

March 27, 2024
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**CITY OF MARLBOROUGH
OFFICE OF TRAFFIC COMMISSION
140 MAIN STREET
MARLBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS 01752**

Traffic Commission Minutes

The Regular Meeting of the Traffic Commission was held on March 27, 2024, at 10:00 am. (The meeting was also recorded and is available to view online at the City of Marlborough's website (www.marlbrough-ma.gov). Members present: Chairman - Police Chief David Giorgi, Fire Chief Kevin Breen, Interim DPW Commissioner Ted Scott and City Clerk Steve Kerrigan. Also present: City Engineer Tom DiPersio, Assistant Civil Engineer Ashley Miller, Sgt. Ron Ney and Officer Andrew Larose from the MPD Traffic Unit, City Councilor Kathleen Robey, City Councilor Trey Fuccillo and local residents Dave Cormier and Mr. James Joubert.

Minutes taken by Karen Lambert, MPD - Public Safety Administrative Assistant.

Chief Giorgi started recording the meeting at 10:01 a.m. and began by welcoming everyone and making introductions.

1- Minutes

Review of the minutes of the Traffic Commission meeting of February 28, 2024.

VOTE TO APPROVE. All in Favor - Accept and Place on File.

2 - New Business

2a) AMSA school zone on Forest Street

Chief Giorgi said this should have been on the agenda for the last month's meeting. It was an oversight on its part. Mayor Dumais reached out to him on behalf of Councilor Vital questioning why this area is not marked as a School Zone. If it is not considered a School Zone, could this be explored? Chief Giorgi had also forwarded this request to Engineering before the meeting so they could look into it.

Ashley Miller did some research and found that this area of Forest Street had been regulated as a School Zone back in 2011 – 2012. AMSA was going to be responsible for putting up the signage. It appears that they decided not to do this. Tom DiPersio said there is new construction going on there and they have contacts. He can reach out to them about getting the proper signage installed.

Councilor Robey asked if there were specific school grades involved in getting an area designated as a School Zone. She said that the high school doesn't seem to have this. It just has reduced speed during certain hours. Steve Kerrigan said that he thinks it's indicated as 7:00 am to 3:30 pm. Councilor Robey also said that she thinks the flashing lights for the elementary school only flash for a couple of hours in the morning and afternoon. Ted Scott said that he doesn't think there are flashing lights on the proposal for AMSA. They were just fixed signs. Officer Larose pulled up a google maps image of Stevens Street heading up the hill. You can see the signs showing "School – Speed Limit" with the specific hours listed. Officer Larose also pulled up an image of the flashing lights at the School Zone for Jaworek School. They say, "when flashing" and have the times 8:15 am to 9:15 am and 2:45 pm to 3:45 pm. It was discussed that the elementary school probably specifies a shorter time frame because it's mainly for buses and pick up and drop off. The high school has students who drive and there are students coming and going at all times.

It appears that the AMSA School Zone was regulated by the Traffic Commission but is not showing up as a regulation in the City Code. Steve Kerrigan advised that he would have this added. Mr. DiPersio said that this could have been because we were waiting until they were ready to put up the signs. Engineering will reach out to AMSA to see if they still want to add the School Zone signage.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to contact AMSA regarding the School Zone signage. Do they still want to put up the signs?

2b) No parking signs on Bond Street

Officer Connors came to Officer Larose about a resident who came into the station questioning the no parking signs on Bond Street. Are they necessary? Ashley Miller could not find anything in the Regulations about them. Officer Larose pulled up a Google Maps image of the area and you can see several no parking signs randomly placed. Should they be taken down if they are not regulated? One is at the start of the street where there is also a hydrant. It is within 20 feet of the intersection. This could be the reasoning behind this one. Officer Larose said that it is not a high activity road. It's 22 feet wide and the no parking sign could have been placed there so buses or larger vehicles can make the turn. Chief Giorgi suggested keeping the one at the bottom to make turning on each side easier and taking the others down?

Officer Larose said that the resident's concern was that he wanted to park on the street but saw the sign and was concerned about parking there. There doesn't seem to be a need for the others. No vote is needed because the signs are not regulated. It was discussed that there could be a sign near the hydrant side stating, "No Parking from Here to Corner". Fire Chief Breen also believes the sign at the end is there so a fire truck can make the swing into the road. A "No Parking from Here to Corner" sign would need to be regulated because the hydrant is more than 20 feet from the intersection. Based on

Chief Breen's concern, it was determined that the Traffic Commission would create the regulation for the new signage. The other unregulated signs can be taken down.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Giorgi to set up the regulation for a vote at the next meeting.

