

ACTION ITEMS AND MINUTES
PARKING and TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – May 5, 2016

City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

Action Items requiring an immediate ordinance during the next Council meeting: none
Temporary Action Items requiring an ordinance during the annual omnibus: none

ACTIONS:

- [1] Accepted and placed on file the minutes of the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee Meeting held on April 7, 2016.

- [2] Accepted and placed on file the Financial Report dated March 31, 2016.

- [3 (VI.A.)] **Action Item:** Rock Street, request to include in Residential Parking Zone – **VOTED** to table action item until comprehensive residential parking program is implemented.

- [4 (VI.B.)] **Action Item:** Proposed Bike Corral siting for Summer 2016 – **VOTED** to approve staff recommendation to install bicycle corrals at two locations in the downtown.

- [5 (VII.A.)] **Action Item:** Moped and scooter parking on sidewalks – **VOTED** to postpone action item until a report on the legal status of moped parking on sidewalks is determined.

- [6 (VII.B.)] **Action Item:** Court Street at Washington Street – **VOTED** to retain the STOP signs on Court Street.

- [7 (VII.C.)] **Action Item:** Miller Avenue speed limit – **VOTED** to conduct a traffic study on Miller Avenue to determine if the 25 mph speed limit is in conformance with State RSAs and other engineering standards and practices for setting speed limits.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Lown called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Councilor, Brad Lown
City Manager, John Bohenko
Public Works Director, Peter Rice
Deputy Fire Chief, James Heinz
Acting Deputy Police Chief, Frank Warchol
Member, Ted Gray
Member, Ron Cypher
Member, Harold Whitehouse
Member, Shari Donnermeyer
Alternate Member, Mary Lou McElwain

Staff Advisors Present:

Parking Manager, Joey Giordano
Parking and Transportation Engineer, Eric Eby
Transportation Planner, Juliet Walker

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Public Works Director Rice motioned to accept the April 7, 2016, meeting minutes.

Shari Donnermeyer seconded.

Motion passed 9-0.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Harold Whitehouse motioned to accept the March 31, 2016, financial report.

Ted Gray seconded.

Motion passed 9-0.

Committee discussed parking meter fees and why the revenue is so far ahead of projections. Public Works Director Rice reminded the Committee that the budget was established before a rate change was made. The budget was based on revenue projections using the older, lower parking rates. The higher meter prices are bringing in more revenue.

Mary Lou McElwain inquired about the parking meter space rentals line item. She asked if this line item included the fees paid by contractors and developers who park in spaces longer than

the allowed posted time limit, and spaces that are not metered. City Manager Bohenko and Parking Manager Giordano confirmed it does.

Mary Lou McElwain stated that she noticed contractors parking at Prescott Park. Parking Manager Giordano will investigate the issue.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Beth Margeson, 24 Marcy Street, expressed support for keeping the STOP signs on Court Street at Washington Street.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Rock Street, request to include in Residential Parking Zone – Eric Eby stated this action item was presented by Nicole LaPierre, resident at 44 Rock Street. She has experienced difficulty finding parking near her home on Rock Street due to downtown workers parking on the street. She noticed the “Resident Parking Only” signs on Hanover Street and Pearl Street. She requested Rock Street be added to the Residential Parking Zone. Eric Eby stated the residential parking restrictions are very difficult to enforce because the Parking Enforcement Officers do not have a way to identify residential parkers. Eric Eby stated staff recommends taking no action on the residential parking program until the new parking garage is in place. However, staff is researching residential parking programs. Parking Manager Giordano recently made a presentation to the Citywide Neighborhood Committee about what goes into a residential parking program.

Harold Whitehouse asked for a time table on establishing a residential parking program. City Manager Bohenko stressed the importance of having a place to put the vehicles once a residential parking program is established. He stated approximately five years ago, multiple meetings were spent on this issue with residents from the South End. Ultimately, the residents decided against the program. He reiterated that Parking Manager Giordano is fully investigating residential parking programs.

City Manager Bohenko discussed the previous challenges of identifying residential parkers and stressed the need to put the correct program in place once the parking garage is operational. He stated that 6 months before the new parking garage is open, public meeting and public input sessions would be held to discuss residential parking.

Harold Whitehouse motioned to table action item until comprehensive residential parking program is implemented. City Manager Bohenko seconded. **Vote 9-0, to table action item until comprehensive residential parking program is implemented.**

Mary Lou McElwain commented on the continuing complaints of employees parking in residential parking zones. She asked how the City could work with businesses to identify the employees parking in resident parking areas. She mentioned actively working with the downtown businesses to resolve this issue.

City Manager Bohenko suggested conducting surveys of the downtown businesses to inquire about employee parking.

B. Proposed Bike Corral siting for Summer 2016 – Juliet Walker, Transportation Planner, stated information was provided in the packet proposing to place the bike corrals in the same locations as last year. The first location is on Daniel Street, before the intersection with Penhallow Street, in a no-parking zone. She stated this is the third summer it has been placed at this location and it keeps the sight lines open at that location. The second location is at a metered parking space next to the entrance to the public parking area entrance at the corner of Hanover Street and Market Street. This is the second year at this location. She stated that it is on the outskirts of the downtown, which is heavily used by pedestrians and bicyclists. The corrals would be installed in May and removed in November, which is standard practice.

Harold Whitehouse supported the Daniel Street space, but inquired about the criticism of the location at Hanover Street and Market Street. Juliet Walker stated that there were a few comments from businesses at the beginning. She stated she visited some of the businesses in the area before the corral was installed and they expressed support. She stated that usage will be monitored and businesses will continue to be contacted.

Ron Cypher opposed the corral being placed in a metered parking space for vehicles.

Public Works Director Rice motioned to accept staff recommendation. City Manager Bohenko seconded. **Vote 8-1, to approve staff recommendation to install bicycle corrals at two locations for the 2016 season. Ron Cypher opposing.**

Shari Donnermeyer inquired about contractor parking for the Gas Light renovations. Public Works Director Rice stated the Gas Light has been working with the City.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Moped and scooter parking on sidewalks – Eric Eby stated that staff has discussed the issue several times with Mr. Stettner and continues to investigate state laws and city ordinances regarding bicycle and scooter parking. He stated that according to state law, motor vehicles, which include mopeds, are not allowed to park on sidewalks. Eric Eby stated there might be a clause that allows cities to write their own ordinances regarding bicycles and mopeds and staff continues to work with the Legal Department on this issue. Staff will report back with a proposed policy recommendation.

City Manager Bohenko motioned to postpone action item until a report on the legal status of moped parking on sidewalks is determined. Ron Cypher seconded. **Vote 9-0, to postpone action item until a report on the legal status of moped parking on sidewalks is determined.**

B. Court Street at Washington Street – Eric Eby stated the request was presented by Harry Wood, employee at the Inn at Strawberry Banke. Mr. Wood noticed vehicles braking and accelerating causing noise and exhaust to enter the Inn. Eric Eby stated that his initial review of the traffic volumes did not appear to warrant an all-way STOP. However, since the last meeting, Eric Eby conducted more research by placing traffic counters on Court Street and Washington Street. It recorded traffic volumes and speeds. He checked with the Police Department and no accidents have been recorded at this intersection for the past ten years. He spent over an hour watching traffic and pedestrians at the intersection. He stated that because it is working well now without any accidents and because of the volume of pedestrian traffic, he has changed the recommendation to leave the STOP signs in place. This recommendation was based on the limited sight lines and the extensive pedestrian activity at the intersection. He believes it is safer to leave it alone.

Ted Gray motioned to keep the STOP signs on Court Street at Washington Street. Harold Whitehouse seconded. **Vote 9-0, to retain the STOP signs on Court Street.**

Chairman Lown stated the direction of the Committee has been toward traffic calming and this action will further the traffic calming efforts of the Committee. Mary Lou McElwain supported keeping the STOP signs and thanked staff for their work. Harold Whitehouse suggested revisiting the issue in the future if needed.

C. Miller Avenue speed limit – Eric Eby stated David Hudlin presented the issue because he was concerned about speeding on Miller Avenue. Mr. Hudlin had suggested moving the speed limit signs to another location to make traffic aware of the 25 mph speed limit. Eric Eby investigated and found the true speed limit, by law, is 30 mph, and that the signs are improperly posted. There is no city ordinance regarding the speed limit on that street.

In order to comply with the law, the signs should be removed, or 30 mph speed limit signs should be installed. Eric Eby reviewed the speeds at both ends of Miller Avenue and the 85th percentile is 30 mph. The average speed is 25 mph. The actual speeds of drivers are in compliance with the correct speed limit. He checked with the Legal Department and they said that the City should not have speed limit signs that are in conflict with state law. Eric Eby stated that not all city streets are required to have speed limit signs posted. Staff recommended removing the signs to be in compliance with the current law.

Harold Whitehouse opposed changing the speed limit on Miller Avenue. He motioned to forward the issue to the City Council.

The Committee discussed the option of conducting a traffic study, which is required by state law, to determine if 25 mph speed limit is appropriate and then forward it to the City Council. Eric Eby stated he had recorded traffic counts and measured the sight lines.

Frank Warchol stated the 25 mph has been posted for a long time. He stated a speed sign would be posted on Miller Avenue soon.

Chairman Lown suggested leaving the speed limit signs posted.

Harold Whitehouse withdrew his motion.

The Committee discussed speed limits, violations, challenges, and enforcement.

City Manager Bohenko motioned to have a traffic study completed on Miller Avenue to determine if the 25 mph speed limit is acceptable and direct staff to report back. In the meantime, the signs will remain as posted. Harold Whitehouse seconded. **Vote 9-0, to conduct a traffic study on Miller Avenue to determine if the 25 mph speed limit is in conformance with State RSAs and other engineering standards and practices for setting speed limits.**

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Doug Roberts, 247 Richards Avenue, stated he lives near Miller Avenue and discussed reducing speed limits for general safety considerations.

IX. INFORMATIONAL:

A. Water country traffic study public meeting on May 17, 2016 – Eric Eby stated a draft copy of the traffic study is expected this week from the consultant. A meeting is scheduled on May 17, 2016, in City Hall's Conference Room A. Findings and recommendations would be discussed at the meeting.

B. Wayfinding signs Phase II status – Juliet Walker, Transportation Planner, stated that the installation of the City's Wayfinding Program Phase 2 is starting. Approximately 60 signs will be installed as part of this phase and placed along the primary road corridors into the downtown. There are additional phases forthcoming. She stated there would be a future update regarding wayfinding for the Hanover Parking Garage.

C. "Islington Street Lab" workshop on May 12, 2016 – Eric Eby directed the Committee to the flyer in the packet regarding the Islington Street Lab Design Workshop with Mike Lydon on Thursday, May 12, 2016, starting at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall. The Neighborhood Orientation and Social was held on April 28, 2016, to familiarize the public with the project. The project encompasses temporary traffic calming measures and safety improvements on Islington Street.

Doug Roberts spoke about the project and invited the Committee to attend. The City is a sponsor.

D. Peeverly Hill Road project update – Eric Eby stated federal and state grant monies were received for the first phase of the project. The first phase would include an engineering study to determine the parameters of the project. An anticipated public meeting is expected

on June 2, 2016. A meeting was conducted this week with the consultant to begin the study. Eric Eby clarified that it is a very detailed and multistep process because state funding is involved. Public Works Director Rice stated the Committee would be notified of the exact date in June for the public meeting.

E. New Franklin School traffic circulation improvements meeting on May 9, 2016 – Eric Eby stated traffic safety improvements would be discussed at the meeting on Monday, May 9, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. at the New Franklin School. He stated the Public Works Department would be constructing a cul-de-sac this summer for school bus use at the end of the Myrtle Avenue driveway. Buses enter and exit via Myrtle Avenue removing them from Stark Street and Woodbury Avenue. Parents could drop off children on Franklin Drive and exit through Stark Street and avoid exiting onto Woodbury Avenue. The design plans and improvements would be presented at the meeting. Improvements would be made in time for the new school year this fall.

Public Works Director Rice reminded the Committee the original request came from New Franklin School parents. They were concerned about safety issues and requested improvements at Franklin Drive and Woodbury Avenue. He commended Eric Eby for his work and creative solutions.

Harold Whitehouse asked staff to look at the height of a sign at Elwyn Avenue and South Street.

X. ADJOURNMENT – At 8:43 a.m., voted to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Chastain
Secretary of the Committee