# Juliet T.H. Walker

From: WatsonJr, Bill <WILLIAM.E.WATSONJR@dot.nh.gov> Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 12:58 PM Eric B. Eby Juliet T.H. Walker; Peter H. Rice; Hudson, Robert Subject: RE: Middle Street Bike Lane clarification

Eric -

To:

Cc:

What I tried to clarify with the Council last night is if indeed the intent of their conversation is only to impact a small portion of the total project area, that we would still need to see how that area would be addressed by other means (rerouting through alternate streets was discussed as one potential, removing parking was another one).

Our initial statements that modifications to this section would require the City to payback the federal grant funds unless the design modifications are merited and that we would need to demonstrate safety, environmental or other concerns about specific design details by completing a review and analysis by a qualified engineer. The Toole review did NOT demonstrate safety, environmental or other concerns.

If the Council determines that they want to just flip that section of the project, then yes, we will expect full payback. That solution provides a fragmented, less safe solution that will not provide for the bicyclists of all ages and abilities that the improvements were intended to serve.

I left the door open for further conversation. If the City Council wants to come up with an alternative for this section of roadway designed by a P.E. that demonstrates a better, safer, engineered solution, then I would be open to that conversation.

Regards, Bill

William Watson Jr., PE Administrator P - 603-271-3344 F - 603-271-8093 Bill.Watson@dot.nh.gov

**NH Department of Transportation Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance** 7 Hazen Drive Concord NH 03301



From: Eric B. Eby <ebeby@cityofportsmouth.com> Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 12:30 PM To: WatsonJr, Bill <WILLIAM.E.WATSONJR@dot.nh.gov> Cc: Juliet T.H. Walker <jthwalker@cityofportsmouth.com>; Peter H. Rice <phrice@cityofportsmouth.com>; Hudson, Robert <Robert.A.Hudson@dot.nh.gov> Subject: Middle Street Bike Lane clarification

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#### Bill

Thank you for participating in last night's City Council meeting. Your input was very helpful in informing the Council on the parameters of acceptable actions that can be pursued to ensure the safety of all users of the roadway. I wanted to follow up to clarify a few of your statements at the meeting.

On the attached graphic of the bike lane plan, the entire bike lane can be seen running from Andrew Jarvis Drive on the left of the plan, to Cabot Street on the right side of the plan. The entire length of the bike lane is 4,850 feet on each side of the roadway, for a total of 9,700 linear feet of bike lane. The section of the corridor containing parking spaces is 1,600 linear feet, on just the west side of the roadway. The parking space section therefore comprises approximately 16% of the entire project length. Parking was removed from the rest of the corridor as part of the project implementation.

A few of the Councilors last night reiterated that it was their desire to only modify the section of the bike lane that is within the parking spaces area. We had previously reached out to NHDOT staff about that request last summer and I've attached the email correspondence on our communications with your staff. In those emails and in follow-up communication, it was stated that modifications to this section would require the City to payback the federal grant funds unless the design modifications are merited and that we would need to demonstrate safety, environmental or other concerns about specific design details by completing a review and analysis by a qualified engineer. That was the scope of the report completed by Toole Design, which you and your staff reviewed and discussed with us.

In your comments last night, you seemed to indicate that you were not aware that a request had previously been made to modify only a portion of the bike lanes. In order to clear the record with Council, we would ask that you please review the attached plan and, with the Council's request in mind and the conclusions of the Toole report, confirm whether the City would indeed need to payback the entire grant for modifications to only that stretch or under what circumstances NHDOT would consider requiring that only a portion of the grant funds be returned (or none at all). If it would be easier to discuss this via a phone call or Zoom meeting, we would be happy to set that up as well.

Best, Eric

## Eric B. Eby, P.E.

Parking and Transportation Engineer Department of Public Works City of Portsmouth 680 Peverly Hill Road Portsmouth, NH 03801 (603) 766-1415 Cell 603-828-6695



# Juliet T.H. Walker

| From:    | Willeke, Charles <charles.willeke@dot.nh.gov></charles.willeke@dot.nh.gov> |
|----------|--|
| Sent:    | Wednesday, June 3, 2020 12:58 PM   |
| То:      | Juliet T.H. Walker; Hudson, Robert; Jameson, Tom                           |
| Subject: | RE: Portsmouth #28757  |

Hi Bob,

Let's discuss this at staff meeting next Monday, I think FHWA will be there as well. Then we can respond back to Juliet after that.

C.R.

From: Juliet T.H. Walker
Sent: Wednesday, June 03, 2020 12:51 PM
To: Hudson, Robert ; Willeke, Charles ; Jameson, Tom
Subject: RE: Portsmouth #28757
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Would it be possible to get some preliminary guidance on this question soon? As I said before, it is only a conceptual question at this point, no one has made a formal request for a change. Juliet T. H. Walker, AICP **Planning Director** Planning Department City Hall 1 Junkins Ave Portsmouth, NH 03801 (603) 610-7296 www.cityofportsmouth.com/planportsmouth Twitter: @PlanPortsmouth Facebook: @plan.portsmouth Office Hours: M 8-6, T-Th 8-4:30, F 8-1 From: Hudson, Robert [mailto:Robert.Hudson@dot.nh.gov] Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 2:49 PM To: Willeke, Charles <Charles.Willeke@dot.nh.gov>; Jameson, Tom <Tom.Jameson@dot.nh.gov> Cc: Juliet T.H. Walker < jthwalker@cityofportsmouth.com> Subject: RE: Portsmouth #28757 Yes. The attached plans show what was built and are asking to make changes noted below Bob From: Willeke, Charles < Charles. Willeke@dot.nh.gov> Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 2:38 PM To: Hudson, Robert <Robert.Hudson@dot.nh.gov>; Jameson, Tom <Tom.Jameson@dot.nh.gov> Cc: Juliet T.H. Walker (jthwalker@cityofportsmouth.com) < jthwalker@cityofportsmouth.com> Subject: RE: Portsmouth #28757 Bob – one question in highlight below C.R.

