



**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 Wednesday, June 29, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in the City Council Committee Room, City Hall. Members present: Chairman - Police Chief Mark Leonard, DPW Commissioner John Ghiloni and Fire Chief Kevin Breen. Also present: City Engineer Thomas DiPersio, Jr., Assistant City Engineer Tim Collins and local resident Charles Davis. Minutes taken by: Karen Lambert, MPD Records Clerk.

1- Minutes

The minutes of the Traffic Commission meeting of Tuesday, May 31, 2016.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
TO APPROVE

2 – New Business

2a) Request to restrict parking on one side of Howland St.

Chief Leonard advised that there is nothing in the agenda packet on this issue, however, a woman came into the station to see him about it. The road is newly paved with new curbing also. There are currently no parking restrictions and he said that it does get tight when cars are parked on both sides of the road. He advised the woman that normally this type of issue would be referred to Engineering to see what makes sense. Usually, if there is a restriction, the side that has the most parking spots available would be the side left open.

Commissioner Ghiloni asked if we already did a study here. Tim Collins advised that yes, it was already done as they anticipated that a parking restriction may be necessary when the paving was complete. Mr. Davis, a local resident in attendance on another issue, noted that he was in the area recently and witnessed a school bus trying to get down the road. He said it had “a terrible time” trying to get through with cars parked on both sides. He said that he would imagine the same thing would happen with a fire truck.

Tim Collins advised that it would affect more homes if parking were allowed on the West side and restricted on the East side. Chief Leonard said that he has only received one call on this issue, however, Mr. Davis has also seen the problem himself.

Chief Leonard advised that the City Ordinance calls for a width of 20 feet between the cars for parking to be allowed on both sides. There needs to be 10 feet of travel lane in each direction. Tim Collins advised that first car parked is fine. The second car is the one in violation. He noted that an actual parking space is 10 feet wide, however, a car usually takes up about 8 feet. He believes that curb to curb needs to be 28 feet.

Mr. Davis noted that most houses here have their own driveways. Tim Collins advised that are multifamily homes with narrow driveways. People park in the street so they don't have to move their cars for others who may be blocked in. He said that they are "typical old New England streets".

Fire Chief Breen said he has not been up in this area, however, if it is actually as tight as it sounds it would be a problem. Tim Collins advised that this is typical of streets near the downtown area. It is common for one vehicle to have to "tuck in" to let another car pass.

Chief Leonard suggested that we table this issue for now and let the others take a look and discuss it again at the next meeting.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING and Fire Chief Breen to look into the area for further discussion at the next meeting.

2b) Intersection of Boston Post Road West and Ames St. – U-turns.

Chief Leonard received an email on this issue from an employee of 241 Boston Post Road West. He explained that the timing of the lights at this intersection appears to have changed recently. Traffic coming down Ames and turning right onto Boston Post Road gets the green light at the same time the westbound traffic on Boston Post Road gets the green to make a U-turn. He said that there have been times when he "has come close to a head on collision with traffic flying downhill on Ames to go eastbound on Rt. 20." Both directions think they have a protected turn.

Tim Collins and Chief Leonard both agreed that we have looked into this issue before. Mr. Collins said that he has notified MADOT at least four times. He said that the driver on Ames Street actually has the right of way. Chief Leonard asked if there were any other options. He asked if it was feasible to put up a sign "to give the right of way to Ames."

Mr. Collins also advised that it is posted "No Turn on Red" on Ames. He would like to see MADOT allow the right on red. This would alleviate the stack up on Ames. He also agrees that the light sequence appears to have changed.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING and the DPW to determine if the light sequence has changed and why. If the answer is yes, we should request that MADOT allow the right on red.

Chief Leonard made a motion to suspend the rules and take the agenda items out of order. All in Favor

3-Old Business

3d) Parking concerns on Washington St.

Local resident, Mr. Charles Davis, was in attendance for this issue. He advised that his son goes to school at the ECC and he is there for pick up and drop off daily. He follows the rules passed out by the school. He said that he sees the problem with the neighbors as there are others who don't follow the rules. For example, turning around in people's driveways etc. With people parking on both ends of the drop off area you often have to take a right or left when you can't see clearly if anyone is coming. It appears that there should be no parking allowed in front of the ECC but there are no signs there. The school busses also stack up here. It's a real safety issue for those leaving the school driveway.

