

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

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

---

**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:**

Christina Westfall, Member and Stephen Dubois, Deputy Police Chief (excused for an emergency issue)

**III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:**

**Motion made by Chief LeClaire to accept the minutes of the November 10, 2011 meeting as presented. Seconded by Mr. Whitehouse and voted.**

**IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Atlantic Heights Emergency Route – Report back to the Committee -**

Gregg Mikolaites of Appledore Engineering along with Patrick Crimmins gave a brief overview and update of the Atlantic Heights Area Neighborhood – Emergency Access. Mr. Mikolaites explained that at the October 13, 2011 Traffic and Safety Committee Meeting, the Committee voted to request the consultant spend additional time investigating the feasibility of four of the emergency route alternatives presented, which included routes 2, 5, 6 and 8. He reviewed the pros and cons of each of the 4 routes, (*see power point presentation for details*) concluding that Route 2 would have the least impact on wetlands and would be the less expensive and quickest route to implement.

Chairman Smith asked for public comment:

Del Morse, 34 Concord Way – stated that another of the neighborhoods' concern is diverting the oil and lumber trucks on Kearsarge Way. She further stated that they also would like to see a permanent road put in place and not just an emergency access.

Phil Cullen, 14 Crescent Way, Co-Chair of the NHeighborhood Association, thanked Mr. Mikolaites and Mr. Crimmins for their work on this so far. He stated it is important for the neighborhood to know who is going to be in charge of implementing the emergency plan. He stated he agrees with Ms. Morse, but feels that this needs to be addressed one step at a time. He stated that he agrees with the recommendation of Route 2 as the most reasonable option.

Mr. Gray asked who has the keys to the 4 gates at the PSNH property and how long does it take to open in an emergency situation. He also asked how many trains pass through the area daily.

Mr. Mikolaites referred to Appendix G of the Emergency Ingress/Egress Routes Report for Atlantic Heights Neighborhood, Portsmouth Police Department General Order, which explains the procedure. He stated it is several years old and his recommendation would be to expand on it and make it a public document.

Mr. Gray asked if the gates are remotely operated. Mr. Mikolaites stated no. He also stated he does not know the number of trains that travel through daily.

Mr. Cypher stated one of the problems he heard expressed by the neighborhood is not only the issue of getting out during an emergency, but getting to their homes as there is only a one-way egress.

Chairman Smith stated that there would need to be flaggers used in that situation to allow traffic to pass one-way at a time.

Mr. Gray stated that part of the agreement with PSNH stated that PSNH can sell the property at will and wonders if that is a possibility. Mr. Mikolaites stated that will have to be part of the discussion with PSNH.

Chief LeClaire clarified that this action is for the emergency route and not a permanent road. He stated he agrees that the Police Department General Order needs to be updated.

Public Works Director Parkinson stated that all of these things need to be taken into account as well as new technology that may be available to come up with a workable and more immediate plan.

Chief LeClaire further stated that regarding access to homes during an emergency, this would be handled as any other emergency route with access limited during an event.

Chairman Smith thanked everyone for their work and input. He stated that the truck traffic issue has been heard, but clarified that it is not a part of this issue. He stated the next step will be to have a meeting with Public Works, Police, Fire and Legal Departments to establish the legal documents and general orders updated for consistency and coordination with the departments. He stated that Emergency Access Route #8, Mangrove Street to Spinnaker Point should continue to be explored as well.

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to approve and endorse the recommendation of the consultant for Access Route 2 and refer to the City Council, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.**

**Mr. Whitehouse moved to accept and place on file a letter from National Gypsum Company regarding Potential Emergency Access Routes – Atlantic Heights Neighborhood (presented to Committee in packet as part of Item IV-A), seconded by Public Works Director Parkinson. Motion passed.**

**B. Coakley Road to Colonial Drive – Resident request for a bike path**

Parking and Transportation Director Frederick explained that this request by a young citizen was referred by the City Council but he has been unable to contact the individual to this point.

**Mr. Whitehouse moved to refer to the Public Works Department for a report back, seconded by Mr. Cypher. Motion passed.**

**C. 677 Dennett Street – TAC referral – Request to add 3 parking spaces and “No Parking Here to Corner” sign**

Parking and Transportation Director Frederick explained that the “No Parking Here to Corner” sign is necessary to accommodate the relocation of the bus stop in conjunction with adding 3 parking spaces which was approved by the Parking Committee previously.

Mr. Gray asked when the striping will occur. Public Works Director Parkinson explained that the project hasn’t started yet, so it will be done in the spring.

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to approve the “No Parking Here to Corner” Sign at 677 Dennett Street to be implemented in Spring 2012, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.**

**V. OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. Dennett Street and Kane Street – Report back from DPW**

Public Works Director Parkinson stated the issue here is unorganized and excessive parking in the triangle area of the intersection. He stated the staff recommendation is to line 5 spaces of organized parking.

Chairman Smith asked for public comment:

Tylene Jousse, 197 Dennett Street – referred to a drawing being distributed by Mr. Jousse which recommends one parking space as allowed by the specifications in the ordinance. She stated there is a concern with there not being enough room for trash, recycling and emergency vehicles to turn around especially when there is a lot of snow.

Alain Jousse, 197 Dennett Street – stated that the main point of contention is the accessibility of Kane Street from one end to the other because the parked vehicles hinder traffic going up Kane Street as well as the trash and recycling trucks that have to make 3 point turns. He stated he appreciates the efforts to appease the parking issue but feels that is not going to help the situation. He stated that one space is all that is legally allowed and feels that striping the no parking area would be the cheapest and most effective.

