

MEETING MINUTES

PARKING and TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – November 3, 2016
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER:

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

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Chairman, Brad Lown
City Manager, John Bohenko
Public Works Director, Peter Rice
Deputy Fire Chief, James Heinz
Police Captain, Frank Warchol
Member, Ted Gray
Member, Ronald Cypher
Member, Harold Whitehouse
Alternate Member, Mary Lou McElwain

Staff Advisors Present:

Parking and Transportation Engineer, Eric Eby
Parking Manager, Joey Giordano
Assistant Planning Director, Juliet Walker

Absent:

Member, Shari Donnermeyer

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Harold Whitehouse requested amending the October 6, 2016 meeting minutes. He requested the following language be added to page 4, second paragraph: U.S. Route 1 (1 and three-tenths of a mile).

The sentence was amended as follows:

Mr. Whitehouse expressed concern regarding the roadway alteration of U.S. Route 1 (1 and three-tenths of a mile) and asked if federal agencies were contacted.

City Manager Bohenko motioned to accept the amended October 6, 2016 meeting minutes. Harold Whitehouse seconded.

Motion passed 9-0.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

City Manager Bohenko motioned to accept the financial report dated November 2016.
Ron Cypher seconded.

Motion passed 9-0.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dave Palumbo stated that he investigated Mr. Whitehouse's question regarding flags on wheelchairs. He spoke to several handicapped residents at Betty's Dream and discovered that vendors and manufacturers would not service equipment that had been altered. By placing a flag on a wheelchair, it would void the warranty and service agreement. The residents stated that altering the wheelchairs with flags is too risky. Mr. Palumbo thanked Mr. Whitehouse for presenting the issue.

Rick Becksted requested the following questions be addressed:

Q. What is happening with the sidewalks on Islington Street?

A. They will be constructed in Spring 2017.

Q. Why were the sidewalks completed on Gosling Road near the mall when the proposed project completion was scheduled in 2018?

A. The Gosling Road sidewalk project was shown in the City's Capital Improvement Plan as beginning in Fiscal Year 2017. Due to a change in the project scope, the project was able to take advantage of Federal Community Development Block Grant funding for nearly all of the project costs, allowing the project to be completed sooner, rather than having to wait for City general funds which were scheduled for Fiscal Year 2018.

Q. Will bike lanes be installed near the top of the hill on Lafayette Road where the new granite curbs are installed? He stated the street at that point appears too narrow.

A. Yes, they will. The roadway will be restriped to accommodate the new sidewalk and the bike lanes.

Q. Did staff take pictures of parking on Lafayette Road in the evening where the bike path is proposed?

A. Initial parking observations were made during the weekday morning (7-8 am), midday (11 am-1 pm), and evening (7-8 pm) in February 2015 for the entire corridor.

In April 2016, The City did a follow-up parking study focusing on the portion of the corridor from Park Street north. This follow-up study was more detailed and recorded parking usage between 8 am and 7 pm on a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. These were physical counts, conducted every 1 hour.

Q. Will the bike lane be restricted to daytime use and allow for evening parking?

A. The bike lane will not be restricted to daytime use. Vehicles will be allowed to park in designated parking spaces, not in the bike lane.

Kelly Shaw asked if City staff coordinated with New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) on the Water Country study completed in May 2016. She requested a copy of their comments. Mrs. Shaw also discussed future developments and the traffic impact on Banfield Road.

Bruce Osborn thanked the Police Department for their presence on Echo Avenue. He suggested painting a yellow or white line on the side of the roadway for wheelchair use.

VI. PRESENTATIONS:

A. Water Country traffic study update, by TEC - Eric Eby introduced Kevin Dandrade, Principal, from TEC. Mr. Dandrade presented findings from the May 25, 2016 Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) and the supplemental updated TIA dated November 1, 2016.

The PowerPoint presentation, the updated Traffic Impact Assessment dated November 1, 2016, and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) letter dated August 24, 2016, regarding the agency's review of the TIA are available on the City's website. They are located under Meetings Calendar 2016, November 3, 2016, Parking and Traffic Safety Committee.

