

**MINUTES**  
**PARKING AND TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING**

8:00 A.M. – Thursday, July 12, 2012  
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

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**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Ken Smith called the meeting to order at 8:05 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  
Ron Cypher, Member  
Ted Gray, Member  
Harold Whitehouse, Member

**Member Absent:** Chris LeClaire, Fire Chief

**III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:**

**Mr. Cypher moved to accept the minutes of the June 14, 2012 meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Whitehouse and voted.**

**IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:**

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

**V. REFERRALS:**

**A. Downtown Bicycle Rack Locations – City Council Referral**

Public Works Director Parkinson distributed a map outlining the locations of the 19 bike racks currently located in the downtown area with a total of 96 bicycle spaces.

City Manager Bohenko stated that staff went out to look at potential spaces and found a spot in front of Izzy's Ice Cream on Bow Street which isn't a parking space.

Chairman Smith stated the request of the Council was for a bike rack in a parking space in front of the Brewery on Market Street so that request should be voted before other suggestions are heard.

Mr. Whitehouse moved to install a bicycle rack at the requested location on Market Street, seconded by City Manager Bohenko.

Mr. Whitehouse stated he made the motion for discussion purposes only, but doesn't believe in taking a metered parking space for a bicycle rack.

City Manager Bohenko stated that the City of Portsmouth is a leader in sustainability efforts and feels that we should look at implementing a pilot program for a bicycle rack and suggested the motion be amended to implement it as a pilot program to be reevaluated in October. Mr. Whitehouse agreed to the amendment.

Mr. Whitehouse suggested contacting the U.S. Government regarding putting a bicycle rack in their parking lot. City Manager Bohenko stated he has contacted them in the past regarding public use of the parking lot but since 9/11, they are very strict with access.

Mr. Cypher stated he will not support this motion as Market Street is one of the busiest streets in the city and putting a bicycle rack in the middle of the parking spaces would be a safety issue.

Chairman Smith stated he will not support this location either although he understands the need for bicycle racks. He stated they have located an alternate space in front of Izzy's that will not be taking up a parking spot.

Mr. Gray suggested including the area near Attrezzi's adjacent to Hanover Street next to the Parking Garage as there is a space there that is not big enough to park cars, but can be used for bicycles. He stated this had been looked at previously.

City Manager Bohenko stated he would like the Public Works Department to measure the area first as more space may be needed.

Discussion ensued regarding the logistics of various bike rack locations.

**Mr. Gray moved to suspend the rules to allow audience members to speak to the issue. Seconded by Mr. Whitehouse and voted.**

Marylou McElwain – stated she walks and bikes in the downtown area daily and agrees that the Market Street location is too congested and too busy to put a bicycle rack there but would like the location near the parking garage.

**Motion to implement a pilot program to install a bicycle rack at the requested Market Street location in front of The Brewery to be re-evaluated in October *FAILED* on a 3-4 roll call vote. Mr. Whitehouse, Mr. Cypher, Mr. Gray and Chairman Smith voted opposed. City Manager Bohenko, Deputy Chief Dubois and Public Works Director Parkinson voted in favor.**

**City Manager Bohenko moved to instruct the Public Works Department to install a bike corral in the parking lot at the corner of Hanover and Market Streets and to recommend placement of a bike rack at the identified non-parking space in front of Izzy's on Bow Street as a pilot program until October. Seconded by Public Works Director Parkinson and voted.**

City Manager Bohenko clarified that the bike rack installation at the Attrezzi location could have substantial costs associated with it.

**B. Parking – Maplewood Avenue – Referral from Mayor Spear**

**Mr. Whitehouse moved to schedule a Work Session with Planning Staff at the next Parking and Traffic Safety Committee meeting on August 9, 2012. Seconded by City Manager Bohenko and voted.**

**VI. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Bus Traffic – Middle School – Principal John Stokel**

Middle School Principal John Stokel presented the schedule for Bus Parking for the 2012-2013 school year in relation to the continued renovation of the Middle School through August 2013.

Mr. Gray asked if there is adequate room for the busses to turn onto Rogers Street. Mr. Stokel stated yes but there will be modifications made to the curbing by the end of August.

Mr. Whitehouse asked about the removal of an old brick column. Mr. Stokel stated there is still one left but the others are gone and he would check with the contractor regarding the last column.

**B. Woodbury Avenue – Traffic Safety Concerns – Resident Request**

City Manager Bohenko explained that he sent a letter to the resident regarding her concerns with speeding on Woodbury Avenue and that the issue had been referred to the Police Department for investigation.

Deputy Chief DuBois stated he has also spoken to her regarding the lack of progress on the case and that although they did have a license plate number and the person was identified, they have not continued the investigation.

City Manager Bohenko stated that this is less about the property damage as it is about the safety of the residents in the area. He stated we can't have the police department there all of the time, but it is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Deputy Chief DuBois stated that a recent survey of that road showed that there are 7,000 vehicles travelling on the road in a 24 hour period and there were 300 vehicles stopped by the police in the last year. He continued by stating that the police department has recently received grant money to address speeding issues and Woodbury Avenue will be on the list.

