

**PORTSMOUTH  
TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING  
8:00 a.m. – Thursday, May 8, 2008  
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers**

**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Councilor Ken Smith, Chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 8:05 a.m.

**II. ROLL CALL: Members Present:**

|   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Councilor Ken Smith, Chairman               | Ted Gray, Member            |
| Steve Parkinson, P.E. Public Works Director | John Connors, Member        |
| Captain Fred Hoysradt                       | Assist. Fire Chief Achilles |
| Deborah Finnigan, P.E., Traffic Engineer    | John Howe, Member           |
|   | Brendan Cooney, Member      |

Excused absence: Christina Westfall and Jonathan Bailey.

**III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:**

**IT WAS VOTED** on a Motion made by Ted Gray to accept the minutes of the April 10, 2008 meeting. Seconded by Brendan Cooney. Motion passed.

**III. NEW BUSINESS:**

- (A) **New Franklin School** – Traffic Concerns – Asst. Fire Chief Achilles referred to the on-site, idea to create a one-way out traffic flow going from Woodbury to New Franklin and out to Dennett St. There would still be two-way for businesses at the Woodbury end and Dennett St. end due to the single family residence.

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to accept the plan. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (B) **1950 Lafayette Road** – Review of Driveway Compliance Proposal – Dave Holden, Planning Director reported there have been on going meetings with staff on violations of site review agreement there would be no exiting of traffic from the site onto US Rte.1. This has been documented and the applicant has agreed it is a problem and voluntarily came to an appropriate proposal to put up a barrier to prevent cars from exiting out. Their proposal was to put up two barriers. It was a solution, but staff is concerned that we have a public plan that is being violated and would create a great deal of liability for all parties if there's a fatal accident and the concern is there will be a fatal accident with vehicles exiting that site. We view this violation very seriously. A possibility is to eliminate the driveway out to Rte.1. It is here before you because the Planning Board acting under the site review found them to be in violation referred to Traffic & Safety for review and referred to TAC for review and report back.

City Attorney Sullivan has two concerns with this situation: 1. Planning Board determined that cars should only enter from Rte.1 to the site and it is the City's position to honor the Planning Board's decision. Secondly and more importantly, is what's happening now, in a dedicated entrance to that site, cars

are routinely exiting, there are photographs of it, it has personally been observed by the Chairman of the Planning Board and is a situation left alone long enough will lead to a head on collision. Attorney Sullivan's most important consideration is to try to prevent somebody from getting hurt or killed. We've engaged in discussions with the Casey Center about options that might be available to them to satisfy the Planning Board. Perhaps a gate that triggers only when cars go in from Rte.1, the problem with this is it would stack cars up into Rte.1 creating a more dangerous situation than the one we're trying to solve. If this Committee doesn't like this, it is important to help us come up with an alternative to eliminate this unsafe situation.

Steve Parkinson said he asked Debbie Finnigan, our Traffic Engineer to put together some additional ideas to change the perception of this and make it look like a one way in. Ms. Finnigan put together four different scenarios which she presented to the Committee.

1. Come in driveway entrance, narrow entrance up physically, have to take a right turn at the first building and navigate around the interior of the parking lot with barriers to prevent going back out that same entrance.
2. Narrowing the driveway pushing it all to one side trying to diminish and slow down traffic and have barriers along the sides whether it be curbing or posts or combination of all of the above, additional landscaping in the area that was taken out of the driveway.
3. Narrowing both sides leaving the middle.
4. Making the driveway entrance narrow forcing traffic to the right at the first building still allowing circulation within the parking lot and from parking lot back in front of the professional building that creates a positive right hand turn with landscaping in the area and cutting down the mass of pavement that exists.

Mr. Parkinson is in favor of the last scenario and would rather see one of these alternatives other than the tire shredders. It is so wide there most people go which ever way they want to.

John Connors is 100% against tire shredders and is in agreement with Mr. Parkinson and Plan D. Ted Gray also agrees with Mr. Parkinson and suggested if plan D is adopted the area at the entrance be extended so it goes farther toward the building to ensure that nobody tries to exit onto Rte.1.

**MOTION** by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to table and forward to TAC for review. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

The Chair referred to Lucy Tillman the required number of parking spaces, there was a common share between the office building and the function hall.

Ms. Tillman responded there was a variance granted and because of the size of the function hall the BOA granted a variance for reduction of parking based on maximum occupancy. The uses would have to be reviewed to determine if they are business or professional and will look at this.