It was further discussed that since the DEC has added more employees there is nowhere to park. With the hydrant, the circle driveway and way the street is graded downhill you really can't see when pulling out. There is also a city ordinance that states there is no parking within 20 feet of a crosswalk, however, people are frequently parked on the line at both sides. People are also backing into Devens St. and parking. All of this has to do with the number of people working in the building. Mr. Davis said that he has talked to some of the teachers and they said that they have to park in the street because the DEC employees take the spots in the lot.

Tim Collins advised that he found two old regulations, one from 1986, for a parking restriction on Washington Street. Parking was restricted on both sides, between the hours of 7am and 7pm Monday to Friday, in front of the school and up to Devens Street. This was probably from when there was nothing really going on in the area.

Chief Leonard asked how many parking spots we would lose on the north side if parking were restricted. Commissioner Ghiloni advised that there are also two openings and a hydrant and that maybe 7 spots would be lost. Chief Leonard said that this has historically been an issue off and on. If parking is restricted, he is not sure where those seven spaces would go. There is parking allowed on Bolton Street, but he is not sure that we want to encourage this either.

Chief Leonard advised that he would be in favor of a parking restriction from 7:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday, in front of the school (305 feet) on the north side. This is the same restriction currently in effect in front of the IC School. Any existing old regulations will be removed and a new one created. This should be able to be done before the next school year. Commissioner Ghiloni said that with the hydrant and the crosswalk there may be only 4 "legal" spaces lost. Chief Leonard asked Tim Collins for copies of the old regulations.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to CHIEF Leonard to prepare the appropriate regulations for a vote at the next meeting.

Back to New Business

2c) Curtis Ave. speeding concerns.

Chief Leonard received a letter from local residents on this issue. They are asking if a “vehicle speed survey” could be done and posting of speed limit signs on Curtis Ave. Tim Collins advised that we also dealt with this issue a few year ago. As soon as a road is newly paved, speed issues develop. Tim Collins advised that they added lines to the sides of the road to make it appear smaller, which helped for a while.

Chief Leonard advised that this is really more of a police enforcement issue. He can also get the speed board out there.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to the POLICE DEPARTMENT for enforcement.

2d) Request to make Emmett St. one-way from South St. to Orchard St.

Chief Leonard received a letter from a resident of Emmet Street on this issue. He said that some residents are parking their cars right to the corner, “limiting that busy corner to one lane”. He said that “this has been a safety hazard for years. Cars turning right from South Street end up confronting cars coming west up Emmett Street.” He is suggesting:

- 1) Zoning the corner for no parking.
- 2) Making Emmett Street one-way heading toward Ward Park.

He also asked when South Street will be paved.

Tim Collins passed out a diagram of the street with the areas of concern marked in red. He also had a photo, which showed a car legally parked, however, it also shows that part of the sight problem is a large hedge on the left side. He said that a hedge is considered a fence and according to the City Ordinance, it cannot be higher than three feet.

Currently parking is restricted within 50 feet of the intersection at the corner of Emmett and Fahey. The two ends of Emmett Street, at South Street and at Orchard Street, have a parking restriction of 20 feet from the intersection. Mr. Collins thinks it may be a good idea to apply the 50 foot regulation to both ends.

It was discussed that the house at the corner of Emmett and South Street is a multi-family. They should get 11 parking spots based on the # of bedrooms in the unit. Also, the group does not want the street to be changed to one-way. Mr. Collins thinks that it will help to have the hedges cut back.

Chief Leonard summarized that the issue could be approached in stages.

- 1) 26 South Street needs to trim the hedges down to two feet in the first 25 feet of roadway. Pam Wilderman, of Code Enforcement, can notify them.
- 2) Extending the parking restriction to 50 feet at both ends of Emmett Street, to the intersection of South Street and Orchard Street. This still leaves room for a spot at the driveway at 16 Emmett Street (3 family).

