

PORTSMOUTH
TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
9:00 a.m. – Thursday, July 13, 2006
City Hall - Council Chambers

DRAFT

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Ken Smith, Chair called the meeting to order at approximately 8:00.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Councilor Ken Smith, Chairman	Jonathan Bailey, Member
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director	Ted Gray, Member
Assist. Police Chief Len DiSesa	Herb Bunnell, Member
Assist. Fire Chief Achilles	Christina Westfall, Member
Deborah Finnigan, Traffic Engineer	

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

IT WAS VOTED on a Motion made by Herb Bunnell after adding “Seconded by Jonathan Bailey” to the motion regarding Jenkins St. off Summit to accept the amended minutes of the June 8, 2006 meeting. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.

The Chair asked
to suspend the rules to take the items out of order under New Business until The Deputy Police Chief is able to comment on them.

IV: NEW BUSINESS:

(C) Brackett Lane/Brackett Drive Intersection – Improvements (correspondence dated June 14, 2006 attached) – Debbie Finnigan reported that she went to see the school signs as the Committee had previously recommended that the school signs and children crossing signs in the area be revised. She went through to see what should be put up and where they should go. She noticed that the stop bar and stop line on Brackett Lane were too far back from the intersection. Debbie wrote a letter to the owner, as they would be impacted, to get feedback from them as to what would be acceptable in order to get the stop bar and line closer to the intersection which is per MUTCD. She was not able to speak with her as she is convalescing from an accident. This is informational and will be revisited at a later date.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to accept the report. Seconded by Herb Bunnell. Motion passed.

(A) Livermore Street – Parking (resident e-mail dated June 28, 2006 attached) (Planning Department Memo dated July 15, 2002 attached) – Deputy Police Chief DiSesa reported he personally observed and acted on violators and it is on the radar screen to have patrol there. The stats for the last two years show there have not been many calls for service with one or two calls for parking issues. We are now checking this area regularly. The suggestion of “No Parking” on one side would eliminate the unsafe backing issue. Will monitor and keep this on our screen.

The Chair stated at this point there should be no parking on the south side (the side where the houses are and continue to monitor if further action is needed.

MOTION made by Ted Gray to have “No Parking” signs on the south side of Livermore Street and have the Police Department monitor this area and to take action if needed. Seconded by Deputy Police Chief DiSesa. Motion passed.

Debbie Finnigan reiterated a concern of the residents who do not want “No Parking” signs on their side of the street. Steve Parkinson stated the signs need to be clearly identified as a no parking area in order for enforcement by the Police Department. However, the signs will be minimal.

- (B) Russell/Deer Streets Intersection** – Police Department referral – Traffic Enforcement (Police Narrative dated June 2, 2006 attached) – Deputy Police Chief DiSesa prepared a map for the members showing the issue of site distance that was brought to his attention by an officer. This is not an accident intersection and suggested eliminating the two parking spots in order to give a site line so that cars would stop at the stop line and not have to creep out in order to see. I drove this myself and you cannot see.

Steve Parkinson stated there is a reconfiguration proposed within the planning aspects of the Westin Hotel/Conference Center/Garage which would bring it in straighter and have a narrower opening. It was Deputy Police Chief DiSesa’s feeling to bring this to the Committee’s attention, at this point he could not say this is a safety issue. People are being cautious because they have to slow down and creep out which is a good thing.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to accept the letter, place it on file and if the proposal of the Sheraton extension does not go through in a reasonable amount of time that we bring it back and look at reconfigurations. Seconded by Jonathan Bailey. Motion passed.

Debbie Finnigan stated that the stop sign is too far back from the stop line and Does not meet MUTCD. Deputy Police Chief DiSesa stated that because the street is curved it already is at the corner, it looked as if it was placed correctly and will relook at it.

- (C) Loud Pipes Warning** – Police Department referral – Posting of signs (Proposed signs attached) – In conjunction with NH Highway Safety we are doing a push to try to address this issue of noise. We want to enforce the RSA and City Ordinances giving us power under the noise Ordinance to have leverage and would like to post signs at entrances to the City. In order for us to go forward this Committee needs to approve these signs before Department of Public Works can actually create and post them.

Steve Parkinson stated with this amount of verbiage and to make it legible we would be looking at billboards. All of this cannot be legible on a small sign or easily read. Deputy Police Chief DiSesa suggested removing the verbiage with RSA’s and Ordinance which would make it more manageable and read “Loud Exhaust Pipes Prohibited Strictly Enforced”.