- (C) **Approval of Grant** - Safe Routes to School Committee referral – Debbie Finnigan explained the funding of the SRTS and is looking for approval so that she can forward it as it is due next Monday.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson to support the SRTS 2008 Grant’s request. Seconded by John Connors. Motion passed.

- (D) **Bow Street at Chapel Street** – Request to remove “No Left Turn” sign - John Connors referred to the on-site and that it maybe a good idea to remove the sign and allow the left hand turn.

**MOTION** made by John Connors to remove the sign and allow left hand turn. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.

- (E) **Maplewood/Woodbury Ave.** – Safety Issues – Autumn Wilbur Maplewood Avenue observed speeding and at the Bridge people coming onto Maplewood from the By-pass don’t stop and when you get to the turn at Buzzy’s the sidewalk turns to a dirt concrete type of sidewalk unable to get a stroller on it and snow fence is there and is very difficult to walk with children. Ms. Wilbur offered to do what she could to make it a safer area.

The Chair stated the Bridge itself is State owned and is something we are looking at in the Rte.1 By-pass project and will be taking sidewalks into consideration.

Ms. Wilbur stated there are many many pedestrians on the street and suggested if there was a pedestrian bridge built at the same time so that you are isolated from traffic.

The Chair stated it will be brought to the State.

Captain Hoysradt reported there is not a stealth stat survey but the accident statistics for 2006 and 2007 shows 4 accidents on Maplewood Ave. in the area of Cutts. One concern in that area there was a fatal accident, but is a low number of accidents for a roadway with that much traffic in a two year period. Since March 15 thru April 3, there were 74 vehicle stops on Maplewood Ave., it is on the radar screen and the Deputy Police Chief has requested stealth stat surveys to see if there has been any changes in traffic pattern or speed. Enforcement is one way to have an impact of vehicles speeding in this area.

Ms. Wilbur stated she is pleased to see a lot more officers in the area, but has observed vehicles slow down when they reach the bridge and suggested officers in the area of the hill where their highest rate of speed is.

**MOTION** made by Ted Gray to place on file and a report back on stealth stat survey and to look at the truck traffic and not allow tractor trailers up and down the street allowing tractor trailers up as far as Central Ave. by the electric supply store and no trucks from that point up to Woodbury. Seconded by John Connors. Motion passed.

Steve Parkinson asked if the Motion was to prohibit trucks, to send to City Council to create an Ordinance to prohibit truck traffic from Central Ave. to Woodbury Ave. on Maplewood.

The Chair responded “correct as well as the Stealth State report back from Police Dept.

Steve Parkinson stated the process if this Motion is approved truck traffic restriction goes to City Council for recommendation, they in turn do an Ordinance change requiring three readings.

- (F) **Southgate Plaza** – Springbrook Condos request for traffic loop – Debbie Finnigan stated Shaw’s is closed and traffic being diminished the traffic signal doesn’t turn green very often, so people are trying to take a left hand turn out of Springbrook Condos against the red light which is an unsafe situation on Rte.1. Debbie Finnigan suggested this Committee send a letter to the State asking that a traffic loop be put in for vehicles trying to get out of the Condo at that stretch, so they can exit safely.

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to write a letter to the State asking for a traffic loop to be put in so that vehicles can exit the condo safely. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (G) **Kane/Dennett Streets** – Speeding issues - Request for dead end signs – Brandon Cooney referred to the site visit and was clear that the sign identifying Kane St. as a dead end was difficult for drivers to see and appeared that there is no road striping and confusing. Mr. Cooney suggested improved signage or other measures be put in place to clearly mark Kane as being a dead end street and also to direct southbound traffic along Dennett St. instead of turning on Kane St. by mistake and to refer this to Public Works Dept. for review and to update and place appropriate signage and striping.

**MOTION** made by Brendan Cooney for improved signage or other measures to direct southbound traffic along Dennett St. instead of turning onto Kane St. and to refer this to Public Works Dept. for review and update and place appropriate signage and striping. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (H) **McClintock/Leavitt Streets** – Speed – Proposed Speed Limit Signs – Steve Parkinson stated this came to the Committee back in September that a lot of traffic trying to avoid the light at Peverly Hill, get into McClintock go up two or three streets including Leavitt. In Reviewing City Ordinances this street doesn’t fall into the designated categories for posted speed. The Police Department did a stealth stat there and when we received the results was not put on the next Agenda.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson to have the streets in the area be included in the City’s Speed Limit Ordinance for 20 MPH. Seconded by John Connors. Motion passed.