The purpose of the original study was to evaluate three community-proposed alternatives for exit routes that Water Country patrons could use to return to the highway. The purpose of the follow-up study was to compare previous intersection volume projections with actual summertime counts conducted by DPW.

The presentation included information on the study area, study process, existing departure patterns, existing conditions with updated data, peak hour traffic comparisons, levels of service and conclusions and recommendations.

Mr. Dandrade presented the study area locations (slide 3). The blue circles indicated the original study area intersections in early March 2016. The early March counts were increased using seasonal adjustment factors to represent summertime conditions. The original May study used 2012 Water Country traffic counts from a previous traffic evaluation. The yellow circles indicated the new summertime counts from data gathered in July and August of 2016.

The peak hour departure data for summer 2016 is illustrated on slide 4. Mr. Dandrade stated the Water Country driveway was counted every weekend between mid-June to Labor Day weekend. On Saturday, July 23, 2016, a peak hourly volume of 777 vehicles exiting Water Country was recorded.

The two-stage study process included:

- Review existing data sources
- Review seasonal adjustments to data
- Analyze redistribution characteristics
- Analyze capacity of nearby intersections
- Offer recommendations for egress

The existing departure patterns were illustrated on slide 6. The 2012 data showed the distribution characteristics as noted on slide 7. The updated August 2016 data showed fewer trips leaving Water Country. The August 2016 data showed the distribution characteristics as noted on slide 8.

The existing conditions with updated data revealed the following:

- Summertime traffic distributes to Constitution Ave more heavily towards Banfield Road.
- Average patrons egress split 66% towards Banfield Road and 34% exit to Route 1 (Saturday).
 - Assumed 70/30 split for analysis purposes.
- Average patrons egress split 59% towards Banfield Road and 41% exit to Route 1 (Weekdays).
- Overall 2016 summer volumes are lower than seasonally adjusted March volumes.

The peak hour traffic comparisons are noted on slide 10. The Banfield Road peak hour traffic comparison from March to summertime are noted on slide 11. Mr. Dandrade stated that the Saturday summertime evening peak hour traffic volume is an increase of fewer than 3 cars per minute over a normal early March weekday evening.

The local residents proposed a potential egress alternative (Alternative A) as illustrated on slide 12. The level of service data for the Banfield Road / Ocean Road intersection was detailed on slide 13, which included the alternative A option.

Mr. Dandrade outlined conclusions and recommendations.

- August 2016 volumes are lower than March volumes projected with seasonal adjustment.
- Redistribution of egress trips anticipated to have marginal improvements at Banfield Road/ Ocean Road, with significant impacts at Route 1 / West Road.
- Exiting patrons may continue to use Constitution Avenue and Heritage Avenue to access Banfield Road.
- Existing exit pattern provides the most options to distribute traffic to area roadways.
- Route 1 / West Road egress will require a significant investment in roadway improvements.
- Egress changes will likely impact Peverly Hill Road and other roadways. Police details are needed to effectively control alternative traffic patterns along West Road.
- **TEC recommends maintaining existing egress patterns and continuing the advancement of the proposed complete street improvements along Banfield Road.**

Mr. Dandrade stated that NHDOT District 6 representatives were present at the May 2016 meeting. He stated NHDOT representatives expressed concern about increased traffic on U.S. Route 1. He also stated NHDOT agreed with the methodology and supported the finding of the study as noted in their letter dated August 24, 2016.

Harold Whitehouse asked about traffic queuing on Peverly Hill Road if it was narrowed due to sidewalks and bicycle paths. Mr. Dandrade stated it was not part of the scope of this study.

B. Maplewood Avenue corridor improvement project, by GPI -

Raymond Pezzullo, Assistant City Engineer, introduced the project. He stated it began as a water main utility project, but was upgraded to a complete street project in accordance with City Council policy. The Maplewood Avenue corridor was highlighted as a high priority in the City's 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. GPI was hired to develop conceptual and preliminary design plans. Public meetings were held in December 2015 and May 2016. Mr. Pezzullo stated that staff and consultants have walked the entire project site and met with residents to discuss their concerns. He stated there has been significant public input and this input was considered during the development of the project plans. The preliminary design is being finalized. Staff will use the plans to move forward with the final design plans and project construction documents.