From: Hudson, Robert <<u>Robert.Hudson@dot.nh.gov</u>>
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 2:27 PM
To: Jameson, Tom <<u>Tom.Jameson@dot.nh.gov</u>>; Willeke, Charles <<u>Charles.Willeke@dot.nh.gov</u>>
Cc: Juliet T.H. Walker (<u>ithwalker@cityofportsmouth.com</u>) <<u>ithwalker@cityofportsmouth.com</u>>
Subject: RE: Portsmouth #28757

## Hi CR/Tom

Juliet provided that attached plans and below are changes.

- Portsmouth #28757 is the project
- Sheets 21 to 26 show bike lane against curb. Buffer between bike lane and travel lane. There is no parking so no change to plans
- Sheets 27 to 30 currently show bike lane against curb, parking, then travel lane. These are the proposed plan changes ←-Do you mean sheets 27 to 30 show what was built and the council is asking to make changes noted below?.
- Sheets 31 to 33 show no bike lane, shared lane with vehicles. No change to plans

Council members are asking if it is possible to move the parking lane to be against curb and bike lane next to travel lane for sheets 27 to 30. The reason for the change is based on input they've received from constituents related to inconvenience, confusion, and perceptions about safety for motor vehicle travelers.

Juliet asked this previously and John indicated that city would need to pay back the federal funds to do this. Council is asking for confirmation of payback of funds.

Juliet said that staff does not support this change.

Bob

From: Jameson, Tom <<u>Tom.Jameson@dot.nh.gov</u>>

Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:57 AM

To: Hudson, Robert <<u>Robert.Hudson@dot.nh.gov</u>>; Willeke, Charles <<u>Charles.Willeke@dot.nh.gov</u>>;

Subject: RE: Question on Modification to Complete SRTS project

Hi Bob,

For TE we have allowed modifications based on the original intent of the project and what the modifications will do to either change or retain the intent.

I would suggest that she have a conference call with the Department to go over what the proposed change would be. Can you find out what the original project was so we can understand the original intent.

I think it is DOT's call not FHWA.

Tom

From: Hudson, Robert <<u>Robert.Hudson@dot.nh.gov</u>>

Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 10:52 AM

To: Willeke, Charles <<u>Charles.Willeke@dot.nh.gov</u>>; Jameson, Tom <<u>Tom.Jameson@dot.nh.gov</u>>

Subject: FW: Question on Modification to Complete SRTS project

Hi CR/Tom

Don't know which SRTS project that Juliet is referring to. City wants to make modifications to substantially change what was built but John told them that they would need to pay back funds if they did this.

She is asking for where there is federal guidance for this. Do you know the answer?

Thanks Bob

From: Juliet T.H. Walker < <u>jthwalker@cityofportsmouth.com</u>

Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 9:55 AM

To: Hudson, Robert <<u>Robert.Hudson@dot.nh.gov</u>>

Subject: Question on Modification to Complete SRTS project

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Hello Bob,

I have been asked by our City Council to confirm whether modifications to substantially change the design of a project that was completed with Federal Safe Routes to School funds and accepted by a prior Council would require that the City forfeit (ie return) those previously awarded Federal funds. This is a question I have previously answered for them in the affirmative after discussing with John Corrigan, but they are asking for confirmation again. Can you answer this for me and/or direct me to someone else either at FHWA or NHDOT that can confirm this for me or perhaps direct me to any federal guidance on this question?

Thanks,

Juliet T. H. Walker, AICP

Planning Director Planning Department City Hall 1 Junkins Ave Portsmouth, NH 03801 (603) 610-7296 <u>www.cityofportsmouth.com/planportsmouth</u> Twitter: @PlanPortsmouth

Facebook: @plan.portsmouth Office Hours: M 8-6, T-Th 8-4:30, F 8-1

# Juliet T.H. Walker

| From:        | Hudson, Robert <robert.hudson@dot.nh.gov></robert.hudson@dot.nh.gov> |
|--------------|--|
| Sent:        | Monday, June 8, 2020 5:00 PM   |
| То:          | Juliet T.H. Walker   |
| Cc:          | Willeke, Charles; Watson, Bill                                       |
| Subject:     | RE: Portsmouth #2857 SRTS project - request for modifications        |
| Attachments: | 66-18 Plans with Const Revisions.pdf                                 |

#### Hi Juliet

Today we discussed your request from City Council to substantially change the design of the Portsmouth #28757 SRTS project that was completed in 2018. We understand that the request is move the parking lane against the curb and the bike lane next to the travel lane. In reviewing the attached plans that you provided, it appears that this would affect sheets 27 to 30. We understand that the reason for the change is based on input City Council has received from constituents related to inconvenience, confusion, and perceptions about safety for motor vehicle travelers.

We do not recommend that the City make this change. We are concerned from a safety standpoint. We had another municipality that constructed a design similar to the design you are proposing. There was a fatality when a car door was opened in front of a bicycle traveling in the bike lane.

I hope this answers your question. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need any additional information on this matter

Thanks Bob

From: Juliet T.H. Walker
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 9:55 AM
To: Hudson, Robert
Subject: Question on Modification to Complete SRTS project

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Thanks,

Juliet T. H. Walker, AICP Planning Director Planning Department City Hall 1 Junkins Ave Portsmouth, NH 03801 (603) 610-7296 www.cityofportsmouth.com/planportsmouth Twitter: @PlanPortsmouth Facebook: @plan.portsmouth Office Hours: M 8-6, T-Th 8-4:30, F 8-1