

MINUTES
PARKING AND TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – Thursday, December 12, 2013
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
John Bohenko, City Manager
James Heinz, Deputy Fire Chief
Frank Warchol, Police Captain
Peter Rice, Public Works Director
Ronald Cypher, Member
Shari Donnermeyer, Member
Ted Gray, Member
Harold Whitehouse, Member

Staff Advisors Present:

Mark Nelson, Parking Division Director
Tom Cocchiaro, Parking Operations Manager

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Mr. Cypher moved to accept the minutes of November 14, 2013, seconded City Manager Bohenko. Motion passed.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mr. Whitehouse moved to accept the Financial Report and place on file, seconded by City Manager Bohenko. Motion passed.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Action Item: Citizen Request for four-way stop at the corner of Burkitt and Thornton

Mr. Gray stated a site walk was held and the consensus was that this is a tough intersection that currently is a 2-way stop intersection. He stated that lowering the speed limit to 20 mph and enforcement of the speed limit may help the situation.

Public Works Director Rice stated he will review the past warrant work done for this intersection which resulted in the 2-way stop sign but feels that other traffic calming options should be explored in the meantime including setting up the Stealthstat to gather data. He stated that Thornton Street is picking up a lot of the traffic that used to go down Dennett Street.

City Manager Bohenko moved to refer to the Public Works Director for a report back after a review of the current 2-way stop sign warrant and to request the police department to set up a Stealthstat to gather data in support of possibly lowering the speed limit to 20 mph, and investigate other possible traffic calming techniques, including striping a bike lane and crosswalk, seconded by Mr. Cypher.

Chairman Smith asked what the time frame would be for the report back. City Manager Bohenko stated approximately February with any action recommended to occur in the Spring. Chairman Smith asked that the neighbors be notified when the report back will be on the agenda.

Motion passed.

B. Action Item: Citizen Request for intersection traffic calming at Bartlett and Thornton

Mr. Cypher stated a site walk was held and this has been a problem intersection for a long time. He stated the police department can't be there to enforce 24 hours/7 days a week, but people are always going through the stop signs. He stated the Public Works Director has suggested some temporary traffic calming measures including installing an "island".

Public Works Director Rice clarified that the "island" would be striped as a visual restriction to make the intersection look smaller and then a permanent solution could be implemented as a part of reconfiguration of the intersection in the Capital Improvements Plan.

Chairman Smith stated that the signage regarding truck traffic needs to be reviewed as the trucks are coming off Woodbury Avenue and going to Thornton instead of down Dennett as they are supposed to go.

Public Works Director Rice moved to implement temporary measures of striping an "island" to make the intersection appear smaller and if found to be correcting the problem, implement permanent fixture as part of the reconfiguration of the intersection through the Capital Improvements Plan, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.

Public Works Director Rice will also review the signage in the area regarding truck travel.

C. Action Item: Citizen request to improve signs at dangerous crosswalk Willard/Lafayette

Ms. Donnermeyer stated a site walk was held of the area and it was thought that this would be a good location for the strobe light crosswalk and/or weebles.

Ms. Donnermeyer moved to implement strobe pedestrian lighting at this intersection as part of the previously approved pilot program, seconded by City Manager Bohenko.

City Manager Bohenko stated that he would like to run the pilot program on the two selected locations before investing in more locations. He stated that he wants people to understand the cost that will be involved with this technology.

Parking Division Director Nelson stated he has received the specs from the Town of Kittery who have installed this crosswalk and there is a significant savings if the installation is done by our own staff.

Chairman Smith clarified that the first location approved for the pilot program was Woodbury Avenue at St. Catherine's Church and a third location if continued, would be Deer and Market Street.

Public Works Director Rice stated that the weeble type of sign would be problematic during snow storms but plow drivers could be alerted that they were there.

Mr. Whitehouse stated there is another issue regarding crosswalks that he would like to see addressed which is vehicles going around other cars that have stopped at the crosswalks to let pedestrians cross.

Captain Warchol stated this is a concern for the police department as well.

Public Works Director Rice stated we have received Safe Routes to School funding for improvements to that corridor and there are capital improvements coming as well. He stated they are hoping to have the design completed by Fall 2014 and to begin work at that time or Spring 2015.

Motion passed.

- D. Action Item: Citizen concern over excessive speed on Maplewood and Woodbury Avenues -

Parking Division Director Nelson stated the citizen who requested this item is not in attendance.

Public Works Director Rice stated that there is money in the Capital Improvements Plan to do work on Maplewood Avenue in conjunction with the Water/Sewer main replacement. He stated that the Council also recently approved the complete streets policy which addresses bicycle safety on the roadway and the bridge is scheduled to go off-line for repairs as well. He stated all of these will help reduce the speed concerns in the area.