Joseph Johnson, Senior Project Manager at GPI, presented to the Committee.

The presentation is available on the City's website under Meetings Calendar 2016, November 3, 2016, Parking and Traffic Safety Committee.

Mr. Johnson stated the need for the project included:

- Primary need: Water main replacement on Maplewood Avenue as recommended in 2013 Water Master Plan
- Identified adjacent areas in need of work
 - Added to overall project
- Full roadway and utility reconstruction where appropriate
- Complete street type design
 - City Council Policy
- Incorporated elements of 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The project limits for design begin on Maplewood Avenue starting at Woodbury Avenue and continue east to North Mill Pond. The project limits are just over a mile in length. The focus is complete street and utility improvements. The project also includes the adjacent neighborhood, with utilities concerns that include Fairview Drive, Cutts Street, Central Avenue, and Leslie Drive. Mr. Johnson stated the construction limits and phasing would depend on available funding.

Data collection included speed, traffic volumes, parking patterns, accident history and input from the public. GPI reviewed 48-hour traffic counts in two locations on the corridor. One location was near North Mill Pond on Maplewood Avenue (identified as A on slide 4). The average daily traffic

count was 8,800. The 85th percentile speed was 33 mph toward downtown and 35 mph going out of the downtown. The posted speed limit is 25 mph. The second location was near McGee Drive. The average daily traffic count was 2,300. The 85th percentile speed toward downtown was 36 mph. It was 37mph going out of town.

He stated the character of the roadway changes as you move out of the downtown. Data was collected on parking (see slide 5). He stated they looked at a typical weekday (Wednesday) and a weekend day (Saturday) to determine parking conditions. The data showed there was very little demand during the peak periods. He stated there were one to two cars parked during the peak periods and the need for on street parking is not present. He stated it is an ideal roadway for bicycle lanes.

Data collection on accident reports provided by Portsmouth Police Department for the project area was available from 2009 to June 2013. There were 31 accidents reported on the corridor. A breakdown is provided on slide 7.

Mr. Johnson provided a public input summary on slide 8. The summary included:

- Vehicles driving too fast
 - Speed humps
- Bicycle accommodation
- Accommodate school children
 - Crosswalks
- Sidewalk Improvements
- Drainage issues
- Pavement conditions in the adjacent neighborhoods
- Neighborhood feel

Mr. Johnson presented the Maplewood Avenue Road design goals on slide 9.

- Safety
 - Traffic calming
 - Accessible sidewalk
 - Grass buffer (where possible)
 - Bicycle accommodation
 - Curbing and drainage
 - Utility coordination - redundant utility poles

Mr. Johnson discussed the proposed sidewalks along Maplewood Avenue as highlighted in red on slide 10. He discussed proposed traffic calming measures as outlined on slide 11. They included: perceived narrowed travel lanes; radar speed signs at two locations, as noted in yellow circles; and intersection geometry improvements at key locations noted in red circles.

Mr. Johnson outlined the Maplewood Avenue typical roadway section as illustrated on slide 12.

Ted Gray asked about the narrowing of road lanes and vehicle parking on both sides of the street. He expressed concern for residential parking. Mr. Johnson stated that the parking

observation showed very little demand in the area. Mr. Gray asked that consideration be given to fewer bike lanes and narrower sidewalks.

Mr. Johnson outlined the concept of intersection improvements at Woodbury Avenue on slide 14, and detailed the intersection improvement at Woodbury Avenue and Maplewood Avenue.

The improvements included:

- Calm travel speeds
Realign intersection to 90 degree angle - T type of configuration
- Reduce pavement width and introduce green space (public space to be developed)
- Gateway treatment
- Pedestrian crosswalk and introduction of Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFB)
- Bicycle accommodation through buffered bike lanes
- Sidewalk connection on Woodbury Ave from Frank Jones Mansion to Woodlawn Circle
- Retain existing tree in island

He discussed other traffic control measures as shown on slide 15 such as raised intersections. He stated there is a gentle rise into the intersection and a gentle decline out of the intersection. It is a vertical deflection that reinforces slow speeds and encourages yielding to pedestrians. He also noted that a raised intersection would impact emergency response times.