- (I) **Daniel Street** – Request for Reinstallation of Driveway) – Ted Gray referred to the on-site and the fact there was a parking area there years ago and stated that reinstallation of this driveway would be in order.

**MOTION** made by Ted Gray to accept and approve with the following stipulations that 1. vehicles be backed in rather than driven in so that when exiting it is clear to look down Daniel St. that there is no traffic and 2. a conspicuous sign be posted somewhere on the building front that there is an

active driveway there. The planter that is there would need to be removed. Seconded by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles. Motion passed.

Steve Parkinson reviewed discussion in the Parking Committee meeting prior to this meeting dealing with the loss of two 15-minute spaces and it was the Motion from that meeting to approve with the net loss of one of those spaces, moving one of those 15-minute spaces towards the loading zone so there is only one loss of parking space there.

- (J) **Betty's Dream** – Request for “No Parking” on Woodlawn Circle – Debbie Finnigan stated that residents have a difficult time using Woodland Circle with parking in the pathway where they safely get to their building.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson to grant their request for “No Parking” on Woodlawn Circle. Seconded by Ted Gray.

Ted Gray referred to talk about perhaps having parking on that barrier where the wheelchair accessible sidewalk no parking from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. so that at night vehicles can park there.

Steve Parkinson stated it would be difficult to put a time frame on it especially during the warmer months when it potentially is used later into the evenings. Steve Parkinson stated this particular work was done under a Community Development Block Grant, helped design the walkway all the way to Woodbury Ave.

Asst. Fire Chief Achilles does not support Motion and would make the residents on corner of Longmeadow and Woodland aware of the request and be engaged as they may be affected. There is a hydrant there and would like them to communicate with Betty's Dream to see if there is an option if we maintain that you can have our parking spots for additional parking at corner lot property. Does not want to make this unilateral without Betty's Dream being able to speak to, for or against.

Asst. Fire Chief Achilles would like the maker of the Motion to see our concern.

Steve Parkinson stated as with the other Ordinance changes referred to today this process involves a public hearing before the City Council to create a “no parking” area.

The Chair asked that informational letters be sent to the parties involved.

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief to table and have an informational letter go to these people. Second by Brenda Cooney. Motion passed. Steve Parkinson opposed.

#### IV. **OLD BUSINESS:**

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to take off the table. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (B) **Toyota Dealership** - Greenleaf Ave./Rte.1 Bypass – Report back – Dennis Moulton referred to the site plan showing the requests from the Committee to add a stop sign and stop bar at the exit and asked that we indicate areas of customer parking which are indicated on the plan and further request from TAC to add signs at the customer parking spaces. The third request was the trip generation. Mr. Moulton prepared a memo to Deborah Finnigan with attached spreadsheet showing the calculations. Also attached is a letter from the Controller for Portsmouth Toyota showing the number of customers during 2007. Mr. Moulton contacted Steve Pernow to review some of the material that was submitted and he concluded the trip generation on site was either equal to or slightly less than the previous uses on the site.

Debbie Finnigan referred to the annual visits to site in 2007 how does this represent future business? Debbie Finnigan stated as Mr. Pernow is not here she is not able to ask questions and get responses she needs and will look to their traffic engineer for explanation and feels this is not appropriate. Ms. Finnigan stated moving forward based on the fact that she will have discussion with Mr. Pernow at a later date and bring it to TAC or not but is not 100% in agreement with what was presented. Debbie Finnigan feels this is not appropriate and questioned daily hours based on six not seven.

Mr. Moulton responded it was probably a conservative assumption, the spreadsheet does not break out peak hours and doesn't account for variations between weekdays versus Saturdays.

Ted Gray referred to employee trips on site one trip in and one trip out is two trips in and did not agree with what was represented. Mr. Gray feels there will be a lot more traffic in and out of site than is represented and agrees with Ms. Finnigan. Also concerned with all this extra business where are all the trucks going to park that come in.

Mr. Moulton responded when Portsmouth Toyota applied for occupancy the City requested that a plan be provided showing how trucks enter the site based on the current configuration of the lot.

Ted Gray stated you are more than doubling the square footage, looking at more number of sales, trip ins, customers and employees, then throwing the trucks in and the car carriers is a potential pandemonium.

Asst. Fire Chief Achilles asked if approved it goes to TAC and would this be where Ms. Finnigan would get more information she required?

Debbie Finnigan requested a meeting prior to the TAC meeting, not just at the TAC meeting they meet with her and the Planning Dept. to discuss this.

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to approve with stipulations for striping, stop bar and add stop sign and that they meet with Debbie Finnigan and the Planning Department prior to the TAC meeting. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.

