

**MINUTES**  
**TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING**

8:00 A.M. – Thursday, October 13, 2011  
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

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**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Ken Smith called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**II. ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:**

Councilor Ken Smith, Chair  
Steve Parkinson, Public Works Director  
Chris LeClaire, Fire Chief  
Ted Gray, Vice-Chair  
Ron Cypher, Member  
Harold Whitehouse, Member  
Jon Frederick, Parking & Transportation Director

**Members Absent:**

Stephen Dubois, Deputy Police Chief and Christina Westfall, Member

**III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:**

**Motion made by Ronald Cypher to accept the minutes of the September 8, 2011 meeting as presented. Seconded by Harold Whitehouse and voted.**

**IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Atlantic Heights Emergency Route –Presentation to the Committee**

A presentation regarding Atlantic Heights Area Neighborhood Emergency Ingress/Egress Route Analysis was given by Gregg Mikolaities, Vice President of Appledore Engineering with the assistance of Patrick Crimmins, Project Manager. Mr. Mikolaities reviewed the project description stating that Kearsarge Way currently serves as the sole access way to the Atlantic Heights neighborhood which was a concern addressed by the Atlantic Heights Area Neighborhood Association in a letter to the City in May of 2011. He continued that the project goal is to identify a new route of travel that can be utilized in the event of a disruption to Kearsarge Way and to identify up to three potential routes and rank them based on feasibility and cost effectiveness. Mr. Mikolaities reviewed the scope of work thus far which has included various meetings with city staff and the neighborhood as well as site walks of abutting properties and a review of existing conditions. He stated they are here to review the 8 alternatives they are presenting and will provide a final report of the “pros” and “cons” of three potential routes to the Traffic and Safety Committee on November 10, 2011. He stated the area is challenging because it is limited by water and Interstate 95. (See power point presentation handout for full details.) The criteria used to

assess each route included topography challenges, wetland impacts, private property easements, public easements (B&M/NHDOT), railroad crossing and new road construction.

Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of the 8 options.

Chairman Smith opened the meeting to the audience for comment:

Phil Cullen, 11 Porpoise Way, Chair of the Atlantic Heights Area Neighborhood Association, thanked everyone for addressing the issue stating that this area is becoming even more condensed with new developments. He stated as this goes forward we need to keep in mind the restrictions of the area as well as the fact that there are industrial businesses in the area that are of concern. He stated that the residents are also concerned with the short-term disruption that the construction is going to have and ultimately would like to see a permanent alternate egress and not just an emergency exit.

Del Morse, Atlantic Heights resident, stated she grew up in the neighborhood and has come back to live and has never felt so unsafe there. She stated she would like to see the trucks redirected from Kearsarge Way as that street was not built to hold that type of traffic. She concluded that this is a quality of life issue.

Chairman Smith stated that the consultants are looking for direction with 3 or 4 alternative to continue exploring.

Chief LeClaire clarified that the purpose of this is to address the need for an emergency access/egress and not looking towards a permanent egress.

Public Works Director Parkinson stated that is correct, but it could morph into something more permanent as it goes along.

Discussion ensued regarding the design challenges of each of the 8 alternatives.

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to request the consultant to spend additional time on Alternatives 2, 5, 6 and 8, seconded by Fire Chief LeClaire. MOTION PASSED.**

**B . Coakley Road/Cottage Street and Route 1 Bypass** – Resident request for a pedestrian light and crosswalk

Parking and Transportation Manager Frederick explained that this issue has been pending since 2007 when the City of Portsmouth requested a pedestrian signal and crosswalk be installed at this intersection. He addressed a letter from the NH Dept. of Transportation dated April 17, 2008 to the City of Portsmouth in response to this request which accepted the location with a variety of conditions to be met by the City.

Chairman Smith asked if there is any construction money from development in the area that could be contributed. Public Works Director Parkinson stated that there is \$10,000.

from the Meadowbrook site, but that isn't nearly enough. He suggested that this be requested to be added to the FY13 CIP.

Mr. Gray stated that this needs to be done as there is already a lot of traffic and there will be more once the Meadowbrook site is developed. He stated there has already been one near pedestrian accident and feels that it is the cost of putting in the crosswalk and signals versus the cost of a life. He concluded stating that this is a State road and feels they should be responsible for installing it.

Chairman Smith stated that the State requires the City add it to the CIP before they will take any further action. Public Works Director Parkinson stated that the State budget continues to be reduced so doesn't feel they will be contributing in the near future as they have not since 2007. He stated that the only way this will get done is if we do it. .