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Engineering to ask Pam Wilderman to notify the homeowner of the City Ordinance on the height of the hedges.

And

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Leonard to prepare the new regulation to extend the parking restriction on both ends of Emmett Street to 50 feet from the intersection.

2e) Speeding concerns on Simpson Rd.

Chief Leonard added this agenda item but did not include the email in the agenda packet. The requestor also asked about "Slow Children" signs. Chief Leonard advised that the speed board is currently out on Simpson Road. He said that he also explained to the requestor reasons why we do not approve "Slow Children" signs.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to the POLICE DEPARTMENT for speed enforcement.

3-Old Business

3b) Traffic Concerns at Wilson & Hemenway Sts.

At the last meeting, the group discussed the possibility of a raised island at this intersection. Tim Collins looked into this and found a problem. A truck coming down Hemenway Street and trying to take a left onto Wilson Street would not meet the required turn radius if an island were installed. The group has also discussed a rumble strip, a T-Intersection and moving of the stop signs, however, each option has also had problems.

Tom DiPersio suggested a smaller island with a rumble strip in front. Chief Leonard asked if we could create one that shows the curve. One of the motorcycle officers said part of the problem could be with the change in the speed of the road. It is 30mph on Hemenway and 25mph on Wilson. If the 25mph zone started sooner maybe it would help. Chief Leonard said that it all goes back to needing some type of physical structure to slow the traffic. Tim Collins said that this is why we started with the advisory sign for the turn. It was initially installed too far down Hemenway and was not clearly visible. It has since been moved closer to the intersection. Another suggestion was made for a dashed line to define the turn. When a car is speeding through the turn they basically cut off the turn.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to diagram the line and put it in.

3c) Crosswalk on Donald Lynch Blvd. @ New England Sports Center.

Tim Collins has looked at the suggested area for the crosswalk and found there to be “loads of sight distance”, about 400 feet. This is also a good location for a rapid beacon for the crosswalk, the west side of the second driveway. He is recommending that NESC go ahead and design the crosswalk as discussed at the last meeting. Chief Leonard also advised that he would also mention the flashing beacon to them, but does not know if they will agree to this.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Leonard to relay the recommendations to NESC.

3e) Simarano Dr. speed limit.

Tim Collins advised that Engineering has done a preliminary speed study. They found that 85% of vehicles were traveling at 49mph. They found the range to be as slow as 33mph and as fast as 58mph. The design speed for the road is 40mph. The current 40 mph speed is good. It was also discussed that police details have also clocked cars at 58mph. It is a new road with no defects and people do tend to drive fast here. Mr. Collins said that an advisory speed sign would help and warning signs do not require a regulation.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to have advisory speed signs installed.

3f)) Timing of traffic signals on Lincoln St. @ Bolton St.

Tim Collins advised that he went back to check on the timing of the lights. He also talked to Mark Dascoli and it appears that the loop is not working properly and it is allowing for the maximum wait time all the time. Chief Leonard said that he only just started getting calls on this recently. Mr. Collins advised that he would call Daigle Electric and have them come and take a look at it.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to try to have the loop connection fixed.

3a) Traffic Commission rules and regulations update.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
To Table.

That there being no further business of the Traffic Commission held on this date, the meeting adjourned at 11:05am.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Lambert

Records Clerk
Marlborough Police Department

List of documents and other exhibits used at the meeting:

-Meeting Agenda for Wednesday, June 29, 2016. (Including City of Marlborough Meeting Posting).

-Draft of minutes from Tuesday, May 31, 2016.

-E-mail from Bob Levine to Chief Leonard, dated 5/31/16, re: Traffic Light Situation (including diagram).

-Letter from Robert & Susan Eaton to Chief Leonard, dated 6/10/16, re: Vehicle Speed Survey on Curtis Ave.

E-mail from Councilor Matt Elder to Chief Leonard, dated 6/10/16, re: forwarded e-mail from Clarence Forman regarding Emmett Street.

Additional Handouts:

-GIS map of Emmett Street with areas of concern marked in red.

-Photo of Emmett Street showing large hedges which cause a sight problem.