

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of July 9, 2014 Meeting
Public Services Administration Building
Needham, MA

IN ATTENDANCE

TMAC Members: Jeffrey MacMann, Anthony Del Gaizo, Stephen DeLisi, Lt. John Kraemer, Robert Meltzer, Richard Merson, Donna Mullin, Mark Rosen, and Glen Schneider.

Technical Advisor: Bob Wilson.

Guests: Andrew Feldman, James Chin, Don Molter, Gene Molter, Jack Carr, Ralph Shuman, Maureen Atkins, Liza d'Hemecourt, Tad Staley, Martin Yapp, Claudia Yapp, Cara Hawkey, and Bill Paulson.

Call to Order

The meeting was convened at 7:00 PM by Mr. MacMann.

I. Bike Markings on Greendale Avenue:

Mr. Staley updated the Committee on Needham Bikes' proposal to place bike markings on Greendale Ave. At the Committee's last meeting, Needham Bikes was commissioned with sending a mailing to the particular section of Greendale Avenue where the proposed markings will be placed, as well as select abutters. The mailer requested that the Greendale Ave. residents and abutters take a survey regarding the bike markings. In total, 104 mailers were sent out, and 86 individuals responded to the survey. After non-residents and repeat voters were removed, 83 of those 86 were in favor or strongly in favor of the bike markings, while three were opposed; in addition, most respondents were not Greendale Ave. residents. The Committee interpreted the lack of a Greendale Ave. response to indicate indifference to the markings. The Committee noted that the map that was sent to residents only included nine markings, rather than eleven as on the original plan, but acknowledged that the map sent to residents merely approximated the locations. **The Committee passed a motion** to put down eleven bike markings on Greendale Avenue in accordance with the map presented to the Committee at the June 2014 bike, except that the marking originally planned to be in front of 1044 Greendale Avenue will be moved two houses closer to Great Plain Avenue due to strong resident opposition. (Note: a copy of the letter mailed to residents and the synthesized results of the survey are attached to these minutes.)

II. Crosswalk, Signage on Webster Street School Zone/Lindbergh Avenue Drop Off:

Ms. Atkins presented two concerns:

- A) Two students have recently been hit by vehicles on Webster Street near Lindbergh Avenue. Ms. Atkins is concerned with the lack of: school zone signs near the high school; speed limit signs; signage for the crosswalk outside the high school on Webster St.; and, a permanent "no left turn" sign in front of the school. In addition, she noted that the "no parking" signs are very faded, and there is no illumination for the crosswalks at night. She proposed that the Town put up new speed limit signs, "school zone ahead" signs, crosswalk signs, a permanent "no left turn" sign, new "no parking" signs, and perhaps an electronic speed board, as well as increasing illumination of the crosswalks.

The Committee informed Ms. Atkins that the high school is not technically a school zone since a school zone requires at least one grade below grade nine. In addition, the investigations determined that the pedestrians who were hit were at fault. **The Committee passed a motion** to install the missing crosswalk signs, replace the faded “no parking” signs, replace any other faded signs, and install yellow diamond “school” signs on Webster Street at both ends of the high school.

- B) Lindbergh Avenue is becoming an unofficial drop-off area for parents dropping off their high school students. Unfortunately, the children are exiting the vehicle in an unsafe manner, on both sides of the vehicle, sometimes without looking. This is a hazard because sometimes other vehicles are speeding on Lindbergh and are not expecting the children. In addition, the sidewalk plows only remove snow from one side, so the children sometimes walk in the street. The Committee informed Ms. Atkins that it is not illegal for drivers to drop off their passengers on the side of the road. In designated drop-off areas, the signage is merely advisory, and thus unenforceable. **The Committee passed a motion** for the Committee to draft a letter to the School Committee and the Public Building Committee concerning parking at the school, which will shortly be reduced as parking lots will be converted into modular classrooms, to communicate that the TMAC is experiencing these issues so that the concerns can be incorporated into future design plans.

III. Intersection, Speed at Washington Avenue/Hawthorn Avenue/Bond Street:

Mr. Molter is concerned with traffic at the intersection of Washington Ave, Hawthorn Ave, and Bond St. as traffic coming down the hill on Washington Ave. faces a blind curve, and generally vehicles are speeding in this area. In addition, he believes that Washington Avenue is a cut through. He recommended a four-way stop sign, speed bumps, or perhaps an increased police presence. The Committee noted that a traffic study was done recently (June 2012), which concluded that the Bond St. leg has the greater volume of traffic; thus, the intersection meets the warrants for a two-way stop sign. **The Committee passed a motion** to install stop signs on Hawthorn Ave. northbound approaching Washington Ave. and on Washington Ave. southbound approaching the Bond St./Washington Ave. intersection, and to install intersection warning signs on Washington Ave. northbound between Holmes St. and the Washington Ave./Bond St. intersection.

IV. Speed, Signage on Gould Street:

Ms. d’Hemecourt is concerned with the speed of traffic on Gould St. near Mills Field, particularly when pedestrians try to cross Gould St. in that area. She suggested installing a crosswalk, speed bumps, or “children at play” signs. The Committee advised Ms. d’Hemecourt that speed bumps are a bad idea due to noise concerns. **The Committee passed a motion** to install playground signs at 33 Gould Street and near the Gould St./Ellis St. intersection. In addition, the Department of Public Works will look into cutting back the hedges on Gould St. in that area.