2c) Speed signs on Lincoln Street

Chief Giorgi received an email from Councilor Fuccillo on this issue and he was in attendance for the meeting. He explained that a resident of Lincoln Street had reached out to him about speed concerns. He understands that speed studies have been done and that the Chief has spoken to this resident in the past. The Chief had also informed him that speed bumps and specific crosswalks were requested; however, no action was taken based upon the data received from electronic speed signs and further discussions with Engineering. There are currently "30 MPH Thickly Settled" signs in the area. Councilor Fuccillo knows that the City has the ability to reduce the thickly settled speed limit to 25 mph in certain areas. He is asking if this is a possibility here? The main area of concern is from East Main Street to Route 85.

Officer Larose pulled up a speed study summary report and reviewed the findings. He noted that the electronic speed sign was up for 12 days and was collecting data. The report shows that 85% of cars were traveling at 30 mph and that the average speed was 24.96 mph. It also shows the number of cars per hour and the maximum speeds per hour. In September of 2023 the sign was placed near 73 Lincoln Street, which was the location of the old Gemini Sign shop. It was placed at the same location in 2022. The sign has been out several times in different locations and the results are similar. He mentioned specifically between East Main Street and Bolton Street, in the middle. There is nothing crazy in the data. It shows a total of 2,900 cars going by with the 85th percentile doing 32 mph. Chief Giorgi did also say that the 25-mph speed limit can be considered on a case-by-case basis but dropping it to 25 mph may not accomplish anything. 85% of cars are traveling within 2 mph of the current posted speed limit. He understands the resident lives on a tough corner. All the proposed ideas are to slow people right here. We've used past data to keep the speed limit as is.

Officer Larose explained how difficult enforcement is here. There is nowhere to park on Lincoln Street. You would have to be pulled into a driveway. When someone goes by fast, by the time you pull out the car is way past that location. If the data showed that speeding here was terrible, it may be a different issue. Chief Giorgi said that personally, he would be fine leaving it as is. Ashley Miller noted that a "Thickly Settled – 30 mph" sign was added to the westbound side of the street. Chief Giorgi asked if another sign should be added to the eastbound side to make it more visible. Steve Kerrigan also noted that speed is often a perception issue. Chief Giorgi said maybe a team approach could work for enforcement with one officer clocking the speed and the other further down in a location to stop the car. It was discussed that this approach really is not feasible due to the low # of violators and that the majority are only a couple mph over the speed limit. Councilor Fuccillo advised that he would relay this information to the resident.

Steve Kerrigan asked if another speed study could be done since the last one was from September 2023. Then we would at least have current data to provide to the resident. Fire Chief Breen said that part of the issue is congestion. He also understands the

resident's concerns, but speeding must be in off hours because the road is usually so busy. Cars then tend to speed in off hours because they can. Chief Giorgi also agrees there is a volume issue here. Officer Larose also had a Speed Summary Report from 2019 showing an average speed of 25 mph, the 85th percentile at 31 mph, with a total volume of 4,500 cars per day. Volumes have differed but the basic data remains the same.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to the POLICE DEPARTMENT to place the electronic speed signs out again on Lincoln Street. Councilor Fuccillo advised that he would speak to the resident about the discussion.

3-Old Business

3a) Crescent Street Parking Issues

Update: At the October meeting, it was agreed that this item would be TABLED until roadway construction is complete before making any changes. TABLED until the Spring.

3c) Continued Discussion: Request to DELAY removal of Northern Stop Sign at Intersection of Clinton St. and Auburn St.

Update: At the January meeting, it was agreed that this item would be TABLED until the Spring. Mr. Cormier was in attendance for any updates. He wanted to add that it's not just this specific stop sign. He would also like to see the 3-way stop sign at Clinton Street and Old Charter Road remain. He said he is a "data guy" and he is interested in any data collected. He understands that perception is one thing, but data can tell something different. Officer Larose pulled up the data for Clinton Street. They can try to get the sign out again next month or the following.

3d) Concerns regarding icy road conditions – 28 West Street.

Update: At the last meeting this issue was referred to the DPW to speak with the IC Church to see what can be done. Ted Scott advised that they have been trying to reach someone but at this time, there is no further update.

