

**PORTSMOUTH
TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
8:00 a.m. – Thursday, August 12, 2010
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Councilor Ken Smith, Chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 8:15 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL: Members Present:

Councilor Ken Smith, Chairman
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director
Deputy Police Chief Steve DuBois
Fire Chief Chris LeClaire

Ted Gray, Member
Ron Cypher, Member
Harold Whitehouse, Member
Kent Kirkpatrick, Member

Absent: John Connors and Christina Westfall

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

IT WAS VOTED on a Motion made by Ted Gray to accept the minutes of the June 10, 2010 meeting. Seconded by Ron Cypher. Motion passed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

(A) Kearsarge and Raleigh Way Intersection – Safety Concerns - Request for Signage (Letter dated July 29, 2010 attached) – Steve Parkinson referred to the on-site and recommended the Committee refer this to Public Works Department to review all the stop signs and signage locations in the entire Atlantic Heights neighborhood and make sure they are all in conformance with the National standards of posting heights and locations. Tree trimming as well.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to refer to Public Works Department to review all stop signs and signage locations at the various intersections in the entire Atlantic Heights neighborhood and make sure they are all in conformance with the National standards of posting heights and locations. Tree trimming as well. Seconded by Harold Whitehouse. Motion passed.

(B) Borthwick Avenue – Liberty Mutual – Safety Concerns (letter dated June 17, 2010 attached) - Steve Parkinson referred to discussion at the on-site that there continues to be an issue of close calls with pedestrians and motor vehicles. Public Works is proposing to work with Liberty Mutual on the potential installation of median islands in the locations of their crosswalks and the entrance to their facility. This traffic calming will make motorists more aware there are pedestrian crossing in this location. The difficulty with this road is that it is heavily traveled, it is wide and very straight. Recommend referring this to Public Works to work with Liberty Mutual on installation of traffic calming in this area.

MOTION made by Ted Gray to refer to Public Works to work with Liberty Mutual on installation of traffic calming in this area. Seconded by Ron Cypher. Motion passed.

- (C) **Penhallow/Ceres Streets** – Request for Crosswalk (map attached) – Harold Whitehouse referred to on-site.

MOTION made by Harold Whitehouse to install a crosswalk from the Federal Building parking lot on Penhallow St. to the corner of Ceres St. and Bow St. by the Dolphin Striker and continue crosswalk from corner of Ceres St. to the corner of Izzy’s Ice Cream.

Steve Parkinson referred to the on-site where it was decided to go from the Penhallow side over to Izzy’s corner.

Amended Motion – To install a crosswalk from the Federal Building parking lot on Penhallow to the corner of Ceres St. and Bow St. by Izzy’s and from Izzy’s corner to the Dolphin Striker. Seconded by Kent Kirkpatrick. Motion passed.

- (D) **Jones Ave.** – Request for “Blind Driveway” sign – Ron Cypher referred to on-site stating that the driveway is approximately 50 ft from the corner of Sagamore, there is no room for the sign and “Blind Driveway” signs are frowned upon Recommend giving this to Public Works for corner construction of the roadway narrowing it down to lower speed turning onto Jones Ave.

MOTION made by Ron Cypher to refer to Public Works for a report back. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

- (E) **Coakley Rd., Cottage Street and Rte 1 By-Pass – Review need for Pedestrian Crosswalk and Signal across Rt.1 By-Pass at Intersection** (Memo dated 8/4/10 attached) (Department of Public Works Referral) -

The Chair stated that both Items (E) and Other Business (A) take in both areas, but will vote separately for each item.

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

- (A) **Meadowbrook – Review of Internal Layout of Site Regarding the Connector Road between the Two Driveways** – (Layout Plan attached) (TAC Referral) – Malcolm McNeil representing the applicant explained they were here for two matters, 1. internal circulation and 2. whether there should be a crosswalk from Coakley Rd to Cottage St. This project has been before you previously. The Planning Board previously approved this plan resulting in a crosswalk. Three Restaurants, two retail stores and a motel were previously approved and as such this location served as a destination for potential pedestrian traffic. This new plan for this site is an automobile dealership which does not have the potential for pedestrian traffic. Traffic counts were done for this proposal and the vehicular traffic generated by the proposed use before you is 20%. The automobile dealership is a thoroughly permitted use, no waivers, no variances. The majority of this property, 28%,

is not being developed at all. The Coakley neighborhood is separated from this development by the Hodgson Brook area heavily buffered by vegetation growth. The dealership is in the center of the site, has been before TAC regarding landscaping and separation from the roadway. The portion of the site closest to the intersection is not being developed. This site went from the heavily used Meadowbrook Inn to a multi-use project that was approved to this which is a lower traffic generator and the lower use of the site. An easement along Coakley Rd has been retained so that in the event a future developer required the crosswalk, there would be a way of getting there. In terms of what may have driven a need for a crosswalk previously, does not exist here. There is no need for a crosswalk here nor is there a legal requirement for a crosswalk. We consented to a crosswalk previously because of the multi-faceted use being proposed, which is not the case here and we believe it is not justified nor is it reasonable for the City to impose upon this developer a requirement for a crosswalk.

Mr. Leedy reported a trip generation update at this site determined, based on the square footage and use of the proposed dealership, that the peak hour trips during the weekday evening would be 105 total trips, 40 entering and 65 exiting; Saturday midday was 115 with 65 entering and 55 exiting. The originally approved plan called for 320 trips weekday evenings, approx. 215 more and 515 on Saturday, 20-22% of the originally generated traffic. We corresponded with the City that we would do traffic improvements (the new entrance, moving away from the By-pass to allow for safe operation of signal at Coakley and By-pass as was called for in the original dialogue with DOT and the City. Shuttle service is provided to take their customers wherever they want to go and have food available on a daily basis for both employees and customers.

