

MINUTES
PARKING AND TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – Thursday, February 13, 2014
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Pro Tem Lown called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Councilor Brad Lown
John Bohenko, City Manager
James Heinz, Deputy Fire Chief
Frank Warchol, Police Captain
Peter Rice, Public Works Director
Ronald Cypher, Member
Ted Gray, Member
Harold Whitehouse, Member

Members Absent:

Shari Donnermeyer, Member

Staff Advisors Present:

Mark Nelson, Parking Division Director
Tom Cocchiaro, Parking Operations Manager
Juliet Walker, Transportation Planner

III. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Mr. Whitehouse moved to nominate and elect Council Representative Lown as the Chair of the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee. Seconded by City Manager Bohenko and voted unanimously.

Public Works Director Rice moved to nominate and election current Vice Chair Ted Gray to continue as Vice Chair. Seconded by City Manager Bohenko and voted unanimously.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Mr. Gray moved to accept the minutes of December 12, 2013, seconded by Public Works Director Rice. Motion passed.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT:

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

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Action Item: Citizen request for solution to dangerous parking situation near 381 Middle Street

Parking Division Director Nelson stated a site walk was held to view the situation and there is a reason for concern. He continued that there are no stand-off requirements in the ordinance regarding parking near driveways as there is for intersections. He stated that if there was that requirement for driveways, then it would take away a lot of parking spaces. He concluded that there will be major work being done on Middle Street in the future which may help slow things down on the road.

Public Works Director Rice stated that there is a Safe Routes to School grant being pursued by Juliet Walker and Dave Desfosses which will include requirements for reduced speed in that area. He stated we should allow the process to continue and revisit the situation after the project is completed.

Chairman Lown stated he talked with the property owner on-site and agrees that it is a dangerous situation.

City Manager Bohenko asked if there are handicapped parking spaces in that area of the street or if there is a need for any. Public Works Director Rice stated not presently, but there are businesses in the area that may warrant handicap spaces. City Manager Bohenko suggested looking into that possibility in the future.

Public Works Director Rice moved to refer to the Public Works Department to evaluate and determine if a handicap space is appropriate in that area, seconded by Mr. Gray.

Chairman Lown stated that there are 2 signs prohibiting parking in front of the Woman's Club walkway and other abutters wonder why they can do that and not themselves.

Public Works Director Rice explained that those signs have been investigated and there is some historic agreement with the Woman's Club that needs further investigation. He stated he will review that as well and deem if it is appropriate to remove those signs.

Mr. Gray stated that there used to be a loading zone there but does not feel there is a formal agreement.

Restated motion: refer to the Public Works Department to evaluate and determine if a handicap space is appropriate in that area and also to review the situation of the parking spaces/loading zone area near the Woman's Club and report back.

Motion passed.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Discussion Item – Status on Hanover Street (vicinity Rock St) changes

Parking Division Director Nelson explained that the flyers have been distributed, signs are being installed, as well as directions to the Rock Street Lot.

Chairman Lown asked how the new lot is working out. Parking Division Director Nelson stated that it is at least half full on business days, but is unsure of the weekends. He stated it will pick up during snow storms.

Public Works Director Rice stated is well used during snow storms as well.

Mr. Whitehouse stated that this area will need to be monitored carefully as this is the only street in Portsmouth that will have a one-way section as well as a two-way section.

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

Parking Division Director Nelson stated that the first pedestrian-activated crosswalk will be installed on Lafayette Road near Willard Avenue.

C. Action Item – (*Not on agenda*) – follow up of 11/14/2013 Action Item – add 2 non voting alternate members to Parking and Traffic Safety Committee

Mr. Whitehouse stated that at the November 14, 2013 Parking and Traffic Safety Committee meeting a motion was made and voted as follows:

*“**VOTED** to authorize the Chairman of the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee, in the minutes presented to the City Council for approval, request an amendment to the membership of the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee with the addition of 2 alternative (non-voting) members from the public.”*

He stated that nothing has been done to enact this change and wants it addressed.

City Manager Bohenko explained that there was not enough meetings left in 2013 for the City Council to have passed an ordinance which requires 3 readings, and therefore, it needed to be brought before the current Council.

Discussion ensued regarding if there was a need of adding alternate members and whether they should be voting members.

Mr. Whitehouse amended his original motion as follows:

Move to authorize the Chairman of the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee, in the minutes presented to the City Council for approval, request an amendment to the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee with the addition of 1 (one) alternate (voting) member of the public, seconded by Mr. Cypher. Motion passed.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no speakers for Public Comment.

IX. INFORMATIONAL:

- A. Gosling Road/PSNH Truck Management Plan Annual Report

Public Works Director Rice stated this was an informational item and will be placed on file.

- B. Complete Streets Award and Grant
- C. Bike Corrals – The Concept and Sighting Criteria

Transportation Planner Juliet Walker updated the Committee on the Complete Streets Award and Grant and Bike Corrals, concept and sighting criteria with a brief slide show presentation.

City Manager Bohenko stated that the pilot program on Bow Street with the Bike Corral was not successful because people didn't know what it was.

Transportation Planner Walker stated the same thing was true with the bike corral at the South Playground. She stated that there needs to be more education as to what they are and perhaps be more conveniently located as well. She stated they are looking for better locations as well as signage options etc. and will come back with these ideas.

Chairman Lown stated that Bow Street was not a good location because it was on an angle, but he feels that bicyclists know how the corrals are meant to be used. Public Works Director Rice stated that non-bicyclists view it as an infringement of space and feels that better signage would help it make sense to everyone.

Mr. Gray stated they should be installed near the areas where the "sharrows" are located.

Mr. Whitehouse stated that there needs to be a better emphasis on safety and for bicyclists to follow the rules of traveling with the flow of traffic, using reflectors, etc. Public Works Director Rice stated that the Safe Routes to School Grant has an outreach provision for safety training for adults and children.

Transportation Planner Walker stated that there will be workshops in the Spring.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Cypher moved to adjourn at 8:45 a.m. Seconded by Mr. Whitehouse and voted unanimously.