

Town of Needham
Transportation Safety Committee

Minutes: December 11, 2024

Location: Forbes/McLeod Community Room, Public Safety Bldg., 88 Chestnut St.

Livestreamed on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88341769950>

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 12, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Guus Driessen, Tyler Gabrielski, Justin McCullen, Lt. John McGrath,
Barry McNeilly, Rebecca Tarantino
MEMBERS ABSENT: Donna Mullin, Tom Ryder
STAFF: Robert Wilson
GUEST: Officer Eddie Bayiates; see attached Sign-In Sheet

1. INTRODUCTION, ROLL CALL, CALL TO ORDER

At 7:00 p.m., J. McCullen called the meeting to order, took roll call, and disclosed the video recording.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 13, 2024

G. DRIESSEN MOVED AND T. GABRIELSKI SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 11/13/24.

VOTE: G. DRIESSEN, AYE; T. GABRIELSKI, AYE; J. MCCULLEN, AYE; J. MCGRATH, AYE; B. MCNEILLY, AYE. UNANIMOUS. **MOTION CARRIES: 5-0**

3. OLD BUSINESS/ STATUS UPDATE REPORT - R. WILSON

SPEED STUDIES, INSTALLED SIGNS

- Warning signs have been installed on Hunnewell St. near Taylor St. for Curve Ahead and Intersection Ahead.
- Intersection Ahead signs have been installed on Hillcrest Rd. before Wyoming Ave.
- The Speed Study was conducted on Manning St.(see 4. below).
- Multiple signs were added west of Hillside Ave. (Stop Ahead, Double Tracks, new tabs).

HILLSIDE AVE. & WEST ST. – NEW ALL-WAY STOP

- DPW Engineering observed West St was congested as trains pass through. Members discussed moving the sign boards requested by Police. The Stop sign installed on the westbound lane was installed too far back. Consider supplementing a sign on the opposite side. We'll take a look to see if it is functioning better.

At 7:26 pm, R. Tarantino and T. Ryder joined the meeting.

4. PETITIONER, GARY CROSSEN - SPEEDING AND OTHER ISSUES ON MANNING ST. BETWEEN BROOKLINE ST. AND GREAT PLAIN AVE.

Representing 32 neighbors, the Petitioner expressed concern for the volume of speeding traffic.

- Families with school aged children walk and exercise on Manning St.
- Neighbors suggest an All-Way Stop Sign or signal at the intersection of Powers St. and Manning St.
- Neighbors use Manning St. as a shortcut to avoid Webster St.

DPW Engineering cited statistics of a November 2024 Traffic Study on Manning St. near Powers St.

- 85% of 1,658 cars during the peak hour traveled at less than 30 MPH

DPW Engineering compared statistics of a 2021 Traffic Study on Powers St. in both directions.

- 85% of 803 cars during the peak hour traveled at 25-28 MPH

According to State and Federal regulations, criteria to add an All-Way Stop Sign include:

- A Stop Sign is not meant to control speed.
 - Equal traffic volume on the two cross streets. In this case, the ratio is almost 2 to 1.
 - Other criteria could include accident history, sight distance, pedestrian and schoolchildren volumes.
- Manning St. is a street for cars without lines on the road. Powers St. has pedestrian crosswalks.

The Mobility Planning Committee is building a list of streets to be turned into “neighborways,” streets with slow speeds for pedestrians and cyclists without bike lanes. Manning St. is considered a good candidate for a neighborway.

Members discussed statutory versus regulatory Speed Signs on Manning St. Advisory Signs could be included as a short-term remedy.