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to request this item, upon approval by the State Dept. of Transportation, be added to the FY13 CIP for consideration for funding, seconded by Mr. Gray.**

Fire Chief LeClaire asked about a plan for a pedestrian bridge as a part of the Meadowbrook development. Public Works Director Parkinson stated that it was part of the review process of the development to reserve the right of way for a pedestrian bridge if one was put in. Chief LeClaire stated that is a two-lane highway so this crosswalk needs to be robust. Public Works Director Parkinson stated there are other crosswalks along this corridor already.

Al Romano, 3 Coakley Road, stated that he feels the City should pay for the crosswalk and signalization so that it will get done. He stated that his wife was the one almost hit by a car and there are a lot of other people who cross there. He stated this is one of only 2 intersections along this corridor that doesn't have a crosswalk and feels that there are others that could be eliminated if necessary, but this one needs to be put in.

**MOTION PASSED.**

C. **Northwest Street** – Resident request for 15 mph speed limit

Public Works Director stated he spoke to the resident who requested this and explained that it is not in the ordinance at this time and if a sign were to be posted, it would be for the default speed of 35 mph.

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to recommend adding Northwest Street to the 15 mph schedule in the Chapter 7 ordinance, seconded by Mr. Cypher.**  
**MOTION PASSED.**

D. **233 Vaughan Street** – Council referral for addition of on-street parking

Parking and Transportation Manager Frederick explained that this is a result of the TAC recommendation to push out the sidewalk as a part of that project which would mean that

if parking were added to that side, it would have to be removed from the other side of the street.

**Fire Chief LeClaire moved to recommend keeping the current parking spaces and make Vaughan Street one-way from Maplewood to Green Street, with Green Street forward remaining two-way, seconded by Public Works Director Parkinson. MOTION PASSED.**

- E. **Sagamore Avenue and South Street** – Advanced left turn signal – Report back

Public Works Director Parkinson reported that the consultant is currently reviewing it and once he has the details regarding cost, etc. he will look to see if it can be done under the current budget or wait until the next fiscal year.

**Mr. Gray moved to table to next meeting pending consultant report back, seconded by Fire Chief LeClaire. Motion to TABLE passed.**

- F. **Jones Avenue and Sagamore Avenue** – Director of Public Works request to evaluate parking distances from corner

Mr. Cypher explained a site review was held and it is recommended that a no parking sign be placed 60' back from the intersection.

**Mr. Cypher moved to recommend placing a “No Parking” sign on the northerly side of Jones Avenue 60' back on the westerly side of Sagamore Avenue, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse. MOTION PASSED.**

- G. **School Zone Crosswalk Policy** – Public Works Director Parkinson request to consider

Public Works Director Parkinson explained that since they put in the new crosswalk at the Little Harbour School, there have been other requests for similar crosswalks. He stated that there isn't enough funding to install this type of crosswalk everywhere, so he is looking for a policy to limit them to school crossings and that will also differentiate these crosswalks from others in the City. He concluded stating that he is looking into some new products that will hold up to wear and tear better than regular paint so he would like to postpone this until he has this information.

**Fire Chief LeClaire moved to table until November pending further information regarding materials, costs, etc., seconded by Mr. Cypher. Motion to TABLE passed.**

- H. **86 Haven Road** – Citizen request for “No Parking” in vicinity of Brackett Road

Mr. Gray stated that this is a dead end area near the school and people park there during drop off/pick-up time for the school and the residents can't get out of their driveways. He stated that if there is an issue people should call the police.

City Councilor Bob Lister, audience member, stated he asked that the Traffic and Safety Committee address this after hearing from the residents on that street.

Fire Chief LeClaire stated that this is an issue for ½ hour in the morning and ½ hour in the afternoon and feels that putting up a permanent "No Parking" sign would work against the residents on the street if they needed extra parking for visitors. He suggested that the situation continue to be monitored.

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to accept and place on file and request Chairman Smith to send correspondence to the Principal of Little Harbour School reemphasizing this concern, seconded by Mr. Gray and Mr. Whitehouse. MOTION PASSED.**

#### **V. OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

Chairman Smith asked audience member Tylene Jousse if she was waiting to address the Committee. Mrs. Jousse stated that she had thought that the issue regarding Dennett and Kane request to remove parking in the triangle, which was tabled at the August 11, 2011 meeting, was being discussed today. Public Works Director Parkinson clarified that the date wasn't set specifically but it is scheduled for a report back in November.

Mr. Whitehouse complimented the Public Works Department for their work completing the widening of the Clough Drive sidewalk to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

#### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to adjourn at 9:02 a.m. Seconded and voted unanimously.**