



Traffic Board Public Hearing Minutes

Monday, May 2, 2022, 5:00PM

Virtual meeting

Traffic Board Members in attendance: Arah Schuur (Chair), Alex Epstein

Board Members absent: Joan Liu

City Staff: Kate White from the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) as Traffic Board Staff Liaison.

Video recording of the hearing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSRtUZEyDRO>

The meeting began at 5:02 pm and ended at 5:20 pm.

Approval of the October 19, 2021, Minutes and the December 1, 2021, Minutes

Alex Epstein made a motion to approve the approval of the October 19, 2021, and December 1, 2021, minutes. Arah Schuur seconded. All members present voted in favor. The motion carried.

Discussion of Board Operations

Arah Schuur described that the City's code of ordinances and the Traffic Board's own rules and regulations guide the operations of the board. A. Schuur shared that given that the board has conducted two public hearings and several meetings, the board wanted to review and discuss whether to make any changes to the rules and regulations.

A. Schuur stated that, as referred to on the Traffic Board's website, the Traffic Board hears appeals of decisions made by the Traffic Commission. There are two cases in which the board will hold a public hearing. The first is to approve or disapprove of any rule or regulation proposed to be adopted, altered or repealed and not yet in effect. The second, is to avoid the adoption, alteration, repeal of a rule or regulation which has been adopted and in place for a period of at least 30 days. A. Schuur shared that in both of those cases, it requires a petition signed by at least 50 registered voters to be submitted to trigger a public hearing. If a petition is submitted and certified, the board must hold a hearing within two weeks. This is stated in the City's Charter documents.

Alex Epstein noted that between the two triggers for public hearings, there is a gap of 30 days if the item in appeal has been implemented. Which has not applied to the two petitions received so far by the Traffic Board.

A. Schuur affirmed this and reiterated that they wanted to remind community members of the rules and regulations that the Traffic Board operates by to clarify this in the future.

A. Epstein asked for clarity about both petitions received recently and if they were regarding proposed changes. A. Schuur responded that the changes on College Avenue had been decided by the Traffic Commission, but the changes had not yet been implemented. The second was proposed but not yet fully implemented.

A. Schuur asked the board about the Traffic Board's public hearing rules particularly around the 2-minute limit and making sure that everyone had the chance to speak. A. Schuur reiterated that the board had two public hearings with lots of public comment, and the board adhered to the rules well. A. Epstein stated that the public hearings have given community members a fair chance to speak their opinion. A. Epstein stated that in future meetings, if turnout is higher, a 1-minute limit could be considered to still ensure that everyone gets the chance to speak. A. Schuur asked the staff liaison to review other public hearing regulations with a shorter time limit.

A. Schuur described how the City of Cambridge requires public commenters to register in advance. A. Epstein stated that there are positives and negatives to pre-registration. Registration to attend is not required for Traffic Board meetings.

A. Schuur asked the staff liaison to put more clarifying text on the Traffic Board website describing the purpose of the Traffic Board, what triggers a public hearing, and the requirement to hold a public hearing within two weeks. A. Epstein requested that the notice of the public hearings include more specific language from the appeal so that community members understand the purpose of the public hearing.

Adjournment

Alex Epstein made a motion to adjourn. Arah Schuur seconded the motion. The motion carried.