

**PORTSMOUTH  
TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING  
8:00 a.m. – Thursday, September 11, 2008  
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers**

DRAFT

**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Councilor Ken Smith, Chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 8:10 a.m.

**II. ROLL CALL: Members Present:**

Councilor Ken Smith, Chairman	Ted Gray, Member
Steve Parkinson, P.E. Public Works Director	John Connors, Member
Deputy Police Chief Len DiSesa	John Howe, Member
Asst. Fire Chief Achilles	Brendan Cooney, Member
Debbie Finnigan, Traffic Engineer	Jonathan Bailey, Member

Absent: Christina Westfall

**III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:**

**IT WAS VOTED** on a Motion made by Steve Parkinson to accept the minutes of the August 14, 2008 meeting. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

**(A) Sagamore Ave. near Jones Ave.** – Sight Distance (letter dated July 3, 2008 attached) – Steve Parkinson referred to the on-site, regarding a resident complaint because of vegetation and living on a curve where Little Harbor Rd goes into Sagamore on the northern side of the street, requested an advanced sign be installed stating there is a blind drive ahead between Jones Ave. and Little Harbor. In addition requested a mirror installed on the other side of the street to see if anything was coming when pulling out of their driveway. Debbie Finnigan stated it is not currently in the MUTCD and placed a request to FHWA and has not heard back as yet. Steve Parkinson referred to the mirror stating the City does not allow this in its right-of-way.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson to defer installation of the sign for a report back from Public Works and deny the request for mirror in the City right-of-way. Suggested the Legal Department contact the adjacent property owner to trim their trees and bushes to allow better sight distance. Seconded by Jonathan Bailey. Motion passed.

**(B) Mechanic St./Point of Graves Cemetery** – Request to reinstate “No Parking” and Request to reinstate Stop Sign on State at Marcy Streets (e-mail dated 9/1/08 attached) – Asst Fire Chief Achilles referred to the on-site and identified there are no parking signs as you make the corner and would be appropriate. Regarding Marcy St. observing traffic there is no additional signage required.

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to refer the “No Parking” signs to Public Works to install down as far as the driveway at the end of the stonewall

and place on file the request for a "Stop Sign" at Marcy St. and refer to the Legal Dept. for appropriate drafting of the Ordinance change and petition the City Council for approval. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.

**Proposed Ordinance Change to create No Parking Zone.**

**(C) Marcy St./New Castle Ave. - Safety Concerns (e-mails and newspaper article attached)**

A. Steve Parkinson stated that Michael Megliola was present who was involved in the bicycle/vehicle accident and requested to address the Committee. Mr. Megliola explained the accident. The gentleman that hit him stated that the sun was in his eyes and he did not see Mr. Megliola. Mr. Megliola went to the intersection of the accident and feels strongly that the sight line is broken by the black fence along the seawall. A pickup truck is able to see over the fence, but a car cannot see over the fence.

Deputy Chief DiSesa reported that the contributing factor was direct sunlight into the driver's edge as he headed down Marcy St. into Fernald Court which was sighted by the officer. In checking the intersection the following day at the same time, there was the same issue and in driving the sequence to check the fence slats, that are slanted, you can see through the fence as you drive that curve and if going the speed limit of 25 MPH, your reaction time is plenty of time if you see a car or bicyclists to actually stop or give them the right of way. In questioning the driver also stated that he was blinded by the sun and was shocked when you appeared in front of him as it seemed you came out of nowhere. The feeling of the accident investigator that had the sun not been in his eyes, he would have seen you. The only accident in three years at that intersection was yours. In 1998 there was a fatal accident at that intersection and as a result, there were traffic calming measures taken the Public Works Dept. Deputy Chief DiSesa does not feel it is a sight line issue that caused the accident, it is not a very high fence and their opinion is that it was the distraction of the driver due to the sunlight that caused your accident. We monitor that street and will continue to do so, do traffic enforcement and the speeds have dropped immensely. Speed was not an issue.

Steve Parkinson stated that the Deputy Chief is correct that the intersection was different and subsequent to that there were improvements made. Mr. Parkinson stated he does not see what Mr. Megliola saw from the drawings as far as sight distances. Our engineers looked at this, the State of NH DOT and the Federal Highway Administration looked at and approved this project. Mr. Parkinson stated there is well over 200 ft. sight distance from a car to a point on this curve before the fence would even come into play, that's more than sufficient on a 25 MPH road for sight distance and believes the issue that happened when you got hit was due to the sunlight in the driver's eyes, the only way it could have happened, the fence is far enough out of the line of sight, there is sufficient sight distance well over 200 ft. from a point South of Ball St. to intersection of New Castle Ave.

