

**PORTSMOUTH
TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
8:00 AM – Thursday, July 19, 2001
City Hall - Council Chambers**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Alex Hanson, called the meeting to order at approximately 8:00 a.m.

II: ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

City Councilor Alex Hanson, Chairman
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Dept.
John Burke, Public Works Dept.
Timothy Brownell, Police Dept.
Fire Chief Rick Plummer, Fire Dept.

Ralph DiBernardo, Member
Ronald Cypher, Member
Herb Bunnell, Member

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

IT WAS VOTED on a Motion by Chief Plummer to accept the minutes of the Traffic & Safety Committee (TSC) meeting of June 21, 2001. Seconded by Ron Cypher. Motion passed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

- (A) City Hall Rear Parking Area – Parking Lot Improvements** – On-site report by John Burke. The City's plan to better organize the parking lot, including striping, paving, lighting and landscape improvements was reviewed. The plan reorients the entrance of the lot since cars entering the lot can no longer exit onto Mt. Vernon Street. The plan results in a gain of approximately 20 parking spaces. At the Technical Advisory Committee meeting, residents expressed three primary concerns: (1) that traffic volumes on Mt Vernon Street would increase; (2) that pedestrian access for residents through the lot to Junkins Avenue and downtown should be maintained; and (3) that site distance to the driveway at Junkins Avenue is limited.

With respect to traffic volumes, John stated that Mt. Vernon St. will see a reduction in traffic of approximately 40 vehicles a day once the lot is made a one way (cars cannot exit onto Mt. Vernon St.). This estimate is based on traffic counts collected by the Department over a one week period. Even with the additional parking spaces, traffic volumes are not anticipated to increase on Mt. Vernon Street because 1) most of the vehicles are already using unstriped parking areas and 2) the additional

trips created by the parking should not surpass those trips reduced by one-waying the parking lot.

With regard to site distance, the on-site committee did feel that site distance is a problem at the driveway exit from the lot going to Junkins Avenue. However, the feeling was that pedestrians should not use this narrow drive where emergency response vehicles exit the lot, but use instead an existing pedestrian path next to City Hall. The Committee believed however, that the pedestrian path should be improved by potentially installing lighting, steps and rail.

MOTION made by Ralph DiBernardo to approve the plan as presented with the stipulation that the existing pedestrian walkway be improved for access, lighting and signing, and have first priority as a future City project. Seconded by John Burke. Motion passed.

Steve Parkinson suggested a sign for people coming up from Blossom Street directing them to the improved pedestrian path. Chairman Alex Hanson complimented Steve Parkinson on the new sidewalk installed between City Hall and Junkins Ave.

- (B) **Lafayette Road/Patriots Park Intersection – Proposed Signal/Signs** – John Burke stated that the resident request regarding signal installation would be referred to NHDOT, who has Route 1 authorization for signals. John discussed the parking problem on U.S. Route 1 in front of Dunkin Donuts with the NHDOT District 6 Engineer who requested that the City Manager send a letter to the State requesting that they post “no parking” signs in the area of concern.

MOTION made by John Burke to request that the City Manager forward a letter to the State requesting a NO PARKING zone be posted 100 feet north and south of the Dunkin Donuts entrance on U.S. Route 1. Seconded by Ralph DiBernardo. Motion passed.

V. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

- (A) **Pedestrian Centerline Crossing Signs** – There are currently two signs at Borthwick Avenue/Liberty Mutual, two on Middle Street @ the convenience store and @ the Lafayette School playground, and one on Woodbury Avenue. 10 new signs have been ordered. The outstanding requests for new locations include one for lower State Street, one for the crosswalk in front of the Immaculate Conception Church on Summer Street and two at the intersection of Miller/Lincoln Avenues.

VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- (A) Mt. Vernon Street Traffic/Safety Concerns - Police Chief Brad Russ informed the Committee that he had a very positive meeting with the residents of Mt. Vernon Street in response to last month's Traffic & Safety Committee meeting. They discussed the concerns of the residents and the Police Department with respect to sharing use on Mt. Vernon Street. He stated that they came to a mutual understanding concerning the Mt. Vernon Street issue as well as the rear parking area. He informed the residents that he pledged to support an effort to explore the option of having two-way traffic along the northerly side of the building so that the exit onto Junkins Avenue could also be looked at as an entrance. He realizes there are a lot of factors to consider in such a project.

Chairman Alex Hanson spoke to Mt. Vernon Street resident Jack McEnany who was present and stated that the City Attorney was drawing up an Ordinance for the 10 mph speed limit sign. He added that the Traffic & Safety Committee also recommended the City parking lot be made one-way – except in cases of emergency - and that the existing walkway between the front and back of City Hall be improved. He also noted the replacement of the “Slow Children Playing” signs on Mt. Vernon Street.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: _____