- (C) **Rte.1 By-Pass** – Coakley Rd. Traffic Signal – Steve Parkinson stated receiving a letter back from the NHDOT referring to installation of pedestrian signal and crosswalk for the redevelopment of the Meadowbrook property. The State came

back with approval with a lot of stipulations. Mr. Parkinson asked Dave Holden how was this left with the developer, should it go to the Planning Board?

Mr. Holden suggested providing this to all parties. The Planning Board stipulation was that the developer shall secure the traffic signalization and feels it the responsibility of the developer to do this. By providing this to everyone to get an assessment as to how it will be implemented.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson to send a copy of the letter to the developer, Planning Department, Legal Department, all associates of City Departments that dealt with this project. Seconded by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles. Motion passed.

Debbie Finnigan stated that all items on the list are currently on the Meadowbrook plan and they have been asked to do. The State responded to Ms. Finnigan's letter not necessarily the developers which came a few months after her letter.

- (C) **Rte.1 Lafayette Rd/Pevery Hill Rd Elwyn Rd Traffic Signal** - Ms. Finnigan is disappointed they are not recommending the implementation of an exclusive left turn phase. Ms. Finnigan recommends writing a letter back stating that we are disappointed and still feel this is a safety issue and go on record that we don't agree with their recommendation.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson to write a letter back to NHDOT stating we are disappointed and we feel this is a safety issue and to go on record that we don't agree with their recommendation. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

#### IV. INFORMATIONAL:

- (A) **Woodbury Avenue** – Report back – Debbie Finnigan reported a public informational meeting was held last week. The major concern was the roundabout at Woodbury/Maplewood. From Woodlawn Circle down to Bartlett, that part is going forward with construction in July. There will be an additional public informational meeting regarding Maplewood and Woodbury and come back with an update on that. We will be looking at different alternatives for that location and maybe include some more of Maplewood.

Steve Parkinson stated that since the project came to this committee, we have tried to do other things to improve the safety, one being reversing of the traffic flow to New Franklin School. The second aspect not on the plans was that originally we were not proposing as we felt there was not enough money to put curbing in and it has been determined by latest estimates we will be putting in curbing.

Debbie Finnigan stated the item we are adding in is flashing school zone signs with radar capability meaning that during pick up and drop off of kids, the radar will be on, if going faster than 20 MPH and has been helpful in slowing traffic. In addition we are adding school zone signs on the ramps with truck route signs not on the previous plans.

**V. OTHER BUSINESS:**

- A. Greenland Rd from Greenland town line to Rte.33** - Steve Parkinson informed the Committee it was brought to his attention that the stretch of Greenland Road which goes from the Greenland town line to Rte.33, there is a short stretch there with 3 or 4 houses actually in Portsmouth and from town line going to Portsmouth Ave. all the way back to Rte.33 near Dunkin Donuts. There is a lot of truck traffic diversion because of what is going on Rte.33 and the series of lights. Truck traffic is increasing on Greenland Rd. Portsmouth Ave., parallel to Country Club. One of the residents approached us to look at this and asked how the committee would want to proceed with this. Steve Parkinson asked if the Police could monitor this situation and see in reality what may or may not be happening.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson to have the Police Department monitor this situation and report back. Seconded by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles. Motion passed.

- B. Handicap Space at the High School** - The Chair referred to prior talk of a handicap space by the fire lane at the high school for an employee.

Asst. Fire Chief Achilles stated that a fire lane can not be impacted by any kind of parking whatsoever and suggested the either he or the Chair talk to the school as they have a very wide driveway up to the front door and on more than one occasion other people park there and if they feel it valid to have her park there, suggest they have her park there. There is a lot of handicap parking on the corner if you come out that loop, take a right, it's the parking there.

The Chair suggested a recommendation from the committee to the School Board requesting information back on the possibility of having a handicap space closer to the main door.

Assist. Fire Chief Achilles stated by Code you cannot put any type of parking in a fire lane including a handicap spot.

Steve Parkinson is opposed to allowing the wide sidewalk going to the entrance to be used as a driveway or parking, it is a dangerous situation to mix vehicles and pedestrians.

Asst. Fire Chief Achilles agrees with Mr. Parkinson and would rather not have any parking up there and agreed with notifying the School Board to identify a handicap spot closer and come back to us with their solution. The Fire Department has had significant problems with people parking in fire lanes after hours and were unable to get to the hydrant. It comes down to enforcement.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

Respectfully submitted,  
Elaine E. Boucas, Recording Secretary