

**MINUTES**  
**PARKING AND TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING**

8:00 A.M. – Thursday, April 10, 2014  
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

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I. CALL TO ORDER:

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

II. ROLL CALL:

**Members Present:**

Councilor Brad Lown  
Carl Roediger, Deputy Fire Chief  
Frank Warchol, Police Captain  
Peter Rice, Public Works Director  
Ronald Cypher, Member  
Shari Donnermeyer, Member  
Ted Gray, Member  
Harold Whitehouse, Member

**Members Absent:**

John Bohenko, City Manager

**Staff Advisors Present:**

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

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

**Mr. Whitehouse moved to accept the minutes of March 13, 2014, seconded by Mr. Cypher. Motion passed.**

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

**Public Works Director Rice moved to accept the Financial Report and place on file, seconded by Mr. Gray. Motion passed.**

V. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Action tem: Improving Islington Street Detour, Citizen presentation

Margaret O'Rourke, resident of 56 Sheffield Road, gave a slide presentation of the various issues created with the closing of the Islington Street Bridge including GPS continuing to direct people down Islington Street. Other speakers on this issue included residents Jay Feeney, Stephanie Lane, Kellie Cioe, Marc Goulet and Assistant Mayor Jim Splaine. The neighbors requested that the signage be improved and that the City reach out to the trucking businesses to inform them of the bridge closure and detours involved.

Public Works Director Rice stated he understands the challenges with these construction projects and that it takes time for the traffic patterns to take hold. He stated that signage is adjusted as needed throughout the project. He also clarified that this is a State DOT project

and there is a detour package included, but the project is a bridge replacement. He stated the City is working closely with DOT and the suggested signage is in fabrication. He further stated that the outreach to business is underway. He stated that the work on Islington Street was not intended to be a complete construction job as it requires sewer line upgrades, etc. which means more money. Finally he addressed the posting of speed limit signs stating that there needs to be a recommendation from a traffic study, and because the area is under construction, the study wouldn't be conducted under normal circumstances as required. He concluded that the City can continue to be responsive to concerns throughout the project with signage and enforcement.

Mr. Whitehouse asked what can be done about correcting GPS instructions. Public Works Director Rice stated that the 90 day waiting period for the update is usually waived for State projects so he will look into that.

B. Action Item: Improving signal lights at Intersection of Islington and Cabot Streets

Mr. Cypher stated a site walk was conducted of the intersection and the lights are not as obvious as they should be so the recommendation is to hang the signal lights in the middle of the intersection. He continued that this would require obtaining easements from two property owners. Public Works Director Rice stated he is currently working with the property owners and will report back.

C. Action Item: Citizen request to change parking rules for Miller Avenue as a result of road improvements.

Mr. Whitehouse stated a site walk was conducted and explained that the issue occurs on Sundays at the 10:00 a.m. service and once the lot is full, people park on the street. He stated that St. John's Lodge has already given the church permission for cars to park there during this time, but people don't park there.

Public Works Director Rice stated he will communicate with the Church and St. John's Lodge as well as explore the option of police details during church services.

D. Action Item: Portsmouth Women's Club request for Loading Zone

Parking Division Director Nelson stated that this issue was referred previously and he has followed up with the women's club who are in favor of the loading zone being installed.

**Ms. Donnermeyer moved to install a loading zone with signage at the requested location. Seconded by Mr. Gray and voted. ) This is enacted as a temporary regulation and will be considered for inclusion in a future omnibus ordinance.)**

Public Works Director Rice stated there may also need to be a handicap space which he will look into separately.

E. Action Item: Bike Corral Siting for Summer 2014

Transportation Planner Juliet Walker gave a report back on bike corrals stating that they are being relocated from the places they were installed last year because they were underutilized for various reasons. She stated that in accordance with feedback received, they are not

going to occupy a parking space but will put them in “dead zones” at the end of roads so they will not interfere with site lines. She further explained that they are looking currently at Daniel Street/Penhallow Street in the no parking zone that people do sometimes park or use as a loading/unloading zone so this will remove that illegal usage. She stated this will be the only recommended location at this time.

Ms. Donnermeyer stated that the signage needs to be clear as to what this is as she feels it is not obvious that they are bike racks.

Mr. Gray suggested there be two racks installed so that there could be 12 bikes parked there instead of 6.