MOTION made by Herb Bunnell to approve the signs with final design going back to Steve Parkinson. Seconded by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles. Motion passed.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

- (A) Islington Street – Approval of Ordinance Changes – Debbie Finnigan stated that the Legal Department had some concerns they were not seeing our request for Ordinance changes. The procedure has been changed. The Action Sheet given to the City Council to approve will have to clarify that an addition or Ordinance change is requested. Debbie Finnigan will be providing the Legal Dept. with what needs to be modified, changed or added with a map and the changes shown on the hard copy of the appropriate Ordinance, so they will know exactly where the Committee would like the change(s).

There has been a request that we reapprove the changes to the Islington Street section that we had done back in May as it was not clear if there were changes to the Ordinance. There are overlaps in the Ordinance like 15 minutes versus 2 hours for the same section of road. Would like permission from the Committee to make these changes to Islington St. and be clear that it is a proposed Ordinance change so we can move forward.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson giving Debbie Finnigan permission to make the changes to Islington St. clarifying the Ordinance change. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (B) Sutton/Greenside Avenues Intersection – Stop Sign (correspondence dated June 13, 2006 attached) – Debbie Finnigan stated it was suggested writing a letter to the Neighborhood Association which she did. The response was that the signs were put in six (6) years ago and have been in that location ever since. No other information is on file as to where they were and suggested filing this for information.

MOTION made by Herb Bunnell to accept and place on file. Seconded by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles. Motion passed.

- (C) Rte.1 (Lafayette Rd) at Peverly Hill Rd/Elwyn Road Traffic Signal – (Resident letter dated April 28, 2006 together with Debbie Finnigan’s response dated June 9, 2006 attached) – Debbie Finnigan wrote a letter to the NHDOT Traffic Division to have exclusive lefts at Peverly, Elwyn and Rte.1. She received a response from the State’s Traffic Engineer asking if we had done an analysis. Debbie Finnigan responded that we do not have the capability in house. They said they would do the analysis and get back to her. This is informational of where this issue stands.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to accept and place on file. Seconded by Jonathan Bailey. Motion passed.

VI. INFORMATIONAL:

- (A) Clarification of Action Sheet regarding Ordinances changes – Debbie Finnigan referred to this in the Islington St. issue and asked if anyone had an issue to let her know. She is hoping this clarifies it to the Council.
- (B) Discussion regarding e-mailing versus postal mail or receiving at on-site – The Chair referred to the cost of postage to get the packet out, if it is okay we will be e-mailing out Agendas and those that do not have e-mail addresses will continue

to receive by mail unless you'd like to pick them up at the Department of Public Works. Debbie Finnigan stated that was the goal, it is a Committee decision and would like to hand out the package at the on-site. The Committee responded that they would like to receive the packets prior to the on-site so they would have time to review the information.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS:

(A) The Chair had asked Debbie Finnigan to find out about street names being the same or similar for example, Brackett Lane and Brackett Drive. The Planning Board had previously looked at renaming a lot of streets to make sure they were in compliance with 911. The Planning Board came back with quite a list of streets that could be somewhat confusing. Asked the Committee if they wanted to pass this back to the Planning Board as they handle this and then referred to the Police Dept. for 911 and the possibility of name changes.

Deputy Police Chief DiSesa stated that it can be confusing and the RSA is clear that for obvious reasons the street names should not be similar in any way that it might be confused in an emergency situation.

Asst. Fire Chief Achilles stated that this came up because they received a couple of calls where it was the wrong street, it came in as one street and actually was another one. Similar names are as much a problem as same names such as Brackett Lane, Brackett Road. Elwyn is a problem as well, Elwyn Ave., Elwyn Rd., Elwyn Rd, ext. The Fire Department would be very interested in mitigating this as they have had ambulance calls where they have not been at the right area.

The Chair stated there is an approved list of names that was also run through 911 and suggested this go to the Planning Board and Police Dept. for 911 to see if we can get some corrections for safety issues.

MOTION made by Jonathan Bailey to forward this to the Planning Board with a letter of explanation to have them look at this. Seconded by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles. Motion passed.

(B) Mirona Road – Ted Gray referred to vehicles speeding and a business owner requested a sign or two indicating rough road ahead and ultimately shaving off the high points.

Steve Parkinson responded that Public Works Dept. has plans to repair that section.

(C) Asst. Fire Chief Achilles would like to see a crosswalk at Pleasant and Court Street intersection. There currently is not one there.

Steve Parkinson stated there was a crosswalk from the Clip Joint to the old Elks and will have it repainted.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: Adjourned at approx. 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Elaine E. Boucas, Secretary