

Minutes
Traffic Management Advisory Committee
Wednesday, June 9, 2021
7:00 P.M.
Zoom Meeting ID # 823-4252-8108
Adopted July 14, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Seth Bauer, Vice-Chair; Donna Mullin, Rhain Hoyland, Superintendent of Highways; Anthony DelGaizo, Town Engineer, Lt. John McGrath, Rebecca Tarantino, Suzanne Stein.

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Wilson, Engineer; Daphne M. Collins, Recording Secretary, Rana Mana-Doerfer, Administrative Specialist.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Megan Coons; Bill Lovett, Alexander Shapeton, Janice Hunt, Priscilla Coughlin, Sophia Wong, Erin Monson, Michael Grappo

1. ROLL CALL

Seth Bauer, Vice-Chair, opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and Roll Call was taken.

2. MINUTES FOR APRIL 14, 2021

Vote: Lt. McGrath moved to accept the Minutes of April 14, 2021 Ms. Stein seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

3. STATUS REPORT UPDATE

Mr. Wilson reported the following project updates:

Jarvis Circle Neighborhood – The second traffic and speed study conducted in April.

- Jarvis Circle: 105 cars north bound at 22mph; 103 cars south bound at 23mph.
- Nardone Road: 160 cars north bound at 29mph; 153 cars south bound at 27mph.
- Bess Road: 36 cars east bound at 27mph; 59 cars west bound at 16mph. Speed was within 30mph and the volume was low.

A member of the public disagrees with results of the data since it was collected during the Covid19 period.

██████████ Jarvis Circle, thought 30mph was too fast for the neighborhood kids.

A resident of Nardone Road stated that there are lots of children, pedestrians, dog walkers and the elderly in the neighborhood and thought the speed seem faster than data indicated. She requested that speed bumps be installed. Mr. Hoyland said that speed bumps are not an option because of snow removal.

Ms. Tarantino inquired if another traffic study could be conducted with real, post Covid19 data. Mr. DelGaizo responded that a new recount could be conducted in September or October.

Vote: Ms. Tarantino voted to conduct another traffic study in September. Ms. Stein seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

4. MANNING AND POWERS STREETS– Traffic Study

PETITIONER: Megan Coons, 29 Thorpe Road

A traffic study was conducted during two weeks in mid-May. Mr. Wilson reported the results at Manning and Powers Street:

- Powers Street East: 384 cars west bound at 28mph; 419 cars east bound at 27mph.
- Powers Street West: 347 cars west bound at 23mph; 367 cars east bound at 24mph.
- Manning Street: 965 cars north bound at 28mph; 834 cars south bound at 28mph. Speed was within 30mph and the volume was low.

Mr. Wilson noted that the data does not support the installation of a stop sign at the intersection because the traffic volume is imbalanced. Ms. Coons said the street was being used as an alternative to Webster Street and wanted to know of any options to control the traffic volume on the street. Lt. McGrath that the Police cannot limit the public from using a public road. Police statistics show that drivers are obeying the traffic rules.

Mr. DelGaizo acknowledged that Manning Street is a flat, long straight road. However, the data collected from every single car shows that 85% are travelling at the legal speed. Lt. McGrath suggested checking the timing of the light at the Webster and Manning Street intersection to see if it alleviates traffic volume on Manning Street.

Vote: Lt. McGrath moved to adjust the timing of the light at Webster and Manning Streets intersection. Ms. Tarantino seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

Ms. Tarantino inquired about the possibility of installing a stop sign at an intersection along Manning Street. Mr. DelGaizo informed that installing a stop sign to slow down traffic was illegal, and a four-way stop sign requires a balance traffic flow. Ms. Coons wondered if a study could be conducted at another intersection along Manning which would provide the balanced data required. Lt. McGrath thought Manning and Powers Street may be such an intersection

5. DEDHAM AVENUE AND SOUTH STREET INTERSECTION – Crosswalk, signs and speed

PETITIONER: Bill Lovett, 141 Edgewater Drive

Mr. Lovett noted that there is lots of pedestrian traffic of all ages but no place to cross safely at the South Street and Dedham Avenue intersection.

