

**PORTSMOUTH
TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
8:00 a.m. – Thursday, December 14, 2006
City Hall - Council Chambers**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Ken Smith, Chair called the meeting to order at approximately 8:00a.m.

II. ROLL CALL: Members Present:

Councilor Ken Smith, Chairman	Ted Gray, Member
Steve Parkinson, P.E. Public Works Director	Jonathan Bailey, Member
Police Capt. Bill Irving	John Connors, Member
Fire Chief Chris LeClaire	Eric Spear, Member
Deborah Finnigan, P.E., Traffic Engineer	

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

IT WAS VOTED on a Motion made by Ted Gray to accept the minutes of the November 9th and November 21st meetings. Seconded by John Connors. Motion passed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

- (A) **Sheafe Street** – Request for One-Way (memo dated 10/31/06 attached) Debbie Finnigan reported receiving a report from the Parking Manager that he received from the Parking Enforcement personnel that they felt Sheafe St. was too narrow for two-way traffic and parking on one side. Debbie Finnigan reported she had several telephone calls concerning this location and was not aware of the history. Ted Gray stated this had been reviewed a few years ago. The neighborhood had decided it was fine the way it was then. The cars parked on Sheafe St. are residents' vehicles. It is a one lane two-way street and has worked well forever and feels it will work well for many years ahead and feels very strongly to leave it as is.

The Chair asked if the Police Department was aware of any problems there.

Capt. Irving stated it is a small narrow tight street, it is difficult getting up and down, back and forth, it is navigable, difficult with the snow, but it has worked.

Mark Brody, 121 State Street, the rear of the building is on Sheafe St. Feels that Sheafe St. does not get much respect. Is annoyed with the recommendation from the Traffic Dept. amounted to one paragraph without any substantiation regarding safety issue, discussion with the neighbors or any other concerns that you would think occupy the valuable time of this committee and the residents of this neighborhood. There are many small narrow streets and some impassable by two vehicles, Ceres St. is one of them. In his view, being a narrow street does not qualify for making the street one-way. Sheafe St. presents a number of difficult challengers, particularly in the summertime when the bridge is up. He has taken the time to speak with the neighbors and go door to door, an exercise perhaps someone in the Traffic Dept or Safety Committee might do in order to get feedback. There is also a wide section in the middle, probably 2/3 could be described as an open area where some of the buildings have parking, and on most occasions, very similar to other streets in Portsmouth, Sheafe St. is very passable.

Mr. Brody presented a petition to the Chair. There are some very serious safety concerns in the neighborhood that hopefully in the future be considered. Includes a number of establishments having youthful individuals that vandalize the neighborhood they break windows. Sheafe St. is fine, given a little respect, it is not any alley, it is a street with a neighborhood that wants to work with the downtown, work with downtown officials to ensure that it can continue to prosper and contribute in a way every other street does.

The Chair asked Mr. Brody to have the other issues of concern addressed to him in order to have each issue looked into.

George Dodge 175 State Street, stated that traffic backs up on Chapel St. when the Bridge goes up. Mr. Dodge stated to leave the street as it is, in the time he has been there, has never heard of any personal injuries caused by collisions on the street.

Feels pedestrians are very safe. If it is made one way visualizes traffic moving faster perhaps making it more dangerous.

The President of the Sheafe House Condo Association stated it is not a heavily traveled road. Just this morning a truck working on a telephone pole was blocking the road, had it been one way going out or coming, you would not have been able to do so.

Valerie Sobel of 49 Sheafe Street agrees with everything that had been said this morning. Having it one-way would cause a tremendous gridlock on the street. There are a lot of pedestrians who walk there. Concerned with not being able to get out in case of an emergency, getting to work on time if having to wait because of the bridge or restricted roadway situation. There has never really been an issue. Strongly recommend it stays the same. There are some safety issues.

The Chair recommended Ms. Sobel send a letter to him.

Betty Wood, 129 State St. stated when the issue was looked at a few years ago there was an issue of a parking space that did block the street and the City turned it into a no parking space and hopes the decision is to leave it as it is.

