

ACTION ITEMS AND MINUTES
PARKING and TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – February 4, 2016
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

Action Items requiring an immediate ordinance during the next Council meeting: none
Temporary Action Items requiring an ordinance during the annual omnibus: none

ACTIONS:

- [1] Accepted and placed on file the minutes of the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee Meeting held on January 7, 2016.

- [2] Accepted and placed on file the Financial Report dated December 31, 2015.

- [3 (V.A.)] **Action Item:** STOP sign request on Aldrich Road at Boss Avenue - **VOTED** to acknowledge the all-way STOP request and place it on file. Also, **VOTED** to direct staff to present examples and ideas regarding residential roundabouts and other traffic calming treatments at next month's meeting.

- [4 (VI.A.)] **Action Item:** NO PARKING restriction on east side of Summit Avenue - **VOTED** to accept staff recommendation to relocate the center line to create a 12-foot travel lane and a 20-foot travel lane.

- [5 (VI.B.)] **Action Item:** Woodbury Avenue/Franklin Drive corridor study – **VOTED** to approve the recommendations, except for the traffic signal at Woodbury Avenue and Route 1 Bypass northbound ramp, and the traffic patterns (right turns onto Woodbury Avenue) on the Route 1 Bypass southbound ramp.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

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

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Councilor, Brad Lown
City Manager, John Bohenko
Public Works Director, Peter Rice
Deputy Fire Chief, James Heinz
Acting Deputy Police Chief, Frank Warchol
Member, Ted Gray
Member, Ron Cypher
Member, Harold Whitehouse
Alternate Member, Mary Lou McElwain

Staff Advisors Present:

Parking Manager, Joey Giordano
Parking and Transportation Engineer, Eric Eby
Transportation Planner, Juliet Walker

Absent:

Member, Shari Donnermeyer

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Ron Cypher motioned to accept January 7, 2016, meeting minutes.
Harold Whitehouse seconded.

Motion passed 9-0.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

In response to a question from Mary Lou McElwain, City Manager Bohenko stated that a memorandum regarding the downtown parking shuttle service would be distributed to City Council and Parking and Traffic Safety Committee (PTS).

Committee accepted the December 31, 2015, Financial Report.

City Manager Bohenko motioned to suspend the rules to allow for public comments. Public Works Director Rice seconded. **Voted 9-0, to suspend the rules.**

Cynthia and Michael Hart, 213 Aldrich Road, presented a petition signed by fifteen Aldrich Road property owners expressing concern regarding vehicle speeds on the roadway. Additionally, Mrs. Hart provided a *Portsmouth Herald* article dated June 1988, in which her son, Thomas Hart, wrote to Portsmouth Police Chief Burke about speeding vehicles. In the past, she and others have expressed concerns to the City Council and Police Department. Mrs. Hart stated that she observed a 3-way STOP sign in Durham and sent the information to DPW. She requested Aldrich Road at Boss Avenue be reviewed for a 3-way STOP sign, installation of additional speed limit signs, parking enforcement, police monitoring, and visual speed monitoring of the area.

Rick Becksted, 1395 Islington Street, discussed the Woodbury Avenue/Franklin Drive Corridor Study. He supported adding a traffic signal at Franklin Drive and Woodbury Avenue. He expressed concern about the proposed traffic signal at Route 1 Bypass northbound ramp because he thinks it will impede traffic at the Dennett Street and Woodbury Avenue intersection. He recommended closing the Route 1 Bypass southbound ramp and/or the I-95 off-ramp for 48 hours to evaluate traffic patterns.

Peter Weeks, 677 Dennett Street, supported a traffic signal at Franklin Drive but not at Dennett Street.

City Manager Bohenko recommended creating a 15-minute public comment section on the agenda after the Financial Report, with additional comments to be heard at the end of the meeting. The March 2016 agenda will reflect this agenda change.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

A. STOP sign request on Aldrich Road at Boss Avenue – An on-site visit was conducted on February 2nd. Eric Eby stated certain factors and criteria must be met to warrant an all-way STOP sign controlled intersection. The warrants are set by federal and state guidelines. Eric Eby stated that there should be nearly equal volumes of traffic in an 8-hour period on both streets. For example, 200-300 vehicles on the main street and 200 vehicles on the side street. Eric Eby stated a traffic counter was placed at Aldrich Road. Less than 100 vehicles per hour were counted. He stated that none of the warrants for an all-way STOP are met at this location.