J. McCullen Moved and G. Driessen Seconded to explore intersection advisory signage at locations to be determined by DPW Engineering, explore criteria for an All-Way Stop at Powers St. and Manning St. based on MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices), explore options for pavement markings, and consider other markings.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIES: 6-0

5. PETITIONER, DINA ITKIN - CROSSWALK ON HUNNEWELL ST. AT TAYLOR ST.

Petitioner described the roadway and intersection characteristics. She would like a crosswalk added on Hunnewell St. at Taylor St. to remedy the following situation:

- Taylor St. travels up toward Eliot School.
- Pedestrians cross Taylor St. to/from Sunita Williams and Eliot Schools rather than at Central Ave.
- Pedestrians cross Hunnewell St. to get to the bus stop at Briarwood.
- There is low visibility as Hunnewell St. intersects with Ardmore Rd. and Wellesley Ave.
 - A crosswalk here could serve as a traffic calming measure.
- Cars speed on Hunnewell St. toward the intersection.
- Cars turn onto Taylor Extension and do not see pedestrians standing there.
- DPW clarified the Speed Study included cars turning onto Taylor Ext. lowering average speed.

DPW Engineering cited statistics of a July 2024 Traffic Study on Hunnewell St.

- 85% of 3,410 cars traveling in both directions during the peak hour traveled at 36 MPH

Members discussed why adding a crosswalk where it is unsafe to cross creates a false sense of security. Some improvements will be made to make the road safe, probably traffic signal upgrades. Members suggested walking down to Taylor Extension to cross at Chestnut St.

Members discussed the criteria for adding pushbutton flashing lights to cross the road. Teach youth extreme pedestrian safety to wait for traffic to stop before crossing. Do not endorse youth to cross on Taylor Extension where there are no sidewalks.

Long-term traffic calming measures are needed. This section of Hunnewell St. is on the 5 year Capital Plan for 2028. The time to enact change is when we are paving. Look at resurfacing, increasing the width of the double yellow line and narrowing the road from the center. This matter will be continued to the next meeting.

6. TSC EXPENSE ACCOUNT AND FUNDING REQUESTS

Members reviewed the expenditure needs. One correction to the Expense Report was noted (the cost of signs did not include the cost for the hardware associated with the signs).

R. TARANTINO MOVED AND J. MCCULLEN SECONDED TO APPROVE SPENDING \$3,469.26 FROM THE TRANSPORTATION SAFETY ACCOUNT FOR THE PURCHASE OF FLASHING STOP SIGNS AT HILLSIDE AND WEST STREETS. VOTE: UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIES: 6-0

Members discussed a rotary for this intersection. The traffic volume would require a larger rotary. There is likely not enough room.

7. MATTERS NOT ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THE MEETING - NONE

Members discussed the Scope of Work submitted by the on-call Consultant to do a Feasibility Study/Conceptual Plan for the five-legged intersection at Hunnewell St/Wellesley Ave, etc. They will look at the limitations of the existing topography and what it would take to create a pedestrian connection. That was quoted as a \$31,750 project. Tyler has not yet discussed the matter with the Town of Wellesley. A special account would have to be set up. **ACTION: Coordinate a meeting to address the quote for the scope.**

Members discussed the feasibility of adding Permanent Radar signs at Manning St. and installing Jersey barriers.

Members discussed prioritizing projects to spend down the TSC fund balance. Priorities include crosswalks at Mark Lee Rd and Cimino Rd.

Results of the Hospital configuration were completed with a Turning Movements Count. A Dedicated Turn Signal was proposed. The problem developed because the Hospital shut down their other entry. The consultant recommended a lane reconfiguration and signal upgrades. Members discussed the hospital's responsibility for the cost.

Members discussed remedies the TSC is unable to fund with this year's budget and prioritizing items to include in a larger budget next year.

8. ADJOURNMENT

R. TARANTINO MOVED AND G. DRIESSEN SECONDED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:32 PM. VOTE: UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIES: 6-0

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Michaud
Recording Secretary

INFORMATIONAL: The Meeting Packet is available at <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>



TOWN OF NEEDHAM
TRANSPORTATION SAFETY
COMMITTEE

December 11, 2024 – Public Safety Building, Forbes/McLeod Community Room

88 Chestnut St, Needham, Massachusetts

PLEASE SIGN IN

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