



**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 Tuesday, December 20, 2016 at 10:00am in the City Council Committee Room, City Hall. Members present: Chairman - Police Chief Mark Leonard, DPW Commissioner John Ghiloni and City Clerk Lisa Thomas. Also present: Assistant City Engineer Tim Collins, Executive Director of Council on Aging and Senior Center Trish Pope and local resident Stefanie Ferrecchia. Minutes taken by: Karen Lambert, MPD Records Clerk.

1- Minutes

The minutes of the Traffic Commission meeting of Tuesday, October 25, 2016.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
TO APPROVE - Accept and Place on File.

2 – New Business

2a) Request to explore the possibility of changing the one-way direction of travel on Hayden Street.

Trish Pope was in attendance for this issue. She said in her email to the Chief that many seniors have told her that they would park at Bigelow School if they could figure out how to get there. Rather than going back out to Granger and circling around with a left onto West Main and then a left onto Orchard, it would be easier to have signage at Water Street directing them to the parking at the school. Ms. Pope also mentioned an issue with people parking in restricted areas. This causes a problem for buses coming to the Center as they can't make the turn with other vehicles parked in the way.

Tim Collins provided a diagram of the area with the parking restriction indicated. Chief Leonard suggested that Ms. Pope call the Police Department if she sees an issue with the parking restriction so that it can be addressed at the time. With regard to changing the direction of traffic, he feels this may be a problem for residents. Commissioner Ghiloni

agrees that it would be a benefit to the Senior Center but not for residents. Ms. Pope advised that she has tried to schedule events in a way to facilitate parking. For example, all large events were switched to Wednesday. This is Bingo day and when buses come. Exercise class are now on Tuesday. They get about 200 people through the door for these classes.

Chief Leonard asked if we need state approval for a one-way. Tim Collins advised that no it does not. It would only require state approval if it were a mid-block issue. Chief Leonard asked if there was another option. It seems easier (though longer) for people to be directed to take a right onto Granger, then a right onto Liberty and a right into the school. It is the left onto Granger from New Street that can be difficult. Is it more of a matter of educating people? Chief Leonard would also like to include the Fire Chief in this discussion and have Engineering look at it more closely. Trish Pope said she understands if the direction of travel on Hayden can't be changed but she had to ask since it has become an issue. The easier solution would have been to change it before the Senior Center was completed.

With regard to the issue of educating the public, Commissioner Ghiloni passed out the new Warning Notices the DPW had made up relative to parking restrictions and/or winter parking bans. They just came in yesterday and are the first step to educating the public.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to TABLE for further discussion at the next meeting.

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

2d) Request for truck exclusion on Winter Street.

This request came from Stephanie Ferrecchia, property owner of 6 Winter Street. She was in attendance for this issue. She has continuously had problems with trucks coming onto her lawn and hitting the boulders and signs put there by the DPW to protect the house. She said that trucks have to come onto her lawn in order to make the turn. She said that her tenants are "petrified".

It appears that GPS is sending trucks down Winter Street to get back to Rte. 495. The better route would be to take Felton St. to Landry Ave. Tim Collins said that GPS doesn't know our traffic restrictions. Once you go down Winter Street you hit Lincoln Street, which has a truck exclusion, to get back to Rte. 20. A truck exclusion requires MassDOT approval. It was discussed that Winter Street would not hit the required numbers for a truck exclusion. If trucks make up less than 3% of traffic it is not considered a big enough problem. Also, even with a truck exclusion, trucks would need to be able to get down there to make deliveries.

If the real issue is actually getting trucks back onto Rte. 495, it would better to have signs directing traffic specifically to Rte. 495, along with signs indicating the there is a truck exclusion ahead. Chief Leonard suggested focusing on specific companies, for example, if a certain company is generating a lot of truck traffic maybe we can tell them to advise their drivers on the preferred route. He said that he also likes the idea of "directional signage". Ms. Ferrecchia also asked about making Winter Street one way from Lincoln

St. to Elm St. Chief Leonard said that residents would not be happy with this idea. Tim Collins said that people who live at the other end would continue to “zip up the street” and think that the one way doesn’t apply to them because they live there. It creates other problems.

All agreed that directional signs to Rte. 495 were a good idea and that there should also be signs at Felton St. and Lock Dr. Chief Leonard also asked if the tenants could possibly note any specific times of day or days of the week that are more of a problem or the specific companies involved. If so, he can have an officer monitor the area at that time and then also be able to contact the specific companies. Ms. Ferrecchia said that she would ask the tenants to keep track. It was also discussed that it might be a good idea to put the truck counters out if they are available. Commissioner Ghiloni advised that they are available, however, Tim Collins said that they would have to be pulled if it snowed so that plowing could be done.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to install new signage directing truck traffic to Rte. 495 and to set out the truck counters.