Erica Dodge, 175 State Street added that when the parking space was given up and the "No Parking" sign installed they really gave up two spaces in order to keep the street two-way. Referred to the dumpsters encroaching on that and might be something that can be looked in

Steve Parkinson will check on the dumpsters.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to leave Sheafe Street the way it is. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (B) **Richard Ave./Parrott Ave., Richard Ave./Middle St.** – Intersection Improvements (Study attached) - Debbie Finnigan stated this originally came out through the traffic Study of the new Library and the suggestion for Richard, Middle and Austin was to make it more of a 90o intersection with Middle St. However, there is a historic fence and wall on the left side coming up Richards Ave. toward Middle and vehicles would be hard pressed to make that right turn

from Middle and also concerned that a car could actually make that between the two new curb lines. On the right hand side you could put a bump out, however, it would be a small one due to vehicle turning requirements. At Rogers/Parrott suggested putting some channelization at the intersection of Rogers/Parrott Ave. and suggested to continue watching to see if we actually need it as it is an intersection that does not get a lot of traffic. At Richard/Parrott Ave. suggested putting up two more stop signs and this is another location Debbie Finnigan would like continued to be reviewed after the library is open to see if it is or is not warranted.

MOTION made by Ted Gray to leave the situation the way it is with the possible addition of a small bump out at the intersection of Middle and Richards if appropriate. Seconded by Eric Spear. Motion passed.

Fire Chief LeClaire would like to refer the bump out to the Public Works Director. When coming towards town on Middle and take that right the further you put outgoing traffic with the bump out, even a slight one, would be a problem, a bump out but not a big one.

Steve Parkinson agreed with Chief LeClaire and with Debbie Finnigan will take a look at it.

- (C) **Woodbury Ave./Durgin Lane** – Christmas Tree Shop (Plans attached) – Debbie Finnigan referred to the letter dated December 13th asking this to be tabled until January 11th meeting. Debbie Finnigan is waiting for a traffic count from them, reason for the delay.

MOTION made by Jonathan Bailey to table until January 11th. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (D) **Osprey Landing** – No Parking Signage – Debbie Finnigan referred to the on-site and the map stating that the concern is having no parking on Sanderling Way to Osprey Drive as it is very difficult to cross the street and sight distance issues. Feels it is not unreasonable to have “No Parking Here to Corner” on both sides of Osprey Drive from the intersection of Commerce Drive up to Sanderling Way.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to install appropriate signage the required distance back from all corners on Osprey from Portsmouth Blvd. as well as the corners of Sanderling Way and Osprey. Seconded by John Connors. Motion passed.

- (E) **Maplewood Ave./Rte.1 Bypass off-ramp** – Request for Signage – Debbie Finnigan stated the request was for a hidden driveway sign and does not know how much it will actually help as the issue is people coming out of the street on the other side of the house around the corner. The second concern was people running the stop sign and did not observe that at the on-site. Debbie Finnigan feels a hidden driveway sign won't help that issue, what would help is making less of a radius, but would present an issue of vehicles trying to make that corner. The Chair referred to the on-site and going to look into seeing if that car was parked on City property or not.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to table until next meeting to give him a chance to look to check the ownership of the property. Seconded by Fire Chief LeClaire. Motion passed.

- (F) **Peeverly Hill Road/Rte.1** – Signage – (letter dated November 5, 2006 attached) – **MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson to refer to the State of New Hampshire DOT as the intersection is controlled by DOT. Seconded by Chief LeClaire. Motion passed.

- (G) **Tucker’s Cove Gosport/Ordiorne Pt. Roads** - Request for Stop Signs at Three-Way Intersection (letter dated 11/6/06 attached) – Jonathan Bailey referred to the on-site and the single stop sign coming into a straight road. The signal stop sign makes the most sense for the intersection there is not much travel on the road and there was a chorus of no’s.

MOTION made by Jonathan Bailey to place on file and have periodic patrols now and doing follow-up in the spring and place a stealth stat there in the spring. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.