Mr. Leedy explained the changes being made via this plan. There is currently a right in right out access to the By-Pass and a full access driveway approximately 50 ft from signal stop bar on Coakley Rd. The developer is proposing a deceleration lane construction on Rt.1 By-pass to allow people to get out the thru lanes and access this right in right out which has much more generous geometry and can accommodate all forms of vehicles approximately at the same location as the existing right in right out access. The developer had many conversations with Conservation Commission and Planning Board re: allowing the removal of the existing driveway back from the intersection of Coakley Rd to provide queuing space at the signal. It was 50 ft and now is 250 ft. The internal circulation issue from TAC revolves around the proximity of the driveway and configuration of the new drive. There is concern of congestion in this area and people using this as a by-pass. All intersections are stop controlled. The developer feels the cut thru use would be so minimal that it would not be an issue when you can turn right 20 ft down the road.

The Chair referred to the plan seeing only one stop sign at Coakley Rd coming off the Rt.1 By-pass entering in from the deceleration lane there is no stop sign there, you come around in front, there's a stop sign if someone wants to come back out to the By-pass, but not one coming thru.

Mr. Leedy responded, that's correct.

For the record Harold Whitehouse referred to the future development lot on the corner. Is there at the present time an option for future development?

Mr. Leedy responded the reason this plan wasn't implemented was that the economy as it is, there were no tenants for these uses. There maybe a use sometime in the future when the developer will be coming back to the Planning Board and City as it will require an amended site plan.

There were six neighborhood speakers who had concerns and signed a Petition, which was presented to the Committee, requesting a pedestrian traffic light and crosswalk be placed at the intersection of Coakley Road/Cottage St. and the Rte.1 By-pass whether or not the Meadowbrook property is developed. Whether this property is developed or not they request that the exit from the property onto Coakley Road have a sign "Left Turn Only" in order to prevent vehicles being test driven on Coakley Rd. and that a "No Outlet sign be posted at the entrance to Coakley Road.

Harold Whitehouse asked if there was documented communication from the State in reference to this crosswalk? If there is, he would like to see it.

The Chair responded it would have been part of the file for the prior approval around the time frame of 2008.

Item B Internal Circulation - MOTION made by Steve Parkinson regarding the review of the internal layout of the site that approval be granted with the stipulation that there be no test driving through the neighborhood.

Deputy Police Chief DuBois stated that letters have been sent to the State and will refer to the State again outlining all of these issues the dead end and no outlet sign coming down as it is State property.

AMENDED MOTION to review the internal layout of the site, approval be granted with the stipulation that there be no test driving through the neighborhood. Letter again be sent to the State outlining all of these issues as this is State property. Motion passed.

Fire Chief LeClaire thanked Key Auto Group for building business in the City and providing jobs. Felt that Key Auto Group would be extremely interested in being a good neighbor.

The Key Auto Representative stated that the owner/President has approached the abutters and given them his cell phone no. If they are willing to sit down and discuss their concerns, he is interested in working with them in addressing those concerns.

MOTION made by Steve Parkinson that the developer work jointly with the City and State for the establishment of a crosswalk and sidewalk at the Coakley Rd intersection with Rt.1 By-Pass, recommendation to TAC. Both Motions seconded by Fire Chief Chris LeClaire. Motion passed.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

- (A) **Traffic Count – Woodbury Ave., Bartlett to Cottage Sts. - One-Way Street - Report Back** – Steve Parkinson reported that this has been given to the contracting consulting engineer who is in the process of gathering past traffic studies that have been done in this area, traffic counts and additional traffic counts are being done throughout the City. Anticipate a recommendation back by the next meeting.
- (B) **Pamela Drive – Stop Sign – Report Back** – The report back from the consultant was that this request meets sufficient warrants for stop signs at the location of Mariette Drive at Pamela Drive.
MOTION made by Steve Parkinson to recommend having Public Works install stop signs as recommended. Seconded by Ted Gray. Motion passed.

III. OTHER BUSINESS:

Referrals from City Boards and Commissions

- (A) **Sherburne Road – Opening of Back Gate (City Council Referral)** – The Chair referred to the bridge being worked on at Sherburne Rd has brought them down to one lane during construction. A petition was presented to the City by some of the neighbors.
Steve Parkinson reported they are about half done with approximate completion in late fall.
The City Council recommended that the gate be opened to allow traffic through during the construction period only. When construction is done, the gate be closed again.
Fire Chief LeClaire feels no one has the right to put up a gate and close off the neighborhood unless it is a privately owned, privately maintained street and believes it should come down and stay down. It originally was put up to keep Pease traffic out.
Steve Parkinson feels it should be kept closed as it will become a cut through. Sherburne Rd is a public way but the gate also protects the quality of life within the neighborhood.
MOTION made by Harold Whitehouse that the back gate be opened on a 90 day trial period to be reviewed at the end of the 90 days. Seconded by Kent Kirkpatrick. Motion failed. Fire Chief LeClaire, Harold Whitehouse and Kent Kirkpatrick voted in favor. Steve Parkinson, Ron Cypher, Deputy Police Chief DuBois, Ted Gray and Ken Smith voted opposed.
Recommendation to City Council, the gate will not be opened.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine E. Boucas, Recording Secretary