

MEETING MINUTES

PARKING and TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – December 1, 2016
City Hall – Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER:

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

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Chairman, Brad Lown
Deputy City Manager, Nancy Colbert Puff
Public Works Director, Peter Rice
Deputy Fire Chief, James Heinz
Member, Ted Gray
Member, Ronald Cypher
Member, Harold Whitehouse
Member, Shari Donnermeyer
Alternate Member, Mary Lou McElwain

Staff Advisors Present:

Parking and Transportation Engineer, Eric Eby
Parking Manager, Joey Giordano
Assistant Planning Director, Juliet Walker

Absent:

Police Captain, Frank Warchol

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Harold Whitehouse motioned to accept the November 3, 2016 meeting minutes. Ted Gray seconded. **Motion passed 7-0.** Deputy Fire Chief Heinz was not present for vote.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Ron Cypher motioned to accept the financial report dated December 2016. Harold Whitehouse seconded. **Motion passed 8-0.**

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Paula Anne Chalfin spoke regarding the request for a traffic signal at the intersection of Middle Street and Union Street (agenda item VI.A.). She presented a document of her talking points to the Committee. She discussed the following points: an accident that damaged her home and property in August 2016, excessive traffic speeds, limited sight lines, numerous collisions from 2000 to 2016. She requested a traffic signal at the intersection and speed limit reduction.

Shane McCarthy spoke on behalf of the Christian Shore Neighborhood in Ward 1. They are requesting a 4-way STOP sign be installed at the intersection of Burkitt Street and Thornton Street (action item VII.A.). He presented a letter to the Committee from a neighbor requesting to be added to the petition. He discussed the following issues: limited sight lines, pedestrian safety, Thornton Street being used as a short cut to avoid traffic and stop signs on neighboring streets, and driver confusion at the intersection. He requested a 4-way STOP sign be installed.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Request for traffic signal at the intersection of Middle Street and Union Street, by Paula Anne Chalfin - Eric Eby requested additional time to do a traffic analysis and review traffic signal warrants. He stated he would investigate the sight line issues and review the Middle Street bike lane project. He informed the Committee that the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) would need to review and approve a new traffic signal.

Harold Whitehouse requested the action item be expedited. Ron Cypher recounted an accident involving the Portsmouth Fire Chief in the area. Public Works Director Rice reminded the Committee that traffic signal approval and installation would be lengthy, expensive and require budgeting. He stated the Middle Street bike lane project would improve the area. Deputy Fire Chief Heinz stated traffic signal preemption for emergency vehicles would be required on the signal. Mary Lou McElwain requested speeding and enforcement be addressed.

The Committee thanked Ms. Chalfin for being present.

Shari Donnermeyer motioned to have staff conduct a traffic analysis and report back at the January meeting. Ted Gray seconded. **Vote 8-0, staff to conduct a traffic analysis and report back at the January meeting.**

Paula Anne Chalfin expressed concern for pedestrian safety at the intersection of Miller and Middle because the No Turn on Red signs have been removed.

B. Thornton Street at Burkitt Street, request for 4-way STOP sign control, by Christian Shore neighborhood petition - Eric Eby stated this action item was addressed under Old Business because a similar request for a 4-way STOP sign was made last year. He stated as a result of that request, the No Parking signs at the corners were moved to increase sight lines at the intersection. He stated he would be reviewing the traffic volumes, speeds and turning movements at the intersection, and the warrants for 4-way STOP signs. Eric Eby stated he would report back on a recommendation.

Ron Cypher asked if the warrants for a 4-way STOP sign were met last year. Eric Eby stated that traffic volumes were not collected last year and that only the No Parking signs were moved.

Public Works Director Rice discussed the neighborhood traffic calming process.

Harold Whitehouse requested a site visit be conducted for the January meeting.

Public Works Director Rice motioned to suspend the rules to allow for public comment. Harold Whitehouse seconded. **Vote 8-0, to suspend rules to allow for public comment.**

Shane McCarthy stated he supported the current on-street parking. He stated this request has been presented multiple times and the petitioners want a speedy resolution. He stated he believes this intersection warrants a 4-way STOP sign because it is similar to Stark and Thornton.

The Committee thanked Mr. McCarthy for presenting on behalf of the neighborhood.

Public Works Director Rice recommended staff review the area for equally beneficial alternatives.

Shari Donnermeyer motioned to have staff conduct a traffic analysis of the area and report back at the January meeting. Harold Whitehouse seconded. **Vote 8-0, staff to conduct a traffic analysis of the area and report back at the January meeting.**

Ron Cypher asked Eric Eby to explain the warrants of a 4-way STOP sign. Eric Eby stated the warrants include, but are not limited to: traffic volumes of 200 – 300 vehicles an hour on each roadway at the intersection, approximately equal vehicular volumes on similar street types, crash experience and sight lines. He stated the warrants are outlined in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS:

Harold Whitehouse asked if the motorcycle parking spaces in front of Breaking New Grounds on Market Street would be changed back to vehicle parking. Eric Eby stated the pilot program ended on November 30th and the pavement markings would be removed. The space would revert back to one vehicle parking space.

Harold Whitehouse asked for a report back on the Islington Street (White Heron) temporary crosswalk project as noted in the August 4, 2016 meeting minutes. Eric Eby stated he is reviewing the video data collected during the pilot project and would be reporting the findings to the Committee soon.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – At 8:28 a.m., voted to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by:
Amy Chastain
Secretary of the Committee