Mr. DelGaizo noted that the intersection has been identified for reconstruction on the Town's CIP list. Highlighted by the Town Manager as an intersection of concern, it is scheduled in four to five years. The year prior to reconstruction a consultant will be hired to engineer the redesign. At that time, all aspects of the intersection are reviewed, and an actuated pedestrian access would be included. An actuated pedestrian access includes installing handicapped ramps which cost 5K to 7K per ramp. The cost of ramps for the intersection is approximately 20K to 28K. The total cost of an actuated pedestrian

crosswalk is 40K, which cannot be done in the interim outside of the scope of an intersection reconstruction. All aspect of an intersection must comply.

Mr. Hoyland asked if the petitioner was looking for a sidewalk installation as well. Mr. Lovett responded that that is the ideal. He appreciated if the reconstruction timeline could be accelerated.

Ms. Tarantino asked if the intersection could be done sooner. Mr. DelGaizo reported that the reconstruction of intersections on the CIP list are listed on a priority of need. The list only advances with the availability of funding.

Mr. Hoyland identified that there are three similar pedestrian crossing petitions. He suggested developing an Article grouping them together to serve the neighborhood's pedestrian connectivity needs. He noted that the Town has a list of projects that goes out 50 years. Mr. Bauer suggested that TMAC could place the concept of a neighborhood pedestrian connectivity project on the Agenda for public input.

Mr. DelGaizo noted that South Street is a Scenic Road which is under the jurisdiction of the Planning Board.

6. MARKED TREE ROAD BETWEEN OAK STREET AND OAKCREST ROAD– Speed and Blind Curve
PETITIONER: Alexander Shapeton, 115 Marked Tree Road

Mr. Shapeton reported that the area was dangerous. There are sidewalks on only one side of the road and cars go above the speed limit. Delivery trucks park along the road making maneuverability and visibility difficult. Between Oak Street and Oakcrest Road there is a hill and a bend leaving no time to react.

Mr. Bauer told Mr. Shapeton that petitions regarding concerns on Marked Tree Road frequently come before the TMAC. Ms. Tarantino hoped that the reconstruction of the Great Plain Avenue and Central Avenue intersection will improve the traffic challenges on Marked Tree Road. Ms. Tarantino added that Marked Tree was narrow, too fast and needed repaving. She thought the street could use some speed limit or *Slow* signs to remind drivers to slow down.

Mr. DelGaizo reported that consultants were surveying the road for repaving. He concurred that a *Slow Curve* and 30 mph speed signs could be installed.

Ms. Tarantino requested that the speed sign be for 25 mph.

Vote: Ms. Tarantino moved to install a *Slow Curve* and a 25 mph speed signs in front of 95 and 103 Marked Tree Road. Ms. Stein seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

7. SOUTH AND CHESTNUT STREETS – No Heavy Trucks sign on South Street
PETITIONER: Janice Hunt, 969 South Street

Ms. Hunt reported that there is a small *No Heavy Trucks* sign on South Street facing Chestnut Street coming from Dover. She requested that there be a similar visible sign saying *Trucks Prohibited* be placed on South Street facing South Street.

Lt. McGrath was not aware of a weight limit for commercial vehicles on South Street. Mr. DelGaizo said there was a temporary truck exclusion 20 years ago and that South Street was not a truck prohibited street. Mr. Hoyland said the sign was installed when South Street was reconstructed; it is not a legal sign and needs to be taken down. Lt McGrath concurred.

Mr. Bauer inquired about the process to limit streets to truck usage. Mr. DelGaizo reported that the Town does not have the authority to deny trucks access to streets. A petition must be submitted to the state for consideration. If the limit affects an abutting community, the abutting community must approve the petition. Documentation on the number of trucks must be included and an alternative route has to be provided. The petitioner cannot reroute trucks through another town. Lt. McGrath added that delivery and oil delivery trucks are exempt from truck exclusions.

8. HIGHLAND AVENUE AT OAKLAND AVENUE– Crosswalk, Signage

PETITIONER: Priscilla Coughlin, 7 Oakland Avenue

Ms. Coughlin reported that cars ignore the cross walk on Highland Avenue at Oakland Street. This intersection is very busy at commuter hours but is constant throughout the day. She requested flashing lights be installed at the crosswalk to increase visibility and compliance.

Lt. McGrath noted that there is no *Stop* sign at the location and that a *Stop* sign with LED lights be installed.

Mr. Hoyland reported that the Highway Division had in stock a *Stop* sign with a red reflective diamond and that LED lights can be added for 3K.