City Manager Bohenko motioned to direct staff to present examples and ideas regarding residential roundabouts and other traffic calming treatments at next month's meeting. Ron Cypher seconded. **Vote 9-0, to direct staff to present examples and ideas regarding residential roundabouts and other traffic calming treatments at next month's meeting.**

Harold Whitehouse motioned to acknowledge the all-way STOP request and place it on file. Public Works Director Rice seconded. **Vote 9-0, to acknowledge the all-way STOP request and place it on file.**

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

A. NO PARKING restriction on east side of Summit Avenue – Public Works Director Rice motioned to reconsider this action item from the January 7, 2016, meeting for discussion purposes. Mary Lou McElwain seconded. **Vote 9-0, to reconsider the action item for discussion purposes.**

Public Works Director Rice stated that a site visit was not conducted before the January 7th meeting. In order to fully address the issue, a site visit was conducted on February 2nd. Eric Eby stated the recommendation was to shift the center line on Summit Avenue to provide a 12-foot wide northbound lane and a 20-foot wide southbound lane. The center line would be shifted approximately 5 feet to the east. The 20-foot wide lane would provide room for an 8-foot lane for parking and 12-foot travel lane. Mary Lou McElwain stated that she asked for the reconsideration so that a site visit could be conducted and to address pedestrian and bicycle safety. She reiterated that this action item was presented to the Committee as a request for parking on the east side of Summit Avenue, but had evolved to the school bus issue. She also noticed an old sign at the gate on Summit Avenue that indicated no parking on both sides of the roadway. She stated she would not support the motion to shift the center line.

Public Works Director Rice stated that the site visit demonstrated that the adjustment would not create an impact. He stated he would support the previous vote to move the center line. Public Works Director Rice reiterated that the original request for parking was denied.

Harold Whitehouse motioned to accept staff recommendation. Public Works Director Rice seconded. **Vote 8-1, to accept staff recommendation to relocate the center line to create a 12-foot travel lane and a 20-foot travel lane.** Mary Lou McElwain voted opposed.

B. Woodbury Avenue/Franklin Drive corridor study- Eric Eby reminded the Committee that TEC, Inc. conducted a traffic study of the Woodbury Avenue corridor between Rockingham Avenue and Dennett Street. The findings and recommendations of the study were presented to the Committee at the December 2015 meeting. A public meeting was held on January 13, 2016. Public comments and feedback were provided at the meeting. He stated the request for a sidewalk along Rockingham Avenue between the bike path and Woodbury Avenue had been added to the plan.

Reference the diagram shown in the packet for a complete list of recommendations by TEC, Inc.

Harold Whitehouse requested staff meet with Peter Weeks and Rick Becksted regarding their concerns.

After discussing the recommendations, the Committee agreed to table two of the recommendations. The tabled recommendations were the traffic signal recommendation at Woodbury Avenue and Route 1 Bypass northbound ramp, and the traffic patterns (right-turns onto Woodbury Avenue) on the Route 1 Bypass southbound ramp.

City Manager Bohenko motioned to approve all recommendations except the two tabled recommendations. Public Works Director Rice seconded. **Vote 9-0, to approve the recommendations, except for the traffic signal at Woodbury Avenue and Route 1 Bypass northbound ramp, and the traffic patterns (right turns onto Woodbury Avenue) on the Route 1 Bypass southbound ramp.**

Public Works Director Rice reminded the Committee that this is not the final design. Future public input opportunities will be available before a final design is approved.

City Manager Bohenko recommended that staff address the two tabled recommendations with the public and report back at the next meeting. Chairman Lown requested more information on installing a traffic signal at Franklin Drive and Woodbury Avenue, and closing the I-95 northbound ramp onto Woodbury Avenue.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Rick Becksted, 1395 Islington Street, requested the review of the ramps onto Woodbury Avenue and inquired about truck routes and Cate Street. He commented on the Aldrich Road roadway narrowing and his concerns for safety. He identified a 3-way STOP on West Road and inquired about the traffic counts to warrant it. Mr. Becksted commented on roundabouts and requested radar speed signs be installed on Islington Street, Aldrich Road, Woodbury Avenue, Maplewood Avenue, South Street, and Dennett Street.

Kate Mallen, 140 Woodlawn Circle, commented on the decorum of the PTS meeting.

Paul Mannle, 1490 Islington Street, commented on roundabouts, raised speed tables, and requested radar speed signs with strobes.

David Palumbo, 181 Echo Avenue, requested signage on Spaulding Turnpike to direct traffic to Exit 2 for the business and mall districts. He requested signage indicating Echo Avenue is a residential street.

VIII. INFORMATIONAL

A. Banfield Road Improvements Project – Public Works Director Rice informed the Committee of the public meeting at 6:30 PM at DPW to discuss the culvert replacements and Master Planning process for Banfield Road.

Juliet Walker, Transportation Planner, summarized the memorandum that would be provided to the Committee and City Council on the downtown parking shuttle service.

Mary Lou McElwain requested that staff investigate signage that would divert mall traffic from Woodbury Avenue and speed radar signs. Staff was directed to report back. She also supported Mr. Becksted's request for radar speeds signs on Islington Street, Aldrich Road, Woodbury Avenue, Maplewood Avenue, South Street, and Dennett Street.

Ron Cypher recalled that the Committee voted to eliminate two STOP signs on West Road near Campus Drive. Staff was directed to report back.

Harold Whitehouse commented on his action plan for obeying speed limits.

City Manager Bohenko notified the Committee that there would be a future joint work session with the City Council to discuss a residential parking program and the impacts of construction traffic for the wastewater treatment facility on Peirce Island.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – At 9:03 a.m., voted to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Chastain
Secretary of the Committee