Councilor Smith asked when the last time the Stealth Stat was conducted in this area. Deputy Chief DuBois stated it was done on Monday (07/09/12) and explained that the report showed that 37 mph is the 85 percentile average speed and the speed limit is 25 mph.

**City Manager Bohenko moved to suspend the rules to allow speakers from the audience. Seconded by Mr. Cypher and voted.**

Lenore Weiss Bronson, 828 Woodbury Avenue – stated she has been a resident at this address for 26 years and has appeared before this committee several times over the years on this issue. She stated that she has been told that stop signs cannot be put up to control speeding but doesn't understand the logic of this as she feels this has been done in other locations in the city, i.e. Lincoln Street. She stated that narrowing the street with the recent reconstruction didn't help either as they still speed. She stated that if the average speed is 37 mph then that means there are people going even faster than that. She continued that another problem is that the signage off of the highways and the addresses of the mall and other commercial businesses say Woodbury Avenue so people take the first exit that says Woodbury Avenue which then leads them through the residential area. She further related the issue of the school bus stop at Farm Lane which is in a dangerous area in the road and stated there have been several close calls.

Patricia Taylor, 700 Woodbury Avenue – stated back in 2005 when the road construction was going to be done, there was a counter placed on the road which showed 10,000 cars a day and 1,000 trucks. She stated that truck traffic has been reduced significantly with the signage and neighbors reporting any issues, but she doesn't feel the 7,000 figure is correct for present day vehicles. She stated that she feels stop signs at the intersections of Emond Avenue, Farm Lane and Maplewood Avenue would increase the safety of Woodbury Avenue.

Richard Weeks, 30 FW Hartford Drive – stated he has 4 children that he brings to be tutored by Lenore Weiss Bronson and he has witnessed the speeding problems being discussed. He stated even if only 5-10% of the vehicles are going 40-50 mph, that the area is a ticking time bomb and feels that stops signs would alleviate the problem.

Marylou McElwain, 259 South St. - stated that enforcement is important and feels that it isn't done enough in Portsmouth. She stated that the police vehicles and city vehicles need to adhere to the speed limits as well.

Howard Mangold, 1275 Maplewood Avenue – stated that speeding is also an issue on Maplewood Avenue and asked that if they are going to address Woodbury Avenue, that Maplewood Avenue be included as well.

Chairman Smith asked Public Works Director Parkinson to explain the warrant requirements for placing stop signs. Public Works Director Parkinson stated he doesn't have that criteria in front of him at this time but feels that a consultant would need to study this area similar to what is being conducted in the downtown core.

**City Manager Bohenko moved to include Woodbury Avenue and Maplewood Avenue in the consultant study currently being conducted for the downtown area to determine if warrants can be established for stop signs at the intersections discussed, with funding to come from the Parking and Transportation Fund. Seconded by Deputy Chief DuBois and voted.**

**C. Jaywalking – Harold Whitehouse**

Mr. Whitehouse explained that he has been contacted by people regarding the increased problem of jaywalking downtown especially at night with big groups of people not using crosswalks. He asked if there should be signs posted downtown regarding jaywalking.

Deputy Chief DuBois stated that they have received funding for crosswalk enforcement but explained that jaywalking is not illegal and only means that the pedestrian has to yield to the vehicles if not in a crosswalk. He stated that is the State law and State laws surpass any ordinances. He stated that there are increased foot patrols in the downtown for the summer and stated that the only pedestrian hit occurred within a crosswalk.

**D. No Parking Here to Corner – South Mill Street – Resident Request**

Public Works Director Parkinson distributed 2 photos that the resident submitted to show the area in question. He stated that historically there were large boulders in that spot but now there is a bump out in the curbing. He stated that this is a heavily utilized area as there is limited parking in the South End, but he feels that this area is the same as any other area and doesn't recommend approval of this request.

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to accept and place the letter on file. Seconded by Mr. Gray and voted.**

**City Manager Bohenko moved to suspend the rules to introduce a new item on the Agenda. Seconded by Mr. Whitehouse and voted.**

**E. Request for Valet Parking Services, Common Man Restaurant on State Street – *(Not on Agenda)***

Brian Slewinsky of Atlantic Parking Service explained the request to implement valet parking services in front of the Common Man Restaurant on State Street from 5:00 p.m. to midnight, nightly with cars to be parked at 1 Harbour Place Garage. He stated there will be an A-frame sign in the loading zone, a 6X6 pop up tent to be used in inclement weather, and a podium for keys. He stated this would be a year-round service if approved.

Public Works Director Parkinson clarified that the tent will not be located in the triangle portion of the loading zone.

Mr. Whitehouse asked if other valet services have tents. Chairman Smith stated yes, for inclement weather.

**City Manager Bohenko moved to approve the request to utilize the loading zone area in front of the Common Man Restaurant from 5:00 p.m. to midnight, nightly, with cars to be parked at 1 Harbour Place Garage, for a 6 month trial period. Seconded by Public Works Director Parkinson and voted.**

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Gray moved to adjourn at 9:15 a.m. Seconded and voted unanimously.**