Five intersections were noted for improvements.

Edmond Avenue: calm travel speeds by raised intersection and dynamic striping, pedestrian crosswalk/ refuge, and bicycle accommodation

Central Avenue and Emery Street: calm travel speeds by raised intersection and dynamic striping, pedestrian crosswalks I refuge, bicycle accommodation and sidewalk connections

Cutts Street: calm travel speeds, median island, dynamic striping, pedestrian crosswalk, bicycle accommodation (green paint to enhance visibility), sidewalk connections, radar speed signs and installation of supplemental signs (cross traffic does not stop) below the existing stop signs

NB Bypass Ramps: tighten the intersection geometry by installing a mountable apron for the right turn. The apron would cause vehicles to approach and stop before making a right hand turn. The existing island would remain. Mark a bike lane in green paint to enhance the feature

Dennett Street: calm travel speeds, bike lanes through the intersection, dynamic striping, pedestrian crosswalks and bicycle accommodations

Mr. Johnson stated that the following schedule may need to be revised once bids are submitted. The next steps include:

Define project limits and phasing	Fall 2016
Coordinate temp. const. access with abutters	Fall/Winter 2016
Complete final design	Winter 2016/2017
Advertise for bids	Spring 2017
Receive bids/award contract	Spring 2017
Public pre-construction meeting	Summer 2017
Begin construction	Summer/Fall 2017

Harold Whitehouse asked about using rumble strips at intersections. Mr. Johnson clarified that rumble strips are not used in residential areas due to the noise.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Meeting House Hill Road, request for one-way traffic flow, by Elaine Boucas - Eric Eby stated the Committee conducted a site visit on Tuesday, November 1, 2016. He requested additional time to evaluate the area and report back on a recommendation at a later date.

City Manager Bohenko motioned to direct staff to report back. Harold Whitehouse seconded. **Vote 9-0, to direct staff to report back.**

B. Greenleaf Avenue, request for truck restriction between Route 1 Bypass and Lafayette Road, by Linda Forisso-Corbly - Eric Eby stated that neighborhood residents noticed increased vehicular speeds due to the repaving of Greenleaf Avenue. Mr. Eby requested time to gather data on truck traffic and traffic counts and would report back with a recommendation at a later date. He stated an ordinance amendment would be required to prohibit truck traffic on that section of Greenleaf Avenue.

City Manager Bohenko motioned to direct staff to report back. Public Works Director Rice seconded. **Vote 9-0, to direct staff to report back.**

VIII. OLD BUSINESS:

A. 43 Whidden Street, report back on driveway permit application by Greg Mahanna –

City Manager Bohenko motioned to suspend the rules to allow for public comment. Harold Whitehouse seconded. **Vote 9-0, to suspend rules to allow for public comment.**

Attorney Chris Mulligan spoke on behalf of Greg Mahanna. Mr. Mulligan stated he discussed the open space requirements with John Chagnon, Ambit Engineering, who created the site plan. He stated Mr. Chagnon believed the open space requirement would be met if the driveway was

placed in the location specified. Mr. Mulligan asked the Committee to follow the recommendation by DPW staff to grant the driveway permit.

Harold Whitehouse motioned to approve the driveway permit subject to the City's Planning Department approval. Mary Lou McElwain seconded. **Vote 9-0, to approve the driveway permit subject to the City's Planning Department approval.**

B. Echo Avenue, report back on neighborhood petition requesting signs to address speeding concerns – Eric Eby conducted a site visit and spoke to neighbors who signed the petition presented at the October 2016 PTS meeting.

Mr. Eby recommended the following:

- Curve warning signs, chevron signs and speed limit signs should be installed along the roadway near the curve at the intersection with Woodlawn Circle.
- Wheelchair warning signs should be installed at both ends of the roadway as well as near the intersection with Woodlawn Circle.
- Pave the utility patch on Woodland Circle.
- Contact NHDOT officials regarding their willingness to replace the Echo Avenue sign on the Turnpike with a Local Traffic Only sign. This will help to discourage retail users from choosing to travel on Echo Avenue.