2b) Request to consider restricting parking on Grant Ct.

The Traffic Commission received an email from Pam Wilderman, Code Enforcement Officer, on this issue. She said that the road is extremely narrow and she received a complaint that it is very difficult for people to back out of their driveways when cars are parked on the street. Tim Collins said that the road is 17 – 18 feet wide. He provided a GIS diagram of the area which included the number of families in each house, the number of bedrooms and the number of parking spaces required for each. The total needed is 42 spaces, however, they will not get this as there is no room. New parking areas have been added and it does make it difficult to back out. Mr. Collins said that the narrow streets and parking issues are a common problem in the core of Marlborough. No Parking signs can be put up, however, a lot of people will then have nowhere to park. Restricting parking would just create more problems.

Chief Leonard asked if something new has happened in the area. Tim Collins said no it is just a continuous issue all around. The Chief said that this is actually the first real problem that he has heard of and maybe it is just that someone new has moved into the area. He advised that he can send an officer out to see if all cars are legally parked.

Lisa Thomas asked if the new driveways were legal. Tim Collins said “probably not”, however, they are not “illegal” it’s just that they probably didn’t take out a permit. In reality, it does get more cars off the roadway. Chief Leonard said that it could be argued that they are helping the parking issue.

Chief Leonard said that he can reply to Pam Wilderman and advise that the Traffic Commission does have some concerns on the legality of the new parking areas. He will also let her know that the Traffic Commission feels that a parking restriction on Grant Court will just cause other issues. It was discussed in detail, however, there are no good alternatives at this point.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Leonard to advise Pam Wilderman on the Traffic Commissions discussion. Also REFER to the POLICE DEPARTMENT to monitor if cars are legally parked.

NOTE: A resident of Hayden Street came into the meeting at this point looking for an update.

Chief Leonard gave an overview of the issues that were discussed earlier in the meeting. He advised that the Traffic Commission needs to look at alternatives before making any changes. It will not be a quick fix and the neighborhood would be notified of any possible changes. At this point, it is all a preliminary discussion and seeing if problems can be resolved with possible signage and education.

2c) Request for a crosswalk on Hosmer St. near #25 - #37.

This request came from a Resident Owner and Trustee of the Marlborough Court Condos. She mentioned in her email that there is no visitor parking at the complex and that visitors often park at the shopping center across the street.

Tim Collins passed out a GIS aerial photo with the proposed crosswalk location indicated and four photos of the area. He said that there is actually no easement here that they are allowed to use as a cut through. One of the photos is of a sign indicating that the parking area is for Price Chopper customers only and there is no overnight parking allowed. He said that there is not actually overflow parking here for the Condo Complex and noted that there are already two crosswalks in the area about 200 feet in each direction from the proposed crosswalk. They do have an accessible route available, if necessary.

Mr. Collins' other three photos were of the gate opening from different angles and he noted on each photo as to why it was not an accessible route.

- 1) Not an accessible Route – Excessive Grade, Not Paved
- 2) Not an accessible Route – Curbing Present, Within a Parking Space
- 3) Not an accessible Route – Insufficient Width, was previously fenced – top rail connectors present, fence fabric on the right

After further discussion, it was determined that the Traffic Commission can't create a crosswalk that leads to private property for visitor parking. Chief Leonard advised that he will reply to the request.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Leonard to advise that this issue was discussed by the Traffic Commission, however, cannot be accommodated.

2e) Discussion of new Thickly Settled Zone (25MPH) and new Safety Zone regulations from MassDOT.

The MassDOT provided a list of "Frequently Asked Questions on Speed Limits" which was included in the agenda packet. Tim Collins also provided the amended wording to the specific Chapter and Sections and examples of the new signage. It was discussed that the State is now going to allow cities or towns to be able to reduce speed limits in thickly settled areas from 30 mph to 25 mph if they think it is necessary. Tim Collins advised

that the speed limit change can be made citywide or specific to certain streets. He also passed out a list of streets currently posted as “Thickly Settled 30 MPH”. There were nine streets on the list. He said that there are also thickly settled streets that are not actually posted as such. These are local streets and no MassDOT approval is needed to revise the speed limits though Engineering studies may be required.

Commissioner Ghiloni said that he would think the Traffic Commission would want to reduce some of the areas from 30mph to 25mph. Chief Leonard agreed and said it should be reviewed on a case by case basis. The ones that are posted as “thickly settled” would be a good place to start. There would have been an issue at some point in order for it to have been specifically posted.

The criteria for “thickly settled” was discussed and it was noted, for example, that Mechanic Street at 25 mph wouldn’t work. People would need to know whether they were in a 25mph zone or a 30mph zone in order for it to be regulated and enforced. Speeds for thickly settled zones would need to be listed. A letter would need to be sent to the State listing which thickly settled streets are 25mph and which are 30mph.