3e) Speed concerns/traffic safety issue at 775 Pleasant Street

Update: Tom DiPersio advised that the sight distance is only 150 feet from this driveway. He said it's bad and definitely very dangerous. He suggested the possibility of another more prominent sign stating the number of feet to the blind driveway. Chief Giorgi knows they also have the mirror on the pole across the street but asked if there was anything else that could be done. Mr. DiPersio advised that it is a function of the curve and steep area. He noted that the vegetation now isn't bad but may change in the spring. The existing driveway sign is a tiny rectangle. The only other suggestion he sees is for the homeowner to continue the wall and drop the grade in front of his house.

Ted Scott asked if we have speed data for this area? Officer Larose said that area is "not good". He had data from 2022, which was before the road was paved, and the 85th

percentile was 38 mph, and the average speed was 34 mph. He is waiting for the weather to break to put the electronic speed sign out again. Chief Giorgi advised that he would touch base with the homeowner regarding the possibility of a bigger sign, keeping an eye on the vegetation, an updated speed study and a discussion on the wall.

3b) Commercial Vehicle Parking Issues

Update: Officer Larose drafted proposed language for the Commercial Vehicle Parking Restriction and distributed it to the group for discussion. He started with language he found from another state and has made modifications. The original version was too restrictive. One of the main issues has to do with overnight parking, i.e., people parking things like dump trucks or large trailers at their home or a contractor leaving vehicles or a dumpster. He walked through each section and explained the parts he added that were marked in red. He included new language for the section on Exemptions, for example he mentioned “light SUV’s” bearing commercial plates with no advertising. Maybe “midsize” is better wording. It’s hard to know where to draw the line. He mentioned for example, Short Funeral Home has an Escalade, with commercial plates, that they park on the street.

The definition of Commercial Vehicle also needs some work. He noted that things like weight had been suggested, but this would be very confusing for the Police Department never mind the general public to understand. The definition needs to be clear and something that can be easily enforced. He would like to get rid of any gray area. He also included wording about boats/trailers and created a section regarding violations with a \$25.00 fine. He thinks this is low as some people wouldn’t care. The fine is less than overnight storage somewhere. It’s not punitive. Should it be increased? He did add language stating “subject to being towed and stored, at the expense of the owner” under certain conditions.

Chief Giorgi said that we don’t have to make any decisions now. This is a start, and the Legal Department would also need to review it. He asked for the group to review the language for further discussion at the next meeting. This is something that will be useful down the road, and we want to make sure to get it right.

Fire Chief Breen asked if there was any language about dumpsters? Engineering advised that dumpsters do not need to be addressed here as language exists elsewhere that is specific to dumpster.

Chief Giorgi asked if there were any additional questions or concerns?

Mr. Joubert, a resident of Bigelow Street, was also in attendance. He had 2 specific issues. 1) He asked what was going to be done about all the potholes on Bigelow Street? Ted Scott advised that he would check with the DPW on the status. They are currently in the process of filling potholes. 2) What can be done about the speed on this street? He lives near the S curve down to Doucette Drive. His living room faces the street, and the speed is terrible from 10:00 pm to 11:00 pm. It was discussed that this could be due to late night leagues at the rink. Chief Giorgi advised that the best alternative would be to have Officer Connors, from the Traffic Unit, can come down to check it out. It’s difficult to determine the best time to get out there but we will try.

That there being no further business of the Traffic Commission held on this date, the meeting adjourned at 10:58 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Lambert
Public Safety Administrative Assistant
Marlborough Police Department

List of documents and other exhibits used at the meeting:

- City of Marlborough Meeting Posting for the Traffic Commission Meeting on March 27, 2024, including meeting agenda.
- Draft of Traffic Commission Minutes from Wednesday, February 28, 2024.
- Copy of email from Mayor Dumais to Chief Giorgi, dated 1/31/24, re: AMSA.
- Copy of email from Ashley Miller to Chief Giorgi, dated 3/7/24, re: AMSA School Zone with additional attachments.
- Copy of email from Officer Larose to Engineering, dated 3/6/24, re: Bond Street no parking.
- Copy of email chain from Councilor Fuccillo to Chief Giorgi, dated 2/21/24 to 3/13/24, re: Constituent Inquiry – Lincoln Street Speed Signs.

Additional Handouts and/or Displayed on Screen at Meeting

- Draft language for Commercial Vehicle Parking Restriction