Barbara Caldarola, 170 Dennett Street – stated she lives in the house across the street from the triangle. She continued that when she moved there in 1999, it was understood in the neighborhood that this area would be used by visitors etc. but now the density has increased and the area is being used as a private driveway. She stated this should be addressed with the people selling condos without enough parking for the residents. She concluded that 5 cars parking there also means 5 sets of headlights shining into her house and she supports Tylene's suggestion of one space as regulations allow.

Lee Rubin, 1 Kane Street – stated he agrees with all of his neighbors and that the root cause of the problem is vehicle density with the conversion of single family homes to multi-family dwellings. He stated that regardless of what is decided, enforcement by the city is paramount. He stated that he found it interesting that the city put snow emergency notices on his car that was parked in the street in front of his house, but didn't put them on the cars parked in the triangle area.

Joe Caldarola, 170 Dennett Street – stated he also agrees with Tylene's suggestion for one space and feels that allowing 5 spaces will result in 6,7, etc. vehicles parking there. He state it is an awareness and laziness problem as there is safe and legal parking available ½ a block away. He stated that the parking should be eliminated entirely there because enforcement is not a priority.

Alain Jousse – speaking for a second time, stated when he first moved into the neighborhood a police officer who also lived in the neighborhood told him that the police would turn a blind eye to the parking there until someone complained.

Lee Rubin –speaking for a second time, stated that if the parking is eliminated there entirely, it will result in a free-for-all for the available on street spaces. He stated he would request that the street spaces be striped so that people won't be able to block driveways.

Chairman Smith stated that people need to call the police department when driveways are blocked as this will create a record of instances.

Public Works Director Parkinson stated he totally misunderstood the situation and he thought he was looking to provide parking. He stated that this is an enforcement issue and there should be no parking there at all.

Chief LeClaire stated that there is no problem with emergency vehicles and feels that the recommendation of the Public Works Department to install 5 spaces is fine and needs to

be enforced. He stated it is a fact that the neighborhood has changed and we need to manage the situation.

Chairman Smith asked if the one space option presented by Mrs. Jousse meets the warrant. Mr. Frederick stated yes.

*Mr. Whitehouse moved to delay this for a report back from the Public Works Department to consider the public comments. No second.*

**Fire Chief LeClaire moved to adopt the Public Works recommendation to add 5 lined spaces in the triangle area, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed on a 4-2 roll call vote. Mr. Whitehouse and Chairman Smith voted opposed.**

- B. **Thornton Street and Burkitt Street** – Citizen request to reconsider four way stop

Parking and Transportation Director Frederick explained that he received an e-mail regarding the decision made by the Committee and a request to revisit it, however, the individual, who was notified of the meeting, is not present.

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to accept and place on file, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse. Motion passed.**

- C. **Chevrolet & Cass, Woodbury & Bartlett** – Request to trim shrubs – Legal report back

Parking and Transportation Director Frederick explained that these are the letters sent by the legal department at the request of the Traffic and Safety Committee regarding request to trim shrubs at specific intersections.

**Fire Chief LeClaire moved to accept the report back from the Legal Department and place on file, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse. Motion passed.**

- D. **86 Haven Road** – Citizen request for “No Parking” in vicinity of Brackett Road – Discussion with school officials

Mike Coffey, 86 Haven Road – explained the ongoing issue with parents dropping off and picking up kids at Little Harbour School and parking where they are not supposed to and blocking his driveway. He stated that the Principal has sent information out to the parents regarding this issue again, but it was included in a newsletter with a lot of other information and was not very strongly worded. He continued that he understands that the Principal and School Superintendent do not feel comfortable with instructing parents not to park there because they do not have jurisdiction on the city street, so he is looking for a solution from this committee.

Chairman Smith explained that the city can put up “No Parking” signs but he knows that this will affect the neighbors negatively as well.

Superintendent of Schools Ed McDonough stated that Little Harbour School's population has increased and he understands that there is a problem. He stated that even though most parents do cooperative, there will always be those who will not and feels there is not good solution.

Charlie Grossman, Principal of Little Harbour School – stated he sends out reminders on this issue several times throughout the year and asks the parents to be good neighbors during the drop-off and pick up times. He stated he has received responses from parents who flat out say that they can park where they want because it is a city street and he has no control.

Chairman Smith asked if Principal Grossman has gone out at the given times and talked directly to the parents. Mr. Grossman stated not as of yet as he is trying to control 600 students in and out of the building at those time. He stated he would be willing to make the effort to do so.

Mr. Coffey thanked Mr. McDonough and Mr. Grossman for their input and agrees that the parents do have the attitude that it is a city street and they can do what they want.

*Mr. Gray moved to put "No Parking between 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m." signs, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse.*

Mr. Coffey stated he is not able to speak on behalf of his neighbors and wouldn't want this restriction imposed without their input as many of them park on the street in front of their homes at various times of the day.

Public Works Director Parkinson stated that we can't make everyone happy and any restrictions imposed will affect the neighbors too.

Discussion ensued regarding further communication with parents.

Chairman Smith suggested that Principal Grossman coordinate with Deputy Chief Dubois to communicate directly with the parents regarding the issue and the possibility of permanent restrictions being implemented.

*Mr. Gray rescinded his original motion, Mr. Whitehouse agreed.*

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to table to February 2012 meeting, giving School officials time to again communicate with parents regarding the possible future implementation of "No Parking" restrictions and allow time for self-correction, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.**

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Chief LeClaire stated that he would like to thank Chairman Smith for his work as leader of the Traffic and Safety Committee and hopes to see him appointed as Chair of the new Parking and Traffic Safety Committee. The other members concurred. Chairman Smith thanked the committee for their support and explained that the 3 citizens members will continue to serve but he is unsure of who will be the Councilor appointed.

**Public Works Director Parkinson moved to adjourn at 9:25 a.m. Seconded and voted unanimously.**