Chief Leonard said that he would not be in favor of a Citywide change. His preference would be to start where we have had issues. When word gets out that the speed limit in thickly settled areas can be reduced, “everyone” will want a 25mph sign. Should the majority be 30mph or 25mph?

Chief Leonard also said that another option would be to “do nothing” at this point and leave it there for the future. “If it aint broke, don’t fix it.” At least now we will have the opportunity to reduce speeds in thickly settled areas if the need arises.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to ACCEPT and PLACE ON FILE for future use.

3-Old Business

3b) Traffic Concerns at Wilson & Hemenway Sts.

Update: Engineering advised that they would be waiting until the Spring to make any changes here. They don’t want to install the new island with the snow.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to TABLE.

3c) Request for stop signs on Weed St. at Florence St.

Commissioner Ghiloni advised that this issue is still pending.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to TABLE.

3d) Parking restriction on Forest Street near AMSA.

Chief Leonard said that he has been receiving complaints again on this issue. He recently received an anonymous picture showing traffic backed way up on Forest Street.

Commissioner Ghiloni said that he also was in this area recently and could not pass. The main problem is that people arrive too early and have to wait to pick up their children. Tim Collins advised that 50 signs would be needed to restrict traffic on both sides of Forest Street along that stretch. It was discussed that snowbanks throughout the winter were just going to cause more trouble and that signs at least need to go up in the vicinity of the school. They need to be installed “at the curve and grade”.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to the DPW for installation of No Parking signs in specific areas.

3a) Traffic Commission rules and regulations update.

Lisa Thomas advised that she now has all the changes from Tim Collins and they will be advertised at the discretion of the newspaper. She believes that she is now up to date. Chief Leonard and Karen Lambert are working on organizing the regulations that that need to be sent to General Code.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Leonard to work with Karen Lambert on compiling what is missing for General Code.

Commissioner Ghiloni asked to discuss a new item not on the Agenda.

Parking for 240 Main Street – Granger Blvd., Parking Garage

Doug Bushman sent an email advising that he was contacted by the parking clerk about MCDA tenants getting ticketed for overnight parking in the garage. Someone was appealing a ticket saying they had a permit to park there. Mr. Bushman explained in his email that the MCDA retains 50 spaces in the garage. They do not assign individual spaces but they tell tenants they can park on the second floor. He said that there is no signage on the second floor regarding reserved spaces. He said “Options could be that the MCDA parking stickers will be honored anywhere in the facility or ensure that the tenants understand that they can only park on the second floor of the garage.”

Chief Leonard said that he was unaware of any special permits for parking in the garage. The ticket must have been given to someone parking on the lower level between 2 – 5am as parking on the second level would have been fine overnight. The lower level is supposed to be left open for people coming to work in the morning and businesses.

Commissioner Ghiloni will discuss the issue in more detail with Mr. Bushman and determine the best way to handle the issue so that everyone understands and no one is ticketed by mistake.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Commissioner Ghiloni to follow up with Doug Bushman.

That there being no further business of the Traffic Commission held on this date, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Lambert
Records Clerk
Marlborough Police Department

List of documents and other exhibits used at the meeting:

- Meeting Agenda for Tuesday, December 20, 2016. (Including City of Marlborough Meeting Posting).
- Draft of minutes from Tuesday, October, 25, 2016.
- E-mail from Commissioner Ghiloni to Chief Leonard, dated 11/14/16, Re: Parking at the Senior (original email sent by Trish Pope on 11/14/16.)
- E-mail from Pam Wilderman to the Traffic Commission Members, dated 11/14/16, Re: "Two Issues".
- E-mail from Kirstie Parker to Chief Leonard, dated 11/7/16, Re: Process for requesting a new pedestrian crosswalk.
- E-mail from Stefanie Ferrecchia to the City Council, dated 11/16/16, Re: 6 Winter Street. (Forwarded by City Council Secretary to Chief Leonard on 11/16/16)
- Information guide from MassDOT, dated 10/17/16, Re: new Thickly Settled Zone and new Safety Zone.

Additional Handouts:

- 4 photos, with specific notations, provided by Tim Collins relative to new crosswalk request noted above.
- GIS map of Orchard and Hayden Streets with current no parking area highlighted in pink.
- GIS aerial photo on Hosmer Street with area for proposed crosswalk indicated.
- GIS map of Grant Court with specific number of parking spots required for number of tenants.
- Email from Douglas Bushman to Chief Leonard, dated 12/19/16, re: Parking for 240 Main Street – Granger Blvd. Parking Garage.
- Copy of official "Warning" notice from the DPW, regarding parking restriction.