

Town of Needham
Transportation Safety Committee

Minutes: December 13, 2023

Location: Forbes/McLeod Community Room, Public Safety Building, 88 Chestnut Street

Livestreamed on Zoom: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRi9QLvkKP0>

ADOPTED JANUARY 10, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Justin McCullen; Guus Driessen, Barry McNeilly, Donna Mullin, Rebecca Tarantino
MEMBERS REMOTE:	Tom Ryder
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Rhain Hoyland, Lt. John McGrath
STAFF PRESENT:	Tyler Gabrielski, Management Analyst; Robert Wilson, Traffic Engineer
PUBLIC PRESENT:	Brian Antonio, Evan Judd, Marjorie Gaultiz, Lisa Teichner
PUBLIC REMOTE:	Jon Hagler

1. INTRODUCTION, ROLL CALL, CALL TO ORDER

At 7:01 p.m., J. McCullen called the meeting to order, took roll call, and disclosed the video recording.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 8, 2023

G. DRIESSEN MOVED AND B. MCNEILLY SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 8, 2023.

ROLL CALL VOTE: G. DRIESSEN, AYE; J. MCCULLEN, AYE; B. MCNEILLY, AYE; D. MULLIN, AYE;

T. RYDER, AYE. R. TARANTINO ABSTAINED FOR THE REASON SHE WAS NOT PRESENT ON 11/8/23.

MOTION CARRIES: 5-0-1

3. OTHER BUSINESS/TSC STATUS UPDATE REPORT - R. WILSON

CHARLES RIVER ST. NEAR GROVE ST. - Speed advisory signs have been requested.

HIGH ROCK ST. - LANE NARROWING

Comparisons were made between September and November speed studies conducted with slight improvement. Incomplete road markings and speeds should be tracked once markings are completed.

BANCROFT ST. AND WASHINGTON AVE. - INTERSECTION

This intersection is closer to Mitchell School than Bond St. and Falcon St. There is a stop sign on Bancroft but not on Washington. Drivers think it is a 4 way stop. R. Wilson shared his observations made during the hours suggested by the petitioner: 95 vehicles, 70 pedestrians, 20 bicyclists. There were only two instances where a pedestrian and vehicle stopped for one another, and two vehicles stopped for one another. Generally, the volume of incidents was low.

BOND ST. AND FALCON ST. - INTERSECTION

R. Wilson will evaluate the lower intersection at Bond St. and Falcon St. for suggested improvement and report to the TSC in January.

ACTION: The following carried motion from the November 8 meeting will be pushed forward to the January meeting. "J. McGrath moved to have the Engineering Dept. prepare a study to evaluate the intersection of Bond St. and Falcon St. for the purpose of a four-way stop sign and recommend short-term improvement to the Traffic Safety Committee by the next monthly meeting."

Jon Hagler of 22 Bond St. inquired about Town Counsel's interpretation of the 4 way stop sign for this intersection. J. McCullen will wait for DPW's recommendation before contacting Town Counsel.

CROSSWALK SAFETY ON GREAT PLAIN AVE. AT STOCKDALE RD.

A continental crosswalk request was sent to the Highway Div. We are considering painted islands.

4. LISA TEICHNER, MARJORIE GAULTIZ - VISIBILITY ISSUES ON HUNNEWELL ST. BY THORPE PARK TRIANGLE

M. Gaultiz and L. Teichner of 615 Hunnewell St. read an August letter sent to the TSC Committee. Petitioners expressed concern for a site impediment backing out of their driveway into the road.

- Cars parked on the street impede the driver's view of backing out of the driveway.
 - The neighbor has added a fence and row of trees impeding the driver's view of backing out.
 - The large oak tree belonging to the Town impedes the driver's view of backing out of the driveway.
- Members discussed site improvement by preventing parking from the oak tree to the petitioner's driveway or restrict parking on the petitioner's side of the street.
- Neighbors would have to agree to the restricted parking change.
 - The change would be a regulatory bylaw change requiring approval of the Select Board.

ACTION:

- The matter is postponed to the January meeting to obtain opinion from Lt. McGrath.
- DPW will report parking prohibition history and road measurements to discuss options.

5. MATT ARNOULD – SPEEDING ON WACHUSETT RD.

At 7:32 pm, the petitioner was not present. The matter will be postponed.

6. EVAN JUDD – SPEEDING AND CROSSINGS ON NEHOIDEN ST.

E. Judd of 30 Washburn Ave. reported the traffic calming measures employed thus far have been good.

- Drivers travel at 35 mph in a "thickly settled" area with an advisory speed limit sign of 25 mph.
- There is a bus stop at a location where there is no stop sign or crossing.

