

MINUTES
PARKING AND TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – Thursday, May 10, 2012
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
John Bohenko, City Manager
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director
Stephen Dubois, Deputy Police Chief
Steve Achilles, Assistant Fire Chief
Ron Cypher, Member
Ted Gray, Member
Harold Whitehouse, Member

Staff Advisors Present:

Jon Frederick, Parking & Transportation Director

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Public Works Director Parkinson moved to accept the minutes of the April 12, 2012 meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Gray and voted.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Parking and Transportation Director Frederick stated that everything is on target at this time.

Mr. Gray moved to accept the Financial Report and place on file. Seconded by Mr. Cypher and voted.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Tanner Court – Ordinance change request for on-street parking

Parking and Transportation Director Frederick explained that Tanner Court has been reconfigured to accommodate parking on the southerly side of the street for its entire length as a result of the redevelopment project at 51 Islington Street. He stated that due to the width of Tanner Court, no parking would be permitted on the northerly side of the street and an ordinance change is needed to reflect the current conditions.

Mr. Whitehouse moved to approve and forward to the City Council the ordinance change recommendation making Tanner Court open for parking on the southerly side and no parking on the northerly side, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.

B. 300 Rockland Street – Application for Driveway Permit on Broad Street

Public Works Director Parkinson explained that there was a site walk held with the homeowners in attendance where they reviewed a number of issues regarding their request and some possible solutions. He stated these include modifying parts of the existing concrete sidewalk to allow access to the driveway as well as creating a separation between the sidewalk and the parking area with some type of landscaping that is a physical barrier so cars aren't parking on the sidewalk or utilizing any portion of the sidewalk.

Public Works Director Parkinson moved to approve the request with the provision that the applicant work with the Public Works Department to come up with a final plan to allow this access, seconded by Deputy Chief Dubois.

Mr. Whitehouse asked if there are other areas in the City with similar situations and have they been approved for this type of request.

Public Works Director Parkinson stated that there have been no requests the same as this but there are other situations in the city as the streets and homes are in close proximity in some areas and people are looking for off-street parking in the winter.

Motion passed.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

**A. 809 State Street – Citizen request for “Drive Like Your Kids Live Here” –
*Tabled from April 12, 2012 meeting***

Kelly Weinstein, resident of 809 State Street – explained that she has started a grassroots neighborhood association that spans Cass Street to downtown, from Middle to Islington Street as she believes that this is one of the fastest growing family areas in Portsmouth with many toddlers and children walking to the two neighborhood parks. She stated that the students from St. Patrick's School also walk to the parks once a week. She stated that there is a great concern with the speed of cars traveling down Cass, State and Cabot Streets which has prompted her to contact the “Drive Like your Kids Live Here” organization for possible solutions. She referred to the examples of signs that were included in the committee packets and also distributed several pictures showing some of the areas of concern and feels that these signs could be a possible solution, whether it is with the City putting them up, or individual signs in peoples' yards.

City Manager Bohenko moved to refer to the Public Works Department for a report back, with specifics regarding potential sign locations in relation to Federal, State and City laws and potential liability issues, seconded by Deputy Chief Dubois.

City Manager Bohenko stated that this is a great initiative but doesn't want to see the area overwhelmed with signs which can sometimes have the opposite desired effect. He stated it makes sense to have these signs near parks, but we have to be careful not to create any liability issues or go against any Federal, State or City laws.

Public Works Director Parkinson stated that this issue should be dealt with through a city policy because other areas of the city may want to implement these signs if approved for one area.

Motion passed.

B. Haven Road Ombudsman – Report back from Mr. Whitehouse and Mr. Cypher

Mr. Whitehouse explained that he and Mr. Cypher each patrolled the Haven Road area in separate morning and afternoon shifts, and felt that it did make a difference. He stated that perhaps it was the bright yellow PTS jackets they were wearing, but feels that people listened to them when they explained the parking situation and they also had a handout they gave to people for their information. He concluded by stating that the neighbors were thankful that they were there.

Mr. Cypher agreed with Mr. Whitehouses' assessment and related an incident he dealt with at the end of their trial period right before vacation. He stated he also was informed by several parents that the Principal doesn't allow parents to get out and help their small children to the school which then makes the parents decide to park elsewhere to be able to walk them in. He stated he would like to request the Principal of Little Harbour School to review that policy.

Chairman Smith and City Manager Bohenko both thanked Mr. Whitehouse and Mr. Cypher for their service during the last couple of months.

VII. INFORMATIONAL:

A. Mobile Vending from Parking Spaces – *No bid submissions this year*

Chairman Smith stated there were no bid submissions this year for mobile vending from the assigned parking spaces.

Chairman Smith then announced that this would be the last meeting for Parking and Transportation Director Jon Frederick who will be leaving the City of Portsmouth for a new opportunity in another community.

The Committee members thanked Mr. Frederick for his hard work and years of service and wished him well in his future endeavors.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Gray moved to adjourn at 8:20 a.m. Seconded and voted unanimously.