Mr. Megliola will take pictures.

The chair suggested someone do a study, take photographs and give a report back.

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to refer to the Traffic Engineer for a study and a report back to the Committee. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

John Howe suggested that the Traffic Engineering and Mr. Meglioli meet there together.

The Chair suggested that the Traffic Engineer also work with the Police Department.

Jonathan Bailey suggested that members of the Committee also at about the same time of the accident go to the scene of the accident so that when we come back to review this we have more data.

Rose Sully spoke to the accident stating that whether it be the sun or the fence slats, something needs to be done.

B. Debbie Finnigan referred to a request for a “Stop Sign” coming from Marcy St. taking a right onto New Castle Ave., it is difficult get onto Fernald Court as traffic backs up on New Castle and requested the sign be installed coming down the hill at Fernald Court. Ms. Finnigan does not think this is an appropriate use for a stop sign.

Steve Parkinson stated that this has been addressed before after some of the work was done on the sidewalk project and we had placed it on file. Mr. Parkinson does not feel it is an appropriate use of a stop sign at this location. Fernald Court is not a heavily traveled way and recommended to accept the request and place on file.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson recommending accepting the request and place on file. Seconded by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles. Motion passed.

- (D) **Ceres Street** – Request for Loading Zone (sketch attached) – John Connors referred to on-site and after walking the area the Committee decided the best area for the loading zone would be the left hand side as you go down the hill, the westerly side, the area north of the back door of the Dolphin Striker, there is an area of raised curbing felt it would make it the right distance. By moving it over to that side of the street would allow for a better flow of traffic going down the hill onto Ceres St. Have the loading zone marked and designated traffic enforcement can enforce it and rectify the problem.

**MOTION** made by John Connors to place the loading zone on the left hand side going down the hill, the westerly side, north of the back door of the Dolphin Striker, keeping it a 24 hour loading zone and send to the Parking Committee for approval as well as an additional no parking on right side and paint “no parking” on the ground. Seconded by Jonathan Bailey. Motion passed.

**Proposed Ordinance Change to Create Loading Zone.**

Debbie Finnigan recommended adding to the Motion to put up an additional “No Parking” sign on the right hand side coming down the hill and paint “No Parking” on the pavement next to the curb where the flower bed is.

Agreeable to John Connors and the second and Ordinance change to create loading zone.

- (E) **Ocean Road at Mariette Drive** – Request for sign (map attached) – Debbie Finnigan referred to a resident requesting an intersection sign ahead with Mariette Dr. on it coming from Greenland Rte.33 towards Rte.1. Request would be to send to the State.

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to refer to DOT for appropriate signage. Seconded by Steve Parkinson. Motion passed.  
The Chair asked for a 15 minute recess for the 9/11 ceremony.

### III. OLD BUSINESS:

- (A) **Rte.1 - Southgate Plaza** – Report back (letter dated August 28, 2008 attached) – Debbie Finnigan referred to the letter sent to the state concerning the light at Rte.1 and South Gate Plaza, the State checked the signal and determined there is a loop there, however it was not properly marked, so while he was out here he spray painted a stop bar and stop line so people would get into the appropriate lane and if we do not get any further complaints, we'll ask the State to permanently mark that.

**MOTION** made by Ted Gray to accept the report. Seconded by Jonathan Bailey. Motion passed.

- (B) **Islington Street - Ampet Gas Station** – Parking on sidewalk – Deputy Police Chief DiSesa stated as they are a very competitive gas station, cars queue up on that side of the street and block the entrance point to 909 Islington St. causing a tie up. Ampet also parks a vehicle on the sidewalk which complicates things. Deputy Chief DiSesa spoke to the owner at the site walk asking him to remove the vehicle and to keep that area clear. Suggested striping painted to delineate it as a sidewalk area, figure another way to queue the vehicles. We will be monitoring that to make sure cars are not blocking the driveway and not parking on the sidewalk.

**MOTION** made by Deputy Police Chief DiSesa to continue monitoring this making sure cars are not blocking the driveway and not parking on the sidewalk. Seconded by John Howe. Motion passed.

- (C) **Lafayette Road** – Joe's New York Pizza (sketches attached) – Debbie Finnigan prepared sketches to help delineate the problem at Joe's Pizza showing the following options: Option 1 to leave it alone, Option 2 is to extend the island on Suzanne Drive to Rte. 1 and add some curbing and complete the island in front of Joe's Pizza and add striping. Option 3 is similar to the previous except to extend out the island further toward the neighborhood, have a break in the middle so people can come straight across from Joe's Pizza and not have to make a u-turn around the back. Option 4 is similar just changing in and out onto Rte.1 occurs and the last option is closing in the parking lot. For the record they are not engineered, they are sketches. Possibly needs to be a CIP project.