V. Parking Signs on Mark Lee Road Between Alfreton Road and Hunnewell Street:

Mr. Chin informed the Committee that more vehicles are parking for extended periods of time on Mark Lee Rd., particularly in front of his house on the north side of the road (between Alfreton Rd. and Hunnewell St.). These vehicles block the road and access to his driveway, especially

during the winter when snow banks exacerbate the problem. Currently, on the south side of Mark Lee Rd. is a two hour parking restriction, and Mr. Chin requests that the restriction be expanded to the north side of the road. The Committee noted that a house on Hunnewell St. abuts Mark Lee Rd. in this area, and, before proceeding, would like consensus from this resident. Mr. Chin said he would attempt to get this neighbor's consensus and return at a future date. The Committee also noted that a regulation is already in place, but just lacks signage.

VI. Speed on Mark Lee Road/Alferton Road:

Deferred due to absence of petitioner or representative.

VII. Signage on Central Avenue at Volante Farms Entrance:

Deferred due to absence of petitioner or representative.

VIII. Speed on Great Plain Avenue/Central Avenue and Highland Avenue/West Street:

Deferred due to absence of petitioner or representative.

IX. Street light at Forest Street/Central Avenue:

Deferred due to absence of petitioner or representative.

X. Intersection at 4th Avenue and Kendrick Street/Nahanton Street:

Deferred due to absence of petitioner or representative.

XI. Intersection of Bower and Noanet:

Mr. Shuman presented his concerns of the dangerousness of the Bower St. and Noanet Rd. intersection due to speeding vehicles and severely overgrown bushes obstructing the view of drivers. He requested a stop sign be installed on Bower St. at the Noanet Rd. intersection. The Committee noted that the bushes appear to overhang the sidewalk, and may be in violation of the corner clearance regulations. **The Committee passed a motion** to conduct a traffic study to investigate the viability of a stop sign at that intersection. In addition, the Department of Public Works will investigate the overhanging bushes for a corner clearance violation.

XII. Signage on Rosemary Street:

Mr. Carr presented a proposal for reducing the confusion on Rosemary St. westbound at the Highland Ave. intersection. He noted that vehicles sometimes are confused on this one-way road when trying to take a left, causing traffic and accident concerns. He requested that road markings be placed to separate Rosemary St. into two lanes, with the left lane containing a left arrow marking and the right lane contain a straight/right arrows marking. He also requested that a "no parking" sign be installed on the north side of that intersection as sometimes vehicles will park up to the intersection, inhibiting traffic flow. **The Committee passed a motion:** to install markings on Rosemary St. westbound at the Highland Ave. intersection, creating two lanes for a limited distance; to place a left arrow marking on the left side and a straight/right arrows marking on the right side; to install a "left lane for left turn" sign; and, to install a "no parking here to corner" sign on the north side of Rosemary St. in front of the marked parking spot.

XIII. Signage on Garden Street/May Street and Garden Street/Tamarack Street:

Mr. Feldman is concerned with safety on Garden St., which is not a through street, as vehicles speed down it thinking it is a cut-through, but are forced to use the cul-de-sacs on Garden St. and Tamarack St. to turn around and then speed out. He requests “no outlet” signs be installed at the intersection of May St. and Garden St. In addition, Mr. Feldman requested that a “private road” sign be installed prior to 80 Garden St., where Garden St. becomes a private way, in attempt to mitigate damage caused by vehicles that turn around in the cul-de-sac. The Committee informed Mr. Feldman that “private way” signs must be installed on the private way, not prior to it, but that the sightlines will allow approaching motorists to see the signs in advance; in addition, the Town does not provide these signs. **The Committee passed a motion** to install a “no outlet” sign at the intersection of May St. and Garden St.

XIV. Crosswalk from Memorial Field at Highland Avenue:

Deferred due to absence of petitioner or representative.

XV. Intersection at Lindbergh and Manning Street:

Mr. Paulson presented his concerns about the intersection of Lindbergh Ave. and Manning St. It is currently a two-way stop, but many motorists think it is a four-way stop, which creates overall confusion. In addition, a yellow “stop ahead” sign is confusing to motorists because it is located at the corner of Manning St. and Lindbergh Ave., and although it is actually a warning for the intersection at Brookline St., motorists do not know what it means. Mr. Paulson requests a four-way stop sign be installed at the intersection of Lindbergh Ave. and Manning St. The Committee informed Mr. Paulson that the “stop ahead” sign was installed several years ago due to damage to vehicles caused by a general unawareness of the approaching stop sign around the bend. He was informed that the warrants for a four-way stop sign require a balanced flow of traffic, which is probably not the case here. **The Committee passed a motion** to review the placement of the “stop ahead” sign and to investigate how to best delineate the bend in the road at Lindbergh Ave. and Manning St.

XVI. Other Business

- **The Committee passed a motion** to approve the minutes from the June 11, 2014 meeting, pending the correction of the spelling of “AASHTO” in item 1, paragraph 2, line 5.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:37 PM.

Minutes compiled and summarized by Robert Meltzer.