

**PORTSMOUTH
TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
8:00 AM – Thursday, June 17, 2004
City Hall - Council Chambers**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Ralph DiBernardo, Deputy Chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 8:05 a.m.

II: ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Ralph DiBernardo, Deputy Chairman	Ron Cypher, Member
David Allen Deputy Public Works Director	Ted Gray, Member
Deputy Police Chief Dave Young	Herb Bunnell
Fire Chief Chris LeClaire	Jonathan Bailey, Member

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

IT WAS VOTED on a Motion by Ron Cypher to accept the minutes of the Traffic & Safety Committee meeting of May 20, 2004. Seconded by Deputy Police Chief Young. Motion passed.

IV. CORRESPONDENCE:

- (A) Lincoln Avenue, Miller to Richard Avenues – Resident Request to allow on-street parking – Deputy Chairman referred this to Deputy Police Chief Dave Young who stated the Ordinance reads “no parking on the southerly side between intersection of Miller to Richards Ave.” He stated that there is signage there that is in conflict with the Ordinance. Recommended tabling this to the next meeting in order to go on-site.

MOTION made by Deputy Police Chief Young to place on on-site for the next meeting. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (B) Bridge Street at Gepetto’s – Resident concern – Intersection Safety - **MOTION** made by Ted Gray to place on on-site for next meeting. Seconded by Ron Cypher. Motion passed.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

- (A) Memorial Bridge & Bicycle Travel – Report back from the Police Department on the number of instances of bicycle and motorcycle crashes on the bridge within the last 3 years – Deputy Police Chief Dave Young informed the Committee there was one reported in 2000, 4 in 2001, 2 in 2002 and 6 in 2003. Ralph DiBernardo stated that John Burke informed him that this is being studied by the Rockingham Planning Commission and there is still some resistance from State to bicycle traffic on Bridge as opposed to walking.

MOTION made by Fire Chief LeClaire to place on file. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- (A) 195 Hanover Street – TAC Recommended Approval with Stipulations – Dennis Moulton of Millette, Sprague and Colwell discussed the proposed project that was referred by TAC. The hotel will have 131 rooms with 1200 s.f. of retail space. He discussed the entrances to the hotel. The owners of the Parade Mall will provide 70 spaces on the Parade Mall lot for valet parking. Most of the traffic to the site will be directed to Deer St. via signage. Signs will also be used within the Parade Mall lot to direct vehicles to the hotel. The residential units will have parking inside the building entering the parking garage on the first floor of the building. Another part of the proposal is the addition of bump outs on High and Hanover Streets. These improvements are proposed in coordination with pedestrian improvements to the High-Hanover Parking Facility. It is proposed to eliminate 4 on-street metered parking spaces on Hanover St. and 4 on -street metered parking spaces on High Street to accommodate the wider sidewalks.

David Allen referred to the site review stipulations and parking memo from the applicant to Dave Holden and John Burke dated June 8, 2004, which discusses how parking will be handled.

Rob Hoover, HDLA, landscape architect referred to bump outs and Deer St. entry in relationship to traffic and safety. Primarily the bump outs were initiated to (a) help with traffic and (b) to provide safe pedestrian link linking the city together as it continues to grow. Fleet and Hanover Sts. would be the first bump out, where the sidewalk grows in width, allowing an opportunity for the City to provide crosswalk and additional bump out on the other side.

Ralph DiBernardo asked what we see on your conceptual drawing is what the project is going to provide or is there anything on your conceptual drawing that isn't actually part of what will be there when the project is finished?

Rob responded that the only thing that is not shown is the crosswalk – the trees on the parking garage side of the street are simply suggestions.

Ralph DiBernardo then asked what the hotel provides in the way of aesthetics and plantings. Ralph referred the discussion on crosswalks to Dave Allen. Dave stated that crosswalks are appropriate with handicap ramp and would expect the developer to put them in.

Ted Gray asked if the crosswalks would be signalized and is this something that should be considered? Dave Allen doesn't believe these would be signalized and suggested referring this to John Burke for clarification.

Robin Bousa, Senior Project Manager, Vanase Hangen Brustlin who prepared the project study of Traffic Impact and Access Assessment had met with John Burke, Lucy Tillman, Dave Holden and Dave Allen to see what needed to be studied.

The intersections of High/Hanover, Maplewood/Deer Sts. as well as the intersection of Market/Hanover Streets, were specific concerns of John Burke.

