

MEETING MINUTES

PARKING and TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

8:00 A.M. – November 2, 2017
City Hall – Conference Room A

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chairman Ted Gray called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Acting City Manager, Nancy Colbert Puff
Public Works Director, Peter Rice
Deputy Fire Chief, James Heinz
Police Captain, Frank Warchol
Member, Ted Gray
Member, Harold Whitehouse
Member, Ronald Cypher
Member, Shari Donnermeyer
Alternate Member, Mary Lou McElwain

Staff Advisors Present:

Parking and Transportation Engineer, Eric Eby
Planning Director, Juliet Walker
Parking Director, Benjamin Fletcher

Member Absent:

Chairman, Brad Lown

III. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES:

Public Works Director Rice moved to accept the meeting minutes of October 5, 2017.
Seconded by Acting City Manager, Nancy Colbert Puff. **Motion passed 9-0.**

IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Acting City Manager, Nancy Colbert Puff, moved to accept the financial report dated September 30, 2017. Seconded by Public Works Director Rice. **Motion passed 9-0.**

V. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Concerns regarding traffic not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalk on Middle Road at Essex Avenue, by Peter Nelsen. Eric Eby stated that a resident on Middle Road presented the request. He stated there is an existing crosswalk with warning signs on Middle Road near Essex Avenue. He recommended reporting back at the next meeting once he has an opportunity to collect data on traffic counts, traffic speeds and pedestrian volumes.

Harold Whitehouse moved to have staff collect data, evaluate and report back at the next meeting. Seconded by Public Works Director Rice. **Vote 9-0, to have staff collect data, evaluate and report back at the next meeting.**

Harold Whitehouse requested an on-site visit in December before the next meeting.

B. 1) Concerns regarding maintenance and safety on closed portion of Country Club Road, by Cindy Fessenden. Public Works Director Rice stated that after the October PTS meeting, crews made improvements to the area. They pruned trees and shrubs and cleaned debris. The road is gated and used primarily by pedestrians and bicyclists. Safety concerns regarding uneven pavement would be addressed, but the road is not a priority roadway because of its limited use. Public Works Director Rice clarified the roadway is only used by City crews to access the well facility and it is not under the Pease Development Authority (PDA) jurisdiction.

No action required by the Committee.

B. 2) Installation of a HAWK signal and crosswalk on Grafton Drive at Country Club Road, by Cindy Fessenden. Eric Eby stated a High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) signal and crosswalk were requested on Grafton Drive at the C&J Bus driveway. The location was identified in the City's 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan as needing a signalized crosswalk. He stated the City would need to work with Pease Development Authority. The PDA is responsible for infrastructure costs, including traffic signals. Public Works Director Rice stated that Eric Eby had contacted the PDA about this issue and would be working with them.

No action required by the Committee.

B. 3) Installation of an In-Street Pedestrian Crossing Sign at the existing crosswalk on Borthwick Avenue at Greenland Road, by Cindy Fessenden. Eric Eby stated the location is difficult to cross because of the the long crossing distance, the 90 degree curve and limited sight lines at the location. He stated City staff would be working with the developer of the Borthwick Forest office building, located across from the Portsmouth Regional Hospital, to improve pedestrian facilities. Eric Eby stated options would be investigated to improve pedestrian safety.

Mary Lou McElwain commented on improving existing crosswalks in the City and expressed concern about pedestrian safety. She stated crosswalks were not being restored after utility roadway construction. Weebles were not being replaced at existing crosswalk locations. The Committee discussed warrants required for a crosswalk installation. Public Works Director Rice thanked Mary Lou McElwain for presenting the issue. City staff will revisit crosswalk maintenance in regard to the department's priorities and workload.

No action required by the Committee.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Cindy Fessenden spoke about pedestrian safety on Borthwick Avenue at Greenland Road. She requested a weeble be installed in the interim and also a Committee on-site visit.

VIII. INFORMATIONAL:

A. Zagster usage report, by Juliet Walker, Planning Director. Juliet Walker distributed a memorandum and presentation provided to the City Council on October 2, 2017. The presentation is available on the City's webpage:

<http://files.cityofportsmouth.com/agendas/2017/citycouncil/cc100217cp.pdf>

She provided the Committee with details regarding Zagster usage from May 3rd to September 17th, 2017. Highlights included: most users purchased a daily pass or a 3-day pass. City staff would like to see an increase in monthly and annual memberships. The City requested Zagster provide zip code data on riders. Stations and bikes will be removed in mid-November and reinstalled in April 2018. City staff will reevaluate station locations and requests for new station locations. Expansion of the program is through sponsorship. Portwalk Place has sponsored a new location. The Memorial Bridge Parking Lot had the highest usage. The Bridge Street Parking Lot had the lowest usage. The annual lease cost is \$54,000. The City received approximately \$3,000 in returned revenues from Zagster as of the second quarter.

The Committee discussed bike station locations, storage for bikes and stations during the off-season, the program as part of the Parking Supply and Demand Strategies, data collection through the Zagster application on a smartphone and role of the Zagster local manager. The Committee also discussed safety issues regarding helmets and basic rules of the road.

Public Works Director Rice stated the fees associated with the Zagster program do not come from the City's tax base. The Zagster program is funded from the parking program user fees. He stated the program is a demand management tool for parking. It is similar to Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) regional public transit program in that it eases the demand for downtown parking.

Deputy Fire Chief Heinz requested to be included in future meetings regarding new Zagster station locations along with Police Captain Warchol.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS:

Harold Whitehouse requested an update on the request to eliminate access to Echo Avenue from Spaulding Turnpike. Eric Eby stated he is collecting data and anticipates a public meeting will be scheduled in the coming weeks. He stated he has been in contact with Charles McMahon, the resident who made the original request.

Harold Whitehouse presented a bumper sticker to the Committee that he created and financed. The bumper sticker reads: *I am your pace car, I live here*. He distributed bumper stickers to Committee members interested in posting them on their personal vehicles. He spoke in advance to the Portsmouth Police Chief about creating the bumper sticker.

X. ADJOURNMENT – at 8:39 a.m., **VOTED** to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by:

Amy Chastain
Secretary to the Committee