**MOTION** made by Ted Gray recommending Option D because of the ability to egress and exit on both ends, also eliminates traffic going across and turning right.

Steve Parkinson suggested the simplest is the easiest that would be option B which tightens up the entryway to Maple Haven and gives them the opportunity to make a U-turn at the end of the island if they chose to do so.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson recommending Option B. Seconded by Jonathan Bailey. Motion passed.

- (D) **New Franklin School** – Request to hold off for 90 days after completion of Project for Traffic Flow (May 8, 2008 minutes attached) – Debbie Finnigan referred to the proposed change of the pattern at New Franklin School and after discussion with the Superintendent and Principal and having discussion with some of the parents, it was requested to hold off doing any changes until the Woodbury Ave. project has been completed, and if after watching for 90 days there still are issues and concerns we will revisit the plan.

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to hold off doing any changes until the Woodbury Ave. project has been completed and if after watching for 90 days there are still issues and concerns we will revisit the plan. Seconded by John Howe. Motion passed.

- (D) **Brackett Road/Brackett Lane** – Safety Concern – (Letter to new Homeowner and Aerial attached) Debbie Finnigan referred to her letter to the new owners with whom she met with and their concern was how much of the driveway was being taken and all the proposed items on this plan are on City right-of-way. Ms. Finnigan stated the stop bar and painted stop would be sufficient and if people would be more comfortable with an island with stop sign and stop bar which are the two options she would propose. There are also drainage catch basins there that we need to be concerned with.

**MOTION** made by Jonathan Bailey to paint and monitor. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

#### IV. OTHER BUSINESS:

##### **Referrals from City Boards and Commissions**

- (A) **Brewyard Terraces – 125 Brewery Lane** – Request for additional Extension of Approval TAC Referral (Site Plan attached) – John Chagnin, Ambit Engineering presented the project which has been before this committee in the past in November 2005 and TAC requested it be looked at one more time with recommendations. The Planning Board made a stipulation regarding the intersection of Brewery Lane and 500 ft site, 3-way stop. TAC felt a 4-way stop would be better and would require the consent of the Plaza 800 property owner. Mr. Chagnin referred to site plans with changes as plans of Brewery Lane parking spaces. The plans have been approved with stipulation of two options. (1) Creating two parallel parking spaces which is similar to parallel spaces on the approved plan, which interferes with the flow of the sidewalk or Option 2 would

be more appropriate sidewalk continues straight, better for pedestrians. There have been no reported accidents there, not a high traffic street.

Debbie Finnigan asked what the length and width of the parallel spaces?

John Chagnin responded 10 x 20.

Steve Parkinson stated this is a project that came before numerous City Boards over the last 3-5 years.

**MOTION** made by Steve Parkinson to approve as submitted with one clarification presented to the Planning Board, to include the Option showing the parallel spaces, the old sewer shop Building B. Seconded by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles. Motion passed.

Debbie Finnigan referred to one of the requests from TAC, whether or not we place a “stop” sign at the intersection and leaves this to the Committee.

Steve Parkinson stated, if at all possible, have the applicant approach Plaza 800 to have one installed there, but would not make it a condition there had to be one there. There has not been an issue there with traffic accidents and request they approach the owner about putting one there, but would not make the approval contingent upon them having one there.

- (B) **St. Patrick’s School - Request for Crosswalk at Intersection of Winter and State Streets and Marcy at South Streets - (City Manager Referral)** (e-mail dated August 25, 2008 attached) – Asst. Fire Chief Achilles referred to the on-site and although crosswalks are beneficial based on the amount of foot traffic there, the current sidewalk on Winter St. would not support a classroom of students coming across and would not recommend putting a crosswalk in middle of the street and recommend to place this on file.

**MOTION** made by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles to place on file. Seconded by Jonathan Bailey. Motion passed.

- (C) **Crosswalk at Marcy at South Sts.** – Steve Parkinson referred to the on-site and it was the consensus of the Committee that it wasn’t necessary to have it there and it will not be repainted.

**MOTION** made by Jonathan Bailey not to repaint it, and if it has not faded by the spring then the markings can be removed manually. Seconded by Asst. Fire Chief Achilles. Motion passed.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Respectfully submitted,  
Elaine E. Boucas, Recording Secretary