Ted Gray asked about traffic counting in September, 2003 and April 2004. Why was there nothing counted between May and September? Robin responded that the September counts were provided to us from the City Traffic & Engineering Dept. as part of the Maplewood Ave. corridor study. Ralph DiBernardo asked Ms. Bousa, in John Burke's absence, if she could comment on whether there was any discussion of signalized pedestrian crosswalks. She responded no, that typically this was only done in front of schools.

Ted Gray asked about when people would be coming and going from the hotel. Ms. Bousa answered that the hotel does not peak at the same time as the adjacent street traffic. In a traffic study you analyze the combined worse case or whatever that condition would be and in this case the worse case is the adjacent street which is earlier than the checkout time of the hotel.

Ted Gray then asked about the overflow of the potential condo owners, one vehicle space per unit, and today most people have more than one car. What about multiple vehicles and/or guests?

Ms. Bousa stated she did research to see what Institute of Transportation Engineers recommends for hotel parking and found out what they recommend for 131 room hotel during peak time identified as late evening peak hour is 68 spaces for the hotel itself which we are more than adequately covering with our traffic study and feels it is safe to assume there will be adequate parking.

The condominiums were discussed with 30-40% being one bedrooms the rest will be 2 or 3 bedrooms likely with 2 cars, one car space under the building. There are plans to utilize the valet system after hours and park on the Parade Mall.

Ralph DiBernardo asked if there would be enforcement of some kind by the Parade Mall managers that the 50 people moved to the garage will actually use the garage. There will be somebody overseeing this.

Fire Chief LeClaire had concerns regarding the turning radius for fire apparatus, emergency vehicles, which was discussed at on-site. Chief LeClaire was also concerned with the blocked entrance at Fleet St. and is not in favor of having it blocked.

Lucy Tillman stated that the intent was to keep this entrance closed so that it doesn't become a speedway across Deer St. but that it may have to be opened at the next phase of Parade Mall development.

Dave Allen suggested using pavers that emergency vehicles could pass over and still have the sloped curve to prevent cut through traffic.

MOTION made by David Allen to approve with stipulations and adding that 1) the June 8, 2004 memo to David Holden and John Burke from Jeff Johnston be included as a stipulation; 2) That at the bump outs (2) across the Hanover St.

entrance that handicap ramps be installed on both sides of the crosswalks (2) with the possibility of moving the bump outs back 2 feet at the front door; and 3) Work out the issue of using pavers at the Fleet Street driveway between the Fire Chief, Planning and developer. 4) The signage detail be included with the memo. Seconded by Ron Cypher. Motion passed.

- (B) Boise Cascade - 100 Ranger Way – Proposed Addition of Modular Building for Office Space - TAC Recommended Approval with Stipulations (6/3/04 Planning Dept. letter) and Site Plan attached – Ron Cypher referred to the on-site. The committee found no traffic and safety issues and recommended approval.

MOTION made by Ron Cypher to approve as presented. Ted Gray seconded. Motion passed.

- (C) 1390 Lafayette Road-TAC Recommended Approval with Stipulations (6/3/04 Planning Dept. letter) and site Plan attached – Jonathan Bailey stated that the only issue found at on-site was to request working with John Burke on finding a site for a COAST bus stop somewhere along the frontage.

MOTION to accept as presented with the stipulation that the owners work with John Burke to establish an appropriate bus stop for COAST. Seconded by Fire Chief LeClaire. Motion passed.

- (D) Deer Street – Public Works Referral – Driveway Permit Application, (see attached) – Mr. McElaney, owner of 62 Deer Street stated one of the things he wants to do is have a driveway to drive in to his property and park his car, which would necessitate the elimination of a parking space on Deer St. He stated that the City could create a parking space further down Deer Street. Ted Gray referred to on-site stating there is access from High St. There is also going to be a change to Russell St. potentially with the Sheraton project. To have a driveway at this location with the amount of traffic coming from Deer and Russell Sts. would be an invitation to disaster. He suggested Mr. McElaney work with the neighbor to gain access to his driveway or perhaps work out something where he could park in the Parade Mall. Mr. McElaney stated he currently parks in the Mall at a cost of \$100/month. The cost for an access to his driveway from his neighbor would be \$2400/year. The committee recommended this be denied. John Bailey asked the time frame for the Russell St. change. Dave Allen responded that they are diligently working on this and looking at doing something sooner rather than later, trying to get construction started this year.