Mr. Cypher stated he would like to be on record as opposing these being located in front of bars so that people do not ride bicycles after drinking.

Discussion ensued regarding potential locations.

Chairman Lown stated that he is not opposed to the bike corral taking a parking space as it makes a statement that the City supports bicycling and feels it should be centrally located.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS:**

### A. Discussion Item – Status of 4-Way Stop at intersection of Bridge and Hanover

Parking Division Director Nelson explained that the police department has been monitoring the area and everything seems to be going well.

### B. Discussion Item - Status on Route and Signage to Rock Street Parking

Parking Division Director Nelson stated the old one-way signs have been removed but it is still tight going through because there is still parking on both sides especially for garbage trucks. This area will continue to be monitored.

### C. Discussion Item – Status on Pedestrian-activated crosswalk sign acquisition

Parking Division Director Nelson stated that the sign has been installed and the neighbors seem to like it, although people aren't always stopping, and therefore, police presence will need to be in place.

Mr. Cypher stated he saw an elderly woman standing near the sign but it wasn't flashing. Parking Division Director Nelson stated that the sign is working but the button needs to be pushed to activate it.

### D. Discussion Item – Report on Isles of Shoals Seasonal Parking Initiative

Parking Operations Supervisor Cocchiaro updated the committee on the Seasonal Parking Initiative stating that the program was successful and that the parking fee could be raised if necessary to offset expenses and still be reasonable to the downtown employees. He stated there were maintenance costs involved that were probably higher due to the active

winter. He stated that the fee was \$25.00 a month which is a really good price, so if the fee had to be raised slightly to offset the expenses, it would still be a good deal for employees.

Public Works Director Rice stated this was a part of the City Council initiative for creative parking solutions and there will be a comprehensive report forthcoming.

E. Discussion Item – Report on Salt Truck Loading Zone Parking initiative

Parking Division Director Nelson updated the committee on the outcome of sharing the loading zone as parking spaces during certain times stating that there was considerable confusion and people were ticketed. He stated that this may be worth trying again, and adjustments to the signage may help.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Patrick Healy of 111 Sagamore Avenue, spoke regarding adding parking to a portion of Sagamore Avenue near the Cemetery wall to accommodate 12-16 houses who don't have additional parking available. He stated that this could be done in conjunction with the Sharrows project and asked that a site walk of the area be scheduled.

Discussion ensued regarding the process for this type of request. Public Works Director Rice stated he will follow up on this request as the design plan for Sagamore Avenue is almost complete.

**VIII. INFORMATIONAL:**

A. Safe Routes to School Update

Transportation Planner Walker reported that the City has received a grant for projects including bike lanes on Middle Street/Lafayette Road/US Route 1 and improvements to cross walks with design in 2014 and construction in 2015. She continued that we are also improving infrastructure components to improve safety in school zones, beginning with Elwyn Park/Dondero School. She stated the short-term will be enforcement and long-term improvements will include sidewalks, intersection improvements, mobile speed trailer, etc. and evaluation of signage.

B. Parking Shuttle Status

Parking Division Director Nelson updated the committee stating that a vendor has been selected and the pilot program will begin in May with a 15-passenger shuttle going between two stops in 10 minute increments. He stated data will be gathered during the pilot period and reported back. He stated there is room in the contract for negotiation depending on the data, and the vendor chosen has a strong track record with the operation of shuttle services in other communities.

Chairman Lown asked how we will judge if this is a success or failure. Parking Division Director Nelson stated there will be interns collecting data and doing surveys of customers and we will also get feedback from the company running the service.

Public Works Director Rice clarified that the City Council will determine the success or failure. He stated that we will also be reaching out to hotels for their employees to use the services and we need to address security concerns in relation to these employees and the various hours they work.

Chairman Lown stated that Portsmouth Listens did a parking study report and found that the shuttle service in Berlin, NH failed because it didn't have the support of the businesses. Public Works Director Rice agreed stating that we will be exploring ways to get businesses involved and the information out there.

Ms. Donnermeyer asked if this is meant to be geared more to locals or to visitors. Public Works Director Rice explained that this will help with the overflow when the High/Hanover Lot is full and because it is a pilot program, we will gather data on who the users are and make decisions based on that information.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Whitehouse moved to adjourn at 9:30 a.m. Seconded by Ms. Donnermeyer and voted unanimously.**