DPW suggested the petitioner work with the School Transportation department to relocate the bus stop. Members discussed traffic calming measures such as sideline painting. DPW is meeting with a consultant engineer firm to review the Rosemary, Parish and Nehoiden St. intersection as a future project. Members discussed GPI criteria for a school crosswalk study and contacting Parks & Forestry to increase lighting intensity as well as trimming overhanging tree branches.

R. TARANTINO MOVED AND G. DRIESSEN SECONDED TO CONDUCT A STUDY TO DETERMINE AN APPROPRIATE LOCATION FOR A CROSSWALK BETWEEN LINDEN STREET AND WASHBURN AVENUE.

ROLL CALL VOTE: G. DRIESSEN, AYE; J. MCCULLEN, AYE; B. MCNEILLY, AYE; D. MULLIN, AYE;

T. RYDER, AYE; R. TARANTINO, AYE. MOTION CARRIES: 6-0

7. KEITH ESPINOLA - CUT-THROUGH TRAFFIC IN VALLEY RD. NEIGHBORHOOD

K. Espinola of 184 Valley Rd. petitioned for signage on the corner of Greendale Ave. and Intervale Rd. Between 3:00-6:00 pm, traffic backs up to the church. Drivers cut down Intervale Rd. to avoid the traffic light. There are no stop signs in the neighborhood yet every other residence has children. The petitioner requests a stop sign at the corner of Intervale and Norwich Roads, at the intersection of Greendale Ave. and Intervale Rd., as well as the intersection of Valley and Norwich Roads. He suggested signage "restricted access" for "residents only" between 3:00-6:00 pm.

One member suggests the petitioner contact the Police Dept. to remove the local road bypass algorithm from software and conduct speed enforcement on Peacedale Rd. Members discussed conducting a traffic

evaluation to adjust traffic light timing during peak times at Greendale Ave. and Intervale Rd., a possible advisory sign for "no thru way", or no left turn from 3:00-7:00 pm at Great Plain Ave. and Peacedale Rd.

Critical intersections include:

- 4-way intersection of Norwich Rd. and Intervale Rd.
- Stop sign at the end of Intervale Rd. on Peacedale Rd.
- Stop sign at the fork end of Peacedale Rd. (Valley Rd. or Norwich Rd.)

ACTION: J. McCullen will speak with Lt. McGrath to evaluate enforcement of thickly settled statutory limit to have data to assess longer term improvement.

G. DRIESSEN MOVED AND R. TARANTINO SECONDED TO EVALUATE THE BENEFITS OF CREATING A TWO-LANE APPROACH IN THE SOUTHBOUND DIRECTION ON GREENDALE AVENUE.

ROLL CALL VOTE: G. DRIESSEN, AYE; J. McCULLEN, AYE; B. McNEILLY, AYE; D. MULLIN, AYE; T. RYDER, AYE; R. TARANTINO, AYE. MOTION CARRIES: 6-0

J. McCULLEN MOVED AND R. TARANTINO SECONDED TO EVALUATE STOP SIGNS THROUGH THE MUTCD AND MASSACHUSETTS ADVISORY AT THE END OF NORWICH RD, THE END OF INTERVALE RD, AND THE END OF PEACEDALE RD. EACH TO BE DETERMINED, AND CONDUCT A 24 HOUR COUNT AT PEACEDALE RD.

ROLL CALL VOTE: G. DRIESSEN, AYE; J. McCULLEN, AYE; B. McNEILLY, AYE; D. MULLIN, AYE; T. RYDER, AYE; R. TARANTINO, AYE. MOTION CARRIES: 6-0

8. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION - WARREN ST. TRAFFIC CALMING STRATEGIES

Brian Antonio of Warren St. (a petitioner at previous meetings) discussed chicanes as a traffic calming measure on Warren St. B. Antonio secured 32 signatures from 40 Warren St. residents between Lincoln St. and School St.

DPW discussed an approach requiring center lines. Members discussed why yellow lines (less than 100 foot intervals) would be needed on Warren St. to assist drivers to follow patterns. Members reviewed slides from the U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration for yellow lines, curvatures or chicanes.

The Mobility Planning and Coordination Committee is looking for an efficient traffic calming policy with application tools. Their next meeting will be January 8, 2024.

Members discussed not setting precedents to approve measures one street at a time.

ACTION: DPW Engineering will sketch concepts and investigate.

9. MATTERS NOT ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THE MEETING - There were none.

10. ADJOURNMENT - ROLL CALL VOTE

J. McCULLEN MOVED AND G. DRIESSEN SECONDED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:56 PM.

ROLL CALL VOTE: G. DRIESSEN, AYE; J. McCULLEN, AYE; B. McNEILLY, AYE; D. MULLIN, AYE; T. RYDER, AYE; R. TARANTINO, AYE. MOTION CARRIES: 6-0

Respectfully submitted,
Dale Michaud
Recording Secretary