Ron Cypher asked if we could table this until after the reconfiguration and revisit it, if not a dangerous situation, we can consider it then.

Ron Cypher stated one of his biggest concerns is backing out of the driveway in that kind of traffic. Dave Allen stated that if the plan clearly showed there is ability to turn around and pull out it would be a completely different scenario. The way it is configured now you have a crosswalk, on-street parking and a potential change in the intersection and from a safety point of view, this is not a good idea. If this showed there is room to do a turn around and could actually exit forward, it would make sense.

Dave Young stated for the record, once the road is reconfigured so that Russell St. is essentially lined up with your proposed driveway that will increase our concerns for safety. He stated he has concerns for all the same reasons stated by Dave Allen, crosswalk, a busy road, we do respond to a number of accidents in that area, although he appreciates Mr. McElaney's desire for a driveway, public safety is the concern.

MOTION made by Jonathan Bailey to table until a time when there is public availability to what is going to happen with Russell St. extension. Seconded by Fire Chief LeClaire.

Opposed: Ralph DiBernardo, Deputy Police Chief Young, Dave Allen and Ted Gray. Motion to table failed on a tie vote.

MOTION by Ted Gray recommending that he try again to work with the neighbor, but in the meantime with all changes proposed for the area, his application is denied. Seconded by Ron Cypher. Motion passed. Jonathan Bailey abstained. Fire Chief LeClaire and Herb Bunnell opposed.

Mr. McElaney asked if he could appeal. Deputy Chairman Ralph DiBernardo advised him that this is an advisory board to the City Council, they take the minutes of this meeting and act on it at a future council meeting. He also has the right to bring your request before the City Council and to check with the City Manager on this issue.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS:

- (A) Leslie Drive – 20 MPH speed limit – Deputy Police Chief stated he has been out there recently as well as a number of times of the last few years. Doesn't see the need for an on-site, it is a residential area where 20 MPH is very appropriate. It is his recommendation that we support this at this time.

MOTION made by Deputy Police Chief Dave Young to recommend a speed limit at 20 MPH and refer to City Council for Ordinance change. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (B) 1390 Lafayette Road – Yoken's Proposal – Kevin Dandrade, Traffic Engineer representing Market Basket was not present earlier when this issue was discussed. Vice Chairman explained that the Committee passed the project with the stipulation that the property owners work with John Burke and the Public Works Dept. to establish a pullout for the COAST bus stop. Mr. Dandrade asked if he could comment. They reviewed the subdivision plans and site plans for the project adjacent to them across Peverly Hill Rd. He brought to the Committee's attention that this may be an opportunity to better control traffic on US. Rte.1. There are now three curb cuts and this committee brings recommendations to the Planning Board pertaining to how it effects the overall site. The number of curb cuts could be reduced. He was concerned if the Yoken's site ever gets redeveloped, the City or State's ability to obtain a transportation easement to put in a right turn lane is gone and suggested to consider the reservation of a transportation easement along the frontage of Rt.1 should anything be required in redevelopment of those properties.

Ralph DiBernardo stated that any change with the Yoken's lot would be subject to all of the present reviews, so that if development comes about by this change, they will have to go through all the steps again. Ralph DiBernardo stated his place was at the Planning Board meeting that evening – this Committee only reviews traffic as it relates to safety.

- (C) Breaking New Grounds, formerly Café Brioche – Motorcycle Parking - Dante Russo, past resident of Portsmouth now of Dover – Deputy Police Chief Dave Young stated this was a Parking Committee issue and referred him to the Parking Committee which will be meeting next month.

- (D) 296 Pleasant Street - Parking – Mr. Christian Benda addressed the Committee regarding Livermore Street. Ralph DiBernardo stated this has been discussed at previous meetings with a resident - Mrs. Binney. Ted Gray informed him that parking is allowed on both sides of Livermore St. Ralph DiBernardo stated that the issue was that Nursing Home personnel park there all day and eliminating parking for them eliminates it for residents as well. Mr. Benda suggested 2-hr parking on both sides of the street. The second issue was the width of the street is not adequate from a safety standpoint as fire trucks could not get down in an emergency. The Fire Chief did not indicate he was aware of a continuing on-going problem. Mr. DiBernardo explained that there are two committees, the Traffic & Safety – who deals with traffic and safety issues and a Parking Committee that deals with onstreet parking in the City.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION made by Ron Cypher to adjourn. Seconded by Ted Gray. Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: _____
Elaine E. Boucas