Mr. Eby stated that the improvements mentioned during the Maplewood Avenue corridor improvements project would include new sidewalks, crosswalks and crossing treatments that would improve the safety of pedestrians crossing Woodbury Avenue from the Echo Avenue neighborhood.

Mary Lou McElwain supported any action to keep the highway traffic out of the neighborhood.

Ron Cypher motioned to approve staff recommendations. Mary Lou McElwain seconded. **Vote 9-0, to approve staff recommendations.**

Harold Whitehouse asked for the City Attorney's opinion regarding flags on power wheelchairs. He stated that the residents of Betty's Dream may receive federal and/or state funding. City Manager Bohenko stated he would speak to the City Attorney.

C. Parking space striping outside of downtown, report back – Eric Eby recommended to the Committee that requests for parking space striping be addressed on a case-by-case basis. No action required.

D. 15 minute parking spaces, report back on maximizing efficiency of their use – Joey Giordano, Parking Manager, updated the Committee on the new programmable meters currently being tested. The technology would allow 15-minute spaces to be reprogrammed after the 15-minute designation was no longer required. No action required.

E. Bow Street and Market Street intersection, report back on request for police officer while Sarah Mildred Long Bridge is closed – Police Captain Warchol reported that there have not been significant traffic backups that would require traffic management by police officers. He recommended to the Committee that no police detail is needed at this time.

The Committee discussed the traffic pattern and traffic volumes traveling from Bow Street onto Market Street.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Andrea Amico thanked the Committee for the TEC presentation on Water Country traffic. She requested the presentation and NHDOT response letter be posted to the website. She asked if the intersection at Constitution Avenue and Banfield Road was reviewed. She expressed concern about the traffic volumes on Banfield Road and the impact on families in the neighborhood.

She reiterated her position that traffic from a business on Route 1 should be required to exit on Route 1. She asked about the City's participation in the NHDOT Route 1 Corridor Plan dated November 2011, which addresses Water Country traffic. She also mentioned an October 2016 RTPC meeting. She questioned if City staff participates in these meetings and inquired about the City's position on the topics. Andrea Amico listed future developments proposed for the area and questioned the traffic implications. She asked if the proposed developments had been considered in the traffic impact studies. She supports a traffic light at the West Road and Route 1 intersection.

Kelly Shaw asked if future developments are required to be compliant. She asked how the NHDOT is being notified of new developments or change of use developments. She expressed concern that they are not being notified. She also requested that only right hand turns in and out on Constitution Ave be allowed.

Rick Becksted asked if the new developments and proposed developments were part of the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) on Water Country. He expressed support for the permanently mounted traffic calming devices. He expressed interest in learning if they curbed speeding, or if drivers forget about them and continue to speed. Mr. Becksted asked if sidewalk and curbing could be combined and located on one side of the street. He asked about the double yellow line being removed on Aldrich Road.

X. INFORMATIONAL:

A. Neighborhood Traffic Calming program update – Juliet Walker, Assistant Planning Director, presented on Neighborhood Traffic Calming. The presentation is available on the City's website under Meetings Calendar 2016, November 3, 2016, Parking and Traffic Safety Committee.

The intent of the proposed neighborhood traffic calming program is to clarify the process for citizens coming before committees with requests for improvements on their streets. She stated this program is formalizing the existing process and creating a toolbox of responses to the requests.

She stated there are two phases:

- Phase 1 - preliminary assessment
 - Speed monitoring
 - Traffic counts
 - Traffic study
- Phase 2
 - Physical traffic calming measures
 - Short-term | interim - "pilot"
 - Long-term | Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
 - Non-infrastructure traffic calming measures

Juliet Walker briefly discussed the types of traffic calming measures. The next steps are as follows:

- Develop a public request form
- Add guidance / program information on City website

Eric Eby provided updates on the following:

1. Elwyn Road sidewalk request
2. Aldrich Road centerline was removed to allow people to use the full width of the roadway to get around parked cars. Parking is allowed on Aldrich Road.
3. Radar speed signs are traffic calming devices and they collect data.
4. Eliminating center lines on selected roads

XI. ADJOURNMENT – At 9:43 a.m., voted to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Chastain
Secretary of the Committee