner on Sheffield. We own six properties. We own the northerly corner of Sheffield to the west and we own the easterly corner of Sheffield, 8051 South Willow, and we own the other corner that ties into Harvey Road. The problem as Atty. Cronin said in our view is the site distance. It will require some land taking I believe. We have been in this business, I, myself for over 40 years, and 8051 South Willow onto Sheffield is a very large slope. When you turn you are almost going up a 7% or 8% grade almost immediately. You can't see the cars coming easterly on Sheffield at all. Cars that are on Sheffield that want to turn either left or right cannot see the traffic coming southbound on South Willow. Unfortunately, in the 8051 South Willow Street site plan, there is a large detention pond probably 25' from the edge of the pavement. So the intersection would have to be significantly redesigned and have the slope changed on the easterly portion

of Sheffield where it ties into South Willow. Again, I would urge the Board to recommend that we do a lot more research into the actual causes of the accidents. Site distance is primarily one that I think needs to be rectified with a lot more engineering and a lot more thought. As Atty. Cronin said, once you put that sign up there, nothing else will ever happen. It will stay a one-way street with a steep hill and everybody will still be slipping or sliding one way or the other when winter comes. Thank you for your time.

*This being a special meeting, no further business can be presented and on motion of **Alderman Cavanaugh** duly seconded by **Alderman E. Sapienza**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Normand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

City Clerk