Vote: Mr. DelGaizo moved to install a *Stop* signs with a red reflective diamond with LED lights on Highland Avenue on Oakland Street. Ms. Tarantino seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

Ms. Mana-Doerfer to email the request to Eric Lannigan to place the work order.

9. SAINT MARY AND SHERMAN STREETS – Speed and signage.

PETITIONER: Sophia Wong, 181 Saint Mary Street

Ms. Wong reported that the condos at the end of the Saint Mary Street have added traffic and speed to their street. The children and elderly on the street were familiar with the old traffic pattern and volume. She added that there is a bend in the road which made sight lines poor. Neighbors have asked the drivers to slow down but are ignored. They are requesting a *Slow* and speed limit signs be installed.

Lt. McGrath will send police observe the traffic on the street.

Caroline Collins, 181 Saint Mary Street, questioned why the street had a 30 mph limit especially since the street is a cul de sac. Mr. DelGaizo said the 30 mph speed limit is set by the state for a thickly settled area with houses closer than 200' apart. He suggested submitting a petition from the neighbors supporting the

installation of a *Slow Children Playing* sign with the address of the location of the sign. The homeowner whose property where the sign is to be located must agree to the installation.

10. WYOMING AVENUE, FALCON STREET AND HILLCREST ROAD – Intersection.

PETITIONER: Erin Monson, 36 Tutor Road

Ms. Monson was concerned about the challenging intersection where the three streets meet. There were poor visibility issues and navigation ambiguity at the intersection. It is not a typical intersection. Mr. DelGaizo said that Hillcrest Road has the right-of-way and it does not have a *Stop* sign. There is a stop bar and drivers must creep up and proceed. If all the intersections had *Stop* signs it would be difficult to determine who has the right of way.

Lt. McGrath reported that the intersection has low incidents and that most drivers are familiar with the intersection. He thought that adding to the intersection would make it worst.

Mr. Bauer said there was no simple solution at this intersection short of an expensive re-engineered traffic circle.

Ms. Monson inquired if the stop bar on Hillcrest Road could be moved forward to improve visibility. Ms. Taratino noted concerns about this challenging intersection have come before the TMAC in the past. She wondered if moving the *Stop* sign would improve the visibility.

Lt. McGrath suggested approaching the owner to prune the bushes on Hillcrest Road and Highgate Street to improved visibility.

Mr. Hoyland thought the *Stop* sign at Wyoming Avenue could be moved forward. He asked Ms. Monson if drivers were obeying the signs. She responded that they do obey the signs, but some drivers are confused and don't know what to do.

Mr. Hoyland said that the Engineering Department would review the intersection to determine whether the *Stop* sign and the stop bar should be moved. The change would be handled administratively. No formal vote from the TMAC is required. Ms. Monson thought this action would improve the intersection.

11. CHARLES RIVER STREET BETWEEN CENTRAL AVENUE AND SOUTH STREET – Restrict heavy trucks.

PETITIONER: Michael Grappo, 6 Charles River Road

Mr. Grappo was concerned about the high volume of trucks and commercial vehicles on Charles River Road. He has witnessed commercial trucks, 18 wheelers, cement trucks, oil trucks and auto carriers on the street. WIFI services has been cut by trucks. He found the volume of trucks unacceptable.

Lt. McGrath suggested a traffic study be conducted. Mr. Grappo was concerned that the study would focus on speed when the issue was the use and volume of commercial trucks on the street. Mr. Wilson clarified that the study will collect data on speed, as well as provide a count of trucks and automobiles.

Lt. McGrath moved to conduct a traffic study on Charles River Street between the rail trails and 6 Charles River Street. Ms. Tarantino seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Grappo was informed that the results of the traffic study would be posted on the TMAC website within a few weeks.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Ms. Tarantino requested that the Zoom public meeting broadcast be discontinued to continue discussion.

The Zoom public broadcast was discontinued. The following was discussed with the full TMAC and staff present:

Ms. Tarantino was concerned that TMAC was seeing petitioners raising concerns and locations already heard before Committee. She inquired if petitions could be cross referenced against prior petitions, TMAC action and traffic studies. It was suggested that Mr. Wilson could cross reference petitions against the status report when petitioners apply; a data base could be created of street locations for easy reference; frequently asked questions could be posted on the website; public information about TMAC decisions could disseminated through the Town's Public Information Officer and possible coverage on Needham cable.

The discussion ended at 9:23 p.m.