

Engineering Services Division

Traffic Operations Committee

Meeting Minutes – July 16, 2013

Attendees: Rob Mack, PE, PTOE, Engineering Services

Ed Roberge, PE, Engineering Services Steve Henninger, Planning Division

Jim Major, General Services

Rick Wollert, Concord Fire Department

Dick Lemieux, TPAC Chair

A. Regular Discussion Items

1) Overview of city-wide accident data, including prior-month accident summary and discussion of select accident locations, circumstances and potential action.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Traffic accident data for June 2013 was reviewed. There were 101 reportable accidents in June 2013. This compares with 107 and 93 reportable accidents in June 2012 and 2011, respectively. 27 accidents resulted in total of 32 people injured, 5 of which occurred on Loudon Road. There were no fatalities.

There were no accidents involving pedestrians.

There were two accidents involving bicyclists: a bicyclist aged 10 years traveling eastbound along Perley Street on the sidewalk and being struck by a vehicle backing out of a driveway between buildings (minor injury, bicyclist at fault, no helmet worn); and a bicyclist aged 12 years traveling southbound along South Street on the sidewalk and when crossing Roosevelt Street was struck by a vehicle turning left from South Street into Roosevelt Street (minor injury, both driver and bicyclist at fault, helmet worn).

2) City Council meeting update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At its June meeting and public hearing, Council amended the Ordinance to remove STOP former signs from both of the Heather Lane approaches to Gabby Lane.

3) Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At its June meeting, TPAC received an update on the Main Street Complete Streets Project and continued development of a list of TPAC accomplishments since its inception in 2008.

B. On-going Discussion and Action Items.

1) Referral from City Council regarding a driver concern on traffic conflicts between Centre Street vehicles and traffic turning left at the driveways to the Prescription Centre and TD Banknorth. (*Council: 05/13/13*).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Discussion deferred pending feedback from the Prescription Center and TD Banknorth regarding potential intersection modifications and related driveway access changes.

2) Referral from City Council regarding resident concerns on safety at the S. State/Thorndike intersection and requests to consider further parking restriction, installation of multi-way STOP and/or conversion of Thorndike to one-way operation (Council: 05/13/13).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Rob Mack reported that the Parking Committee considered this referral at its July 15, 2013 meeting. It concurred with TOC findings reported in June and recommended denial of the requested parking restriction. A report from TOC on this referral will be submitted to Council in August.

C. New Discussion and Action Items

1) Request from a resident on Portsmouth Street concerning traffic speed along Portsmouth Street near the Eastman Street intersection (Engineering: 06/21/13).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a resident complaint on traffic speed along Portsmouth Street near his residence at #8, just east of the Eastman Street intersection. A reduced speed limit or speed bumps are requested. Rob Mack reported that staff field-viewed this section of Portsmouth Street. It is currently posted at the statutory 30 mph speed. There is an old 20 mph advisory speed plaque posted on the Eastman Street southbound approach to the turn at Portsmouth Street that appeared to be the remains of what used to be a combination curve sign with advisory speed plaque. No such sign is located on the Portsmouth Street westbound approach to the Portsmouth/Eastman intersection.

Engineering Services conducted traffic volume and speed counts on Portsmouth Street in the vicinity of the Eastman Street intersection (near #8) for a 72-hour weekday period between June 14 and 17, 2013. Average recorded speeds were 19 mph and 85th percentile speeds were 24-26 mph, with the higher of the speeds measured in the westbound direction. Of the 1053 vehicles measured over the three-day count period, 4 (0.4%) were travelling in the highest recorded speed range of 36-40 mph.

TOC felt that overall speeds at this location were appropriate, if not well below the posted 30 mph speed limit. TOC concurred that excessive speed did not appear to be a prevalent issue. Somewhat-elevated speeds appeared to be limited to a few inconsiderate drivers. The speed data was provided to the police department to assist in selecting a time of day for potential enforcement. Regarding advisory signage at the curve at the Portsmouth/Eastman intersection, TOC recommended the installation of CURVE signs and 10 mph advisory speed plates on both approaches. General Services will remove the old 20 mph plaque and install the new signs in the near future.

2) Referral from City Council regarding a resident concern on traffic speed along Church Street between Bouton Street and N. State Street and request for a speed zone sign. (*Council: 07/08/13*).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: The subject segment of Church Street is approximately 370 feet long. The former Walker School fronts the north side of the street and several residential and business parcels are along the south side. The street is posted for 25 mph. Traffic enters this street segment from either a stop condition or a low-speed turn from either Bouton or N. State Street, and must again come to a stop condition before exiting the segment at either of these same intersecting streets.

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Engineering Services conducted traffic volume and speed counts on this segment of Church Street for a 48-hour weekday period between July 15 and 17, 2013. The data recorder was located near #5, or about midway between Bouton Street and N. State Street where the highest traffic speeds would be expected. Average recorded speeds were 14 to 18 mph and 85th percentile speeds were 19 to 23 mph, with the higher of the speeds measured in the eastbound direction. Of the 1414 vehicles measured over the two-day count period, 11 (0.8%) were travelling in the highest recorded speed range of 31-35 mph. Staff also observed traffic flow on this segment during the afternoon commuter peak period and did not see any apparently-excessive traffic speeds.

TOC felt that overall speeds were appropriate, if not well below the posted 25 mph speed limit. TOC concurred that excessive speed did not appear to be a prevalent issue, and that the geometry and traffic control on either end of the short street segment do not promote excessive-speed travel. Consideration of additional speed controls does not appear justified. Somewhat-elevated speeds appeared to be limited to a few inconsiderate drivers. The speed data was provided to the police department to assist in selecting a time of day for potential enforcement. A report from TOC on this referral will be submitted to Council in August.

D. Open Discussion Items

1) Staff response to miscellaneous inquiries (refer to correspondence in agenda packet).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None.

2) Discussion of Weeble locations.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: The Main Street Complete Street Project does not currently envision the use of weebles along Main Street following the construction of improvements. This will result in a surplus of weebles that might be available for redeployment at other appropriate locations across the city, or allow a cost savings by reducing the number of weebles deployed each year. Future use of weebles at the former Rumford School will be deferred as it appears that plans to relocate St. John Regional School to this facility have recently fallen through. The potential use of weebles on roundabout splitter islands was discussed as an option to reduce the large number of pedestrian crossing signs currently located at the city's roundabouts.

Respectfully submitted,	
Robert J. Mack, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer	

The next Traffic Operations Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 20, 2013 @ 12:00 PM in the 2ND Floor Conference Room.