

MINUTES
TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – Thursday, November 10, 2011
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER:

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

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Councilor Ken Smith, Chair
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director
Stephen Dubois, Deputy Police Chief
Chris LeClaire, Fire Chief
Ted Gray, Vice-Chair
Ron Cypher, Member
Harold Whitehouse, Member
Jon Frederick, Parking & Transportation Director

Members Absent:

Christina Westfall, Member

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Motion made by Ted Gray to accept the minutes of the October 13, 2011 meeting as presented. Seconded by Ron Cypher and voted.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Portwalk Lot 3 – TAC referral to review traffic flow

Jon Frederick explained that the TAC Committee referred the site plan to the Traffic and Safety Committee for approval of changes proposed to traffic flow which includes eliminating the parking garage exit for right turn only onto Maplewood Avenue. He further stated that per the updated Traffic Impact Study conducted by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, the Portwalk Place driveway is expected to operate at a LOS A through the future year of 2023 with a delay of 9 seconds and a maximum queue of one vehicle. Left-turning movements from Hanover Street into Portwalk Place lower level garage are expected to operate at a (Level of Service) LOS A with a delay of 1 second and a maximum expected queue of one vehicle through the future year of 2023. Movements exiting the Portwalk Place lower level garage are expected to operate at a LOS C or better with a delay of 16 seconds or less and a maximum queue of one vehicle.

Patrick Crimmins of Appledore Engineering further explained the changes stating that the lower level parking area will be reserved for long-term parkers, so an insignificant level of

vehicle movements are expected at the Hanover Street access. The upper level parking area entrance and exit will be on Portwalk Way, and there will be no exit onto Maplewood Avenue. He then introduced Robin Bowser, Director of Transportation Systems for Vanasse Hangen Brustlin Traffic Consultants.

Ms. Browser briefly reviewed the Traffic Impact Study of 11 intersections in the specified area and the potential impact of the various projects proposed since 2007, some of which have not occurred. She stated that they were asked to update the Traffic Impact Study based on the proposed Portwalk place project which they collected data in October 2011 following the State protocol and made the seasonal adjustment, concluding with a forecast through 2023, which was previously explained by Mr. Frederick.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential impact of an additional parking garage in the area with Public Works Director Parkinson stating that will be addressed when the time comes.

Mr. Gray moved to approve the site plan as presented, including the changes to the traffic pattern, seconded by Deputy Chief Dubois. Motion passed

B . McKinley Road and Harrison Avenue – Citizen request for a crosswalk

Margaret Blanchard, 34 Harrison Avenue – stated she has been a resident in Elwyn Park for 40 years and feels that we can do a better job ensuring the safety of pedestrians and students of Dondero School. She stated there is a 4-way stop but people do not stop for pedestrians and there are no signs or flashing lights indicating a school zone or pedestrian crossing.

Mr. Cypher stated a site review was held at the site and because it is not an exact “T” crossing, it would be impractical to put a crosswalk there. He feels that the solution is for police enforcement of the speed limit.

Deputy Chief Dubois stated that enforcement is not a problem depending upon availability of the patrols but feels that signage should also be erected.

Chairman Smith agrees that it is not a good place for a crosswalk, but feels there should be a school zone flashing sign.

Public Works Director Parkinson stated that there are school zone lights at the other schools and doesn't know why they were never put up for Dondero School.

Fire Chief LeClaire stated that there should also be an education of the parents dropping and picking kids up at the school.

Deputy Chief Dubois moved to coordinate with the Principal of Dondero School and School Board to educate parents and children on the safety issues and look at possible signage i.e. school zone, seconded by Mr. Cypher. Motion passed.

C. Junkins Avenue and Pleasant Street – Citizen request for a crosswalk

Mr. Cypher stated a site walk was conducted and it is a matter of replacing the crosswalk as it already exists and needs to be re-installed.

Mr. Cypher moved to re-install the existing crosswalk, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse. Motion passed.

D. Route 1 Bypass Off ramp and Maplewood Avenue – Citizen request for a three-way stop

Parking and Transportation Manager Frederick explained that this is a request from a citizen resulting from the recent closure of the Memorial Bridge and the impact on the intersection.

Discussion ensued regarding this frequent request.

Public Works Director Parkinson moved to accept and place the letter on file, seconded by Deputy Chief Dubois. Motion passed.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. School Zone Crosswalk Policy – DPW report back

Public Works Director Parkinson stated that he is still working with manufacturers regarding colors and testing for weather conditions, etc. He will report back in the Spring.

B. Sagamore Avenue and South Street – Advanced left turn signal –

Public Works Director Parkinson stated he has contacted the signal supplier and it will cost \$3,000.00 to make the change and therefore he will proceed with installing a protected left turn from Sagamore Avenue to South Street. He stated he can pay for this out of the current operating budget.

Deputy Chief Dubois moved to accept the Report back to proceed with the advanced left turn from Sagamore to South Street, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.

C. 86 Haven Road – Citizen request for “No Parking” in vicinity of Brackett Road

Mike Coffey, 86 Haven Road – thanked Councilors Lister and Kennedy for bringing this to the attention of the Traffic and Safety Committee. He reviewed the growing problem of parents dropping off and picking up their children from Little Harbour Elementary school and blocking his driveway. He stated that parents are taking longer and longer to leave the area as they use the time to socialize. He stated that Supt. McDonough is aware of the issue but because it is a city street, it is not his jurisdiction. He continued that the

School did send home notices to parents regarding the issue, but it has not changed the situation. He stated that “no parking” signs are not the answer as it would apply to the residents as well who need the street parking for visitors, etc.

Jim Lamond, 84 Haven Road – stated he believes that the recent “No Child Left Behind” issue may also be playing a role in this as it has increased the number of children and parents dropping off and picking up. He continued to explain his frustrations with the situation as Mr. Coffey distributed pictures of various parked cars. He stated there are no sidewalks on Brackett Street and therefore, the street itself is being used as a pathway. He stated that if a fire truck were to try to get down those streets during the drop-off/pick-up times, they would not be able to. He continued by stating that this is a direct quality of life issue and feels at some point something will happen due to the situation. He concluded by offering some solutions such as speed limit enforcement, patrols during the specified time, posting signs “no parking” signs for specific time periods, etc.

After some discussion of possible options, Chairman Smith stated we have to look at the tools we have available and the affect on the residents.

Public Works Director Parkinson stated he understands the Superintendents’ hesitancy with this issue because it is a city street. He reviewed the various sign options, i.e., 10 minutes parking, no parking from here to corner, etc. but reiterated that it still comes down to enforcement.

Chairman Smith stated we need to have school department representation for further discussion on this issue.

Public Works Director Parkinson moved to table to next meeting in order to invite school representatives to attend, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.

Mr. Whitehouse requested he be appointed to any sub-committee formed on this issue as this is his neighborhood.

D. Kane Street/Dennett Street Parking Issue – Not an agenda Item –

This old business item was inadvertently left off the agenda and will be brought back at the December 8, 2011 meeting.

E. Request for update on progress of cutting back bushes at certain intersections – Not an agenda item –

At the request of Mr. Gray, this item will be brought back to the December 8, 2011 meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Smith informed the committee that the third and final reading of the ordinance creating the combination Parking and Traffic Safety Committee will be held at the November 21, 2011 Council meeting and the first meeting of that committee will probably take place in January 2012. He stated he intends to appoint all 3 citizen members of the Traffic and Safety Committee to the new committee if they are interested in serving.

Public Works Director Parkinson moved to adjourn at 9:10 a.m. Seconded and voted unanimously.