City Manager Bohenko moved to accept and place on file, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.

- E. Action Item – Request for residential Handicap Space at 39 Lovell Street –

Mr. Whitehouse moved to grant the request for residential handicap space at 39 Lovell Street with the stipulations that a placard or plate be displayed, that it not be transferrable and that it is verified annually, seconded by Ms. Donnermeyer.

Public Works Director Rice stated that there will be a sign installed for the space but there will be no striping until the road is permanently paved.

Motion passed.

F. Action Item - Conversion of a portion of Hanover Street to two-way traffic for safety reasons (*This item is enacted as a temporary regulation and will be considered for inclusion in a future omnibus ordinance – See Section 7.336, Section A-10*)

Ms. Donnermeyer stated a site walk was held and this is to help facilitate parking at the Heineman Lot by allowing people to go down Pearl Street.

Ms. Donnermeyer moved to accept the recommended conversion of a portion of Hanover Street to two-way traffic after extensive out-reach and notification efforts of the neighborhood and public as a whole and proper signage put in place, seconded by Public Works Director Rice.

City Manager Bohenko stated this is a necessary change but we need to make sure that every effort is made for neighborhood and public notification of this change prior to the physical change being implemented.

Mr. Whitehouse stated he agrees as this is the first time a one-way street has been partially converted to a 2-way street.

Chairman Smith asked if we will need to eliminate any parking spaces. City Manager Bohenko stated we should hold off on that until we see what happens.

Motion passed.

G. Action Item – Increased penalties for movers/contractors who do not get permits/buy meter bags -

Parking Division Director Nelson referred to a photo montage illustrating various infractions stating that the Parking enforcement officers deals with this issue on a daily basis. He stated that the current \$15.00 fine is not a deterrent and therefore, they are looking to increase the penalty.

Chairman Smith asked what amount the penalty might be. Parking Division Director Nelson stated something similar to handicap parking fines. Chairman Smith asked if we have the statutory authority to implement this type of fine. City Manager Bohenko stated that we need to clarify this with legal in case of appeals, etc. He stated that 90% of the people are in compliance and when the city is properly notified, then there are no issues. He stated the 10% who do not notify the system and wait to be caught, are who cause the traffic problems.

City Manager Bohenko moved to refer to the legal department for a report back after review of statutory authority, seconded by Public Works Director Rice.

Captain Warchol asked who will be issued the ticket/fine, the driver, the company owner, or the people who hired them? City Manager Bohenko stated it would be the company.

Discussion ensued regarding the process for requesting street obstructions.

Motion passed.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Action Item – Status on Bridge and Hanover 4-way Stop –

Parking Division Director Nelson stated that the RSG (traffic consultant) recommendation was that while current intersection volumes do not meet the volume thresholds indicating the necessity of all-way stop control, they believe all-way stop control is appropriate at this intersection due to the sight distance conditions. (Study attached).

Public Works Director Rice moved to accept the recommendation by RSG (traffic consultant) that this intersection become a 4-way stop intersection, seconded by Mr. Whitehouse. Motion passed.

Public Works Director Rice stated he would like to have the Legal Department review to see if an ordinance change is required.

B. Discussion Item - Status on pedestrian-activated crosswalk acquisition –

Parking Division Director Nelson stated he has received the specs from State of Maine Dept. of Transportation which has bought such equipment for Kittery and will begin getting quotes and report back to the committee.

Public Works Director Rice stated as soon as quotes are received, they will work with the City Manager to determine funding and bring it to the City Council.

No action needed.

C. Action Item – *(Not on agenda)* – Update on 111 Maplewood Avenue –

Public Works Director Rice explained that as a result of the presentation recently made to the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee, the Tighe and Bond Engineering Company has updated the design per the committees' recommendations. He stated that this redesigned plan will be going before the Planning board.

Public Works Director Rice moved to accept the updated plan for 111 Maplewood Avenue, seconded by Captain Warchol. Motion passed.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no speakers for Public Comment.

VIII. INFORMATIONAL: None

IX. MISCELLANEOUS:

On behalf of the Committee and city staff, City Manager Bohenko presented Chairman Smith with an engraved gavel in gratitude of his service as the Chairman of the Parking Committee, Traffic and Safety Committee and Parking and Traffic Safety Committee beginning in 2006.

He stated that Chairman Smith has led the committee with efficiency and organization and will be missed.

Mr. Whitehouse stated Chairman Smith has always been professional and courteous to the staff, committee members and the public.

Chairman Smith accepted the gavel with thanks and appreciation and stated it has been an absolute pleasure to serve as Chair.

X. ADJOURNMENT

City Manager Bohenko moved to adjourn at 8:35 a.m. Seconded by Mr. Whitehouse and voted unanimously.