Matt Taylor, 205 Ordiorne Point Road stated it is a dangerous intersection with the amount of traffic from Foye’s corner. His Concern is that there are children in the neighborhood and is a bus stop area. Feels the area of traffic coming from Rte.1A and Sagamore Ave. up towards the neighborhood should be controlled by a stop sign.

Debbie Finnigan felt the one stop sign is appropriate for the location. At the on-site there were not many cars, only one. Suggested if speed is an issue in the spring do a stealth stat, check the speed and see what the traffic volume is on the roadway and feels right now stop signs are not warranted.

Steve Parkinson stated typically with a situation like this, you have equal volumes of traffic on the three ways. We have to meet certain warrants to put up a stop sign.

Capt. Irving stated the stealth stat can be placed there in the spring and once the summer season begins, send police there for directive controls and identify other issues.

Steve Parkinson asked the Police could do directive patrols there.

Capt. Irving understood it was not such a problem now, more the summer season, but certainly would patrol the area now.

Mr. Taylor stated the periodic patrols would be wonderful

Capt. Irving stated they can do it now and in the spring will look at it again.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

- (A) **Pleasant/Court Streets.** – Report Back Police Department – Capt. Irving reported they looked at accident data back 5 years finding a total of 23 accidents occurring at the location of Court and Pleasant Streets. One a three car accident and one a pedestrian. No indication of Personal Injury or Property Damage. **MOTION** made by Ted Gray to place on file. Seconded by Fire Chief LeClaire. Motion passed.

- (B) **Market St. Kearsarge Way Intersection** – Report Back Department of Public Works – Debbie Finnigan reported the replacement of all LED’s, the red, yellow and green for the intersection. One signal head replacement coming inbound with 12” lenses. New LED’s are a lot brighter. If this does not help, we will relook at this.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to accept the report. Seconded by Chief LeClaire. Motion passed.

- (C) **Aldrich Road** – Traffic/Speed Issues – Report back Department of Public Works Debbie Finnigan looked at the sign, there is one “20 MPH” sign attached with a “Slow Children” sign that is faded. Suggested placing the “20 MPH” sign higher and put one in the other direction, there currently is not one going towards Middle. Suggested looking at changing the intersection of Middle and Aldrich to make it a little narrower either by a median island or bump outs.

Steve Parkinson stated this may hit the CIP or in conjunction with another project they are working on sidewalks up through Middle Street, not sure about making it to this location or not but is part of the plans to come up with appropriate design.

MOTION made by Fire Chief LeClaire to accept the report. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (D) **Tanner at Hill Streets** – No Parking - Report back Department of Public Works Steve Parkinson stated the request was to install “No Parking Here to Corner” signs on Tanner from Hill St. end and feels this would be appropriate. Recommended putting appropriate “No Parking Here to Corner” sign on Tanner St. at Hill.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to place appropriate ‘No Parking Here to Corner’ sign on Tanner Street at Hill. Seconded by Fire Chief LeClaire. Motion passed.

Steve Parkinson pointed out in the No Parking City Ordinance the former streets in Wentworth Acres, Seacrest Village or Mariner’s Village were all no parking on both sides of the street. Osprey formerly Profile was no parking on both sides of street from end to the other. Osprey Drive is not in the Ordinance. The old names are still in the No Parking Ordinance.

West Road – Stop Sign - Fire Chief LeClaire reported the two unnecessary Stop Signs on West Road are still there and would like them removed.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS:

- (A) **Lafayette Road** – Joe’s New York Pizza - Chief LeClaire referred to the intersection of Lafayette Road at Joe’s New York Pizza when people leaving Joe’s New York Pizza heading South on Rte.1 going across the intersection to Suzanne Dr.

Debbie Finnigan stated it is worth looking at and having some recommendations from the Traffic & Safety for her to write to the State.

- (B) The Chair introduced John Howe who filed an application to become a member of the Committee. He has moved back to Portsmouth having done work in the Maryland area similar to this. With City Council approval, Mr. Howe will be a member of the Committee after the first of the year.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: Adjourned at approx. 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Elaine E. Boucas, Secretary