

February 26, 2020

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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 Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 10:00 am in Memorial Hall, 3rd Floor, City Hall. Members present: Chairman - Police Chief David Giorgi, DPW Commissioner John Ghiloni, Fire Chief Kevin Breen and City Clerk Steve Kerrigan. Also present: Assistant City Engineer Tim Collins, Sgt. Zac Attaway and Officer Andy Larose from the MPD Traffic Services Unit and City Councilor Christian Dumais, City Councilor Katie Robey and City Councilor Rob Tunnera.

Also present: local residents in attendance for Lakeside Ave. Parking Issues – Vera Copeland, Alice Wertheimer, Doug Peltak, Patty Davison, Peter Maddox, Brian Libby and Brian Plain (head of condo association – Waterwind Knolls).

and Annette Fernandez – Owner of Meadowbrook Child Garden and Christina Lombardi from The Vin Bin were in attendance for second half of meeting.

Minutes taken by Karen Lambert, MPD Records Clerk.

1- Minutes

The minutes of the Traffic Commission meeting of Wednesday, January 29, 2020.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:

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

2 - New Business –

2b) Parking Issues on Lakeside Ave.

Chief Giorgi has received multiple phone calls and emails regarding issues with cars parking on Lakeside Ave. along the berm in front of Waterwind Knolls Condominiums. Several of the emails included photos. Sgt. Attaway and Officer Larose advised that they have also been receiving similar complaints. There were several local residents in attendance for this issue. This issue appears to have begun with the opening of The Fix. It seems to have started with restaurant employees parking here but now it also seems to be an area used by the valets. There appears to be three major issues:

- 1) This is a two-lane road, but when cars are parked here two cars can no longer pass at the same time, essentially turning it into a **one lane** road. If cars are coming from opposite directions one car literally has to back up to allow for the other car to pass.
- 2) When entering Lakeside Ave. from Rte. 20 the parked cars **block visibility** and you can't see if another is attempting to exit Lakeside Ave. onto Rte. 20. Entering Lakeside Ave. from the other directions is even worse "due to the hairpin turn you take into a blocked view area", as described in one of the emails. It is only a matter of time before there is a head-on collision or rear end collision when someone is backing up while another is entering.
- 3) The parked cars are **ruining the grassy area (berm)**, creating a well from their tires. Beautification is being destroyed as cars are blocking the lake view of the condo residents.

Many people also use this street for walking and it is becoming increasingly dangerous for pedestrians. Cars are entering here at 40 mph with blocked visibility. There is also a concern that when the outdoor patio opens at the restaurant there will be even more cars parked here. One resident with a trailer was unable to turn right or left onto Lakeside Ave. and could not even leave the condo with the trailer. Access must be maintained. Residents also mentioned that some of these valets seem to have trouble parallel parking and cars are sticking even further out into the road. People also just "pop out" into the roadway after parking. Another said, when guests leave the restaurant, "not everyone is stone cold sober".

Residents would ideally like to see this made into a no parking area. Or, at the very least, no parking allowed from Winter Street to the corner so that there are at least 50 feet of unobstructed view. Another option would be for The Fix to find a private parking area, at their own expense, that could be utilized for employee and guest parking. Or The Fix could pay to have Lakeside Ave. widened. Chief Giorgi advised that any discussion of cutting into the existing berm would need to be referred to Engineering.

Another resident, who has lived in the area for 65 years, said that Lakeside Ave. used to be marked as no parking. Chief Giorgi advised that Engineering can also go back and research the history.

Chief Giorgi also advised that he met with the owner of The Fix yesterday regarding this parking issue. The Chief acknowledged that he did approve the "temporary" employee parking here until they were able to find an alternative, however, he understands that this obviously is not working. He explained that the Owner is negotiating with nearby

businesses to try to work something out. Once he can find another option, the issue will be over. He also has the valet service from Wednesday through Saturday. Sgt. Attaway said that he has seen cars double and triple parked within the business.

Chief Giorgi said that it would at least make sense right now to restrict parking at the entrances to Lakeside Ave. Residents are asking for a date in which to expect a resolution. They also said that a speed limit sign would be helpful as well as a Caution Pedestrian sign, as there are no sidewalks on this road.

Chief Giorgi said that his goal is to have this resolved by the next meeting on Wednesday, March 25th. Commissioner Ghiloni said that all are aware that there is a problem and that it needs to be resolved. Yesterday was the Chief's first meeting with the Owner and he will continue to be in contact with him over the next few weeks. In the short term, we can mark the area from Winter Street to Rte. 20 as "No Parking", and see if a better resolution can be found before the next meeting on 3/25.

A resident mentioned another issue with cars parked there overnight. Officer Larose said that he talked to one woman who was parked there and she was a condo resident parking an extra car there as there are only two spots allowed per unit. More than two vehicles on the property results in a fine.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to post the area from Winter Street to Route 20 as "No Parking" and REFER to Chief Giorgi to work with Owner of The Fix on a resolution to the parking issue for the next meeting.

2a) Crosswalk Request from Meadowbrook Child Garden – Concord R. @ Mosher Ln.

This request came from the Owner of Meadowbrook Child Garden through Officer Parente. She is requesting a crosswalk that runs from Mosher Lane to the entrance of their lot along with some signage.

Chief Giorgi said that he hasn't been out there yet to see the area in question. Tim Collins pulled up photos on the screen for all to view. He questioned where the crosswalk would actually be placed. He noted that there is no sidewalk. Officer Larose said that parents park on Mosher and then walk across the street with their children. The request doesn't specify why they want the crosswalk or what type of signs are needed.

Chief Giorgi said that he can have Sgt. Attaway reach out to the Owner and get more specifics and also advise that a crosswalk probably won't work because a crosswalk needs to go to a sidewalk not a driveway.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Sgt. Attaway to get speak with the Owner.

2c) Brigham Street Concerns.

Councilor Dumais forwarded an email from a local resident with several concerns. He has gone back and forth with resident addressing his concerns, however, there are two issues he is bringing before the Traffic Commission again.

- 1) **Request for Commercial Vehicle Exclusion** – This request was initially denied due to Brigham Street not meeting truck traffic volume requirements and the alternate route for truck traffic did not work because it was a “bit circuitous”.
- 2) **Request for electronic speed signs.**

The resident is asking if a current truck count can be done. He said that the other count was done 12 years ago. Also, if the truck volume is such a low percentage of traffic volume then the alternate route would only inconvenience a small percentage of drivers. He mentioned the unique layout of Brigham Street, i.e. close proximity of houses to the street, several choke points where it is impossible for a tractor trailer or large box truck to pass oncoming traffic without one side having to come to a complete stop and move to the extreme edge, no sidewalks and many walkers, joggers and cyclists. Councilor Dumais said that he recently drove down the road and said he is “again surprised at how tiny and tight the road is”. There has been a lot of construction and growth since the last truck count was completed. Can it be done again?

Chief Giorgi mentioned that an alternate truck route was suggested that went through Southboro. The Town of Southboro did not approve this route. Tim Collins advised that a Commercial Vehicle Exclusion needs to be approved by the State and there is a very specific window regarding the number of trucks allowed on the road. Also, the State did not like the detour that was presented back in 2007. Their response was that it was “too circuitous”. All agreed, however, that a new truck count would be a good idea, however, the alternate route given in the past through Southboro is now marked as a Truck Exclusion. Mr. Collins advised, however, that we have asked that State about a Truck Exclusion on Brigham Street 3 times and all 3 times it was denied.

Chief Giorgi asked if we could at least provide Councilor Dumais with the most recent vehicle count for Brigham Street, recorded from the portable speed limit feedback units placed along Brigham Street? Mr. Collins advised that this count does not specify truck traffic but it would at least show if there has been an increase in total volume. When the last speed study was done, it was found that cars weren’t traveling as fast as was thought. Farm Road was able to get a truck exclusion a long time ago as it was shown to be a narrow windy roadway with a school. Commissioner Ghiloni advised that Farm Road does not meet the warrants for a Truck Exclusion and would not get approved for one today.

Tim Collins also advised that the City can’t set the speed limit on Brigham Street. Councilor Robey asked about the new regulation that said the City could set speed limits. Mr. Collins said that the Traffic Commission can set Advisory Speed Limits only.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to conduct a new Traffic Count and Truck Count on Brigham Street.

2d) Request for “No Right on Red” sