

MEETING MINUTES

PARKING and TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – February 2, 2017
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Lown called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Chairman, Brad Lown
Public Works Director, Peter Rice
Deputy Fire Chief, James Heinz
Police Captain, Frank Warchol
Member, Ted Gray
Member, Ronald Cypher
Member, Harold Whitehouse
Member, Shari Donnermeyer

Staff Advisors Present:

Parking and Transportation Engineer, Eric Eby
Parking Manager, Joey Giordano
Assistant Planning Director, Juliet Walker

Members Absent:

Deputy City Manager, Nancy Colbert Puff
Alternate Member, Mary Lou McElwain

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Ted Gray motioned to accept the January 5, 2017 meeting minutes. Ron Cypher seconded.
Motion passed 8-0.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Harold Whitehouse motioned to accept the financial report dated February 2017.
Ted Gray seconded. **Motion passed 8-0.**

Harold Whitehouse asked about the Meter in Vehicle category. Parking Manager Giordano stated that the category represented the EasyPark device. Public Works Director Rice mentioned that the EasyPark device would eventually be replaced with the Passport smartphone application.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Rick Becksted spoke against the permanent installation of a crosswalk and bump-out on Islington Street at Albany Street and requested the Committee delay voting on the action item. He expressed concern regarding emergency vehicle access and the potential traffic created by new developments in the area. He also questioned the pilot program survey results.

Doug Roberts spoke in support of installing a crosswalk and bump-out on Islington Street at Albany Street. He requested the project be installed on an interim basis until the Islington Street corridor project is completed. He stated the new developments Mr. Becksted mentioned would increase pedestrian traffic and the crosswalk would be beneficial. Mr. Roberts stated PS21 received 250 responses to the pilot project survey and two-thirds were favorable.

Mike Thiel spoke against the interim installation of a crosswalk and bump-out on Islington Street at Albany Street. He expressed concern regarding the bias of the survey and emergency vehicle access on Islington Street.

Jonathan Blakeslee spoke in support of installing a crosswalk and bump-out on Islington Street at Albany Street. He stated he noticed vehicle speeds decreased during the pilot project and the crosswalk aided pedestrian safety.

David Ecker spoke to truck traffic on Banfield Road. Mr. Ecker discussed the history of Banfield Road truck traffic and signage. He lives on Banfield Road and requested that truck traffic be removed as it was previously.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:
No new business.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Report back on interim parking restriction recommendations on Middle Street at Union Street. Eric Eby stated at the January 5, 2017 PTS meeting, the request for a traffic signal at Middle Street and Union Street was addressed and denied. The Committee voted for City staff to research interim measures regarding sight lines and on-street parking prior to the implementation of the bicycle lane project later in the year.

Eric Eby stated he revisited the intersection, measured sight lines, and determined the number and location of on-street parking spaces that could be removed to improve sight lines to the maximum extent possible at the intersection. He explained the diagram, which was included in the PTS packet, displayed the current conditions and future conditions if the maximum on-street parking was removed. The diagram showed that a total of eight on-street parking spaces on Middle Street would need to be removed to provide the best possible sight lines from Union Street. Vehicles would still creep into the crosswalk and past the curb line, but visibility would be improved and vehicles would not block traffic on Middle Street. Eric Eby stated it is a balancing act when there is a need for on-street parking and concern for safety.

City staff recommended based on the low volume of traffic entering the intersection from the west leg of Union Street, the low number of crashes at this intersection, and the need for on-street parking on Middle Street, that two spaces on the outbound side of Middle Street, and one space on each side of the inbound side of Middle Street be removed as an interim measure to improve sight lines from Union Street.

Ted Gray expressed concern that this action could become a trend and spoke to the need for on-street parking.

Harold Whitehouse motioned to remove two spaces on the outbound side of Middle Street, and one space on each side of the inbound side of Middle Street, as an interim measure to improve sight lines from Union Street. Ron Cypher seconded.

Eric Eby restated that a total of four parking spaces would be removed and that vehicles would continue to inch slightly into the crosswalk, but sight lines would be improved. He spoke to the concern about this action becoming a trend and stated that it is a common problem in urban areas.

Chairman Lown stated his business is located near the intersection and he has had to inch out into the intersection. He expressed concern over the loss of on-street parking and that the proposal was a reaction to an accident that was not causally related to sight line issues. Due to these factors, he stated he would not support the motion.

Harold Whitehouse restated that the action would be an interim measure and he would support the motion.

Shari Donnermeyer asked when the bike lane project would be started. Juliet Walker stated the project would be presented to the Committee in the coming months to obtain the necessary approvals, and could be in place later this year.

Police Captain Warchol reaffirmed the idea of balancing on-street parking needs with safety concerns.

On a roll call 5-3, motion passed to remove two spaces on the outbound side of Middle Street, and one space on each side of the inbound side of Middle Street, as an interim measure to improve sight lines from Union Street.

Harold Whitehouse, Ron Cypher, Public Works Director Rice, Deputy Fire Chief Heinz and Police Captain Warchol voted in favor.

Chairman Lown, Ted Gray, and Shari Donnermeyer voted opposed.

B. Report back on truck restrictions on Banfield Road and a recommendation for revision of the current ordinance. Eric Eby stated this issue was presented to the Committee at the July 7, 2016 meeting by Mr. Ecker. Mr. Ecker's recollection of the restrictions differed from what is in the current ordinance. Eric Eby stated that he worked with the City Clerk as well as the City Attorney to research and understand the history and intent of past changes to the ordinance.

Eric Eby stated that the ordinance is conflicting regarding the issue of truck restrictions on Banfield Road. In 1984, the ordinance restricted truck traffic on the entire length of Banfield Road, subject to four exceptions. In 1996, the ordinance was changed to remove the list of truck-restricted streets and a new section was inserted that designated certain streets as through truck routes, which allowed trucks at all times, under all conditions. Also, it included a list of streets that allowed trucks only for limited use or local deliveries. Local deliveries were defined as a trip that began and ended somewhere in the City. Banfield Road was included in the list of local delivery streets, for the portion between Peverly Hill Road and Heritage Avenue.

Eric Eby stated in 1997 the City Council voted to put the 1984 restrictions back in place. He outlined in his memo to the Committee dated January 24, 2017, the following:

In February 24, 1997 the City Council voted to restore the deleted sections of the ordinance, but to delete from those sections any reference to Peverly Hill Road. This change would also have reinstated the truck prohibition for the entire length of Banfield Road.

However, when the old ordinance sections were restored, the old section 7.703 listing the four exceptions was not restored, which included: 1) where necessary to conduct business at a destination point accessible only through use of restricted streets; 2) emergency vehicles; 3) trucks owned or operated by the City, Public Utilities, or any contractors while engaged in the repair, maintenance or construction of streets, street improvements or street utilities within the City; 4) residential home delivery vehicles. The new section 7.702A listing the limited use exceptions was deleted. In addition, the new list of local delivery routes was **not** deleted, but the definition of a local delivery **was** deleted. The only exceptions in the current ordinance are for local delivery routes, but the definition of a local delivery is not included. Therefore, as currently written, Banfield Road is listed twice, once in Section 7.702 as prohibiting all trucks, and again in Section 7.704 as allowing trucks on the section between Peverly Hill Road and Heritage Avenue for local deliveries.

Eric Eby clarified that truck traffic would be restricted on Banfield Road except for the four exceptions as outlined above.

Harold Whitehouse motioned to delete current Section 7.704 Local Delivery Routes and the old Section 7.703 Exceptions be restored. Ted Gray seconded. **Vote 8-0, to delete current Section 7.704 Local Delivery Routes and restore the old Section 7.703 Exceptions.**

C. Report back on request for 15-minute parking spaces for Profile Coffee Bar and Optima Bank; comprehensive report back on all 15-minute spaces in the Downtown.

Eric Eby stated this action item included the request for one 15-minute parking space for Profile Coffee Bar and two for Optima Bank, as well as a request from the Seacoast Repertory Theater to remove one 15-minute parking space on Bow Street. He stated there are 42 15-minute parking spaces in and around the Downtown and 30 are metered in the Downtown. A map and table detailing all 15-minute parking spaces were included in the PTS packet. After a thorough review of the parking spaces, City staff recommended the following: removal of three 15-minute parking spaces (one on Deer Street at Market Street because the business closed that requested the

space, one on Bow Street at Daniel Street because Optima Bank moved to its new location, and one on Hanover Street at Fleet Street because the business closed and a future bump-out for a crosswalk will be installed); approval for one 15-minute parking space on Portwalk Place in front of Profile Coffee Bar; and approval of one 15-minute space on Daniel Street at the new Optima Bank location. Staff also recommended all remaining 15-minute parking spaces with meter heads be replaced with new digital meter heads that will allow for better turnover of the 15-minute spaces.

Shari Donnermeyer motioned to approve staff recommendations to remove three 15-minute parking spaces (one on Deer Street at Market Street, one on Bow Street at Daniel Street and one on Hanover Street at Fleet Street); approve one 15-minute parking space on Portwalk Place in front of Profile Coffee Bar; approve one 15-minute parking space on Daniel Street at the new Optima Bank location. Ted Gray seconded.

Vote 8-0, to approve staff recommendations to remove three 15-minute parking spaces; one on Deer Street at Market Street, one on Bow Street at Daniel Street, and one on Hanover Street at Fleet Street; approve one 15-minute parking space on Portwalk Place in front of Profile Coffee Bar; approve one 15-minute parking space on Daniel Street at the new Optima Bank location.

D. Report back on temporary crosswalk and bump-out on Islington Street at Albany Street. Eric Eby stated he reviewed the traffic video captured during the trial period and noticed the following: traffic queues from the traffic signal at Bartlett Street would occasionally extend back past the crosswalk during peak hours; traffic waiting to turn left into Albany Street from Islington Street would occasionally hold up traffic behind them, due to the bump-out; traffic yielded to pedestrians when the crosswalk and bump-out were in place; traffic using the parking lot between White Heron and the barbershop had less of an effect on Islington Street traffic flow due to the bump-out and it improved safety; pedestrians would walk up from the Bartlett Street intersection to use the temporary crosswalk rather than wait on the pedestrian signal at the Bartlett Street intersection because it was quicker and safe to use.

Eric Eby stated the bump-out was installed to reduce the number of lanes on Islington Street and not to provide outdoor seating at the café.

Staff recommended that a permanent crosswalk and bump-out be installed at this location as part of the design plans currently underway for the reconstruction of Islington Street.

Ted Gray supported the crosswalk but opposed the bump-out. Eric Eby confirmed that a bump-out was chosen because it reduced the pedestrian crossing distance and limited the speed and number of lanes on Islington Street.

Harold Whitehouse asked if the potential traffic from the new townhouse development was considered. Eric Eby confirmed that the traffic from a previously approved commercial development at the same location, which was more traffic than the townhouse development, was used during his review.

The Committee discussed reinstalling the temporary crosswalk and bump-out during the peak traffic season. Police Captain Warchol supported the pilot project during the peak traffic season in order to review emergency response times and the impact on emergency services.

Ron Cypher motioned to table the action item until a summertime survey could be conducted. Harold Whitehouse seconded.

Public Works Director Rice further defined summertime in the motion as June, July and August.

Vote 8-0, to table the action item until a summertime survey, defined as June, July and August, is completed. The temporary crosswalk and bump-out would be reinstalled and data would be gathered using traffic cameras during June, July and August.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Rick Becksted supported the Committee vote on the peak season survey of the temporary crosswalk and bump-out on Islington Street. He addressed vehicle speeds on Islington Street and requested a study of vehicle speeds along the entire corridor. He expressed concern about losing on-street parking on Middle Street. He requested a traffic study be conducted in the evening hours when residents are home. He proposed allowing resident parking on Middle Street in the bike lanes during evening hours.

Mike Thiel asked about the cost associated with the interim crosswalk and bump-out on Islington Street. Public Works Director Rice stated staff time would be the only cost because DPW would be using reusable materials. Mr. Thiel suggested a more comprehensive survey of business owners be conducted during the next pilot project.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS:

Harold Whitehouse complimented the City's Wayfinding signage. Public Works Director Rice stated the signage was part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and is an on-going program. Juliet Walker confirmed the Wayfinding signage at the City Hall driveway would be illuminated.

X. ADJOURNMENT – At 9:00 a.m., **voted** to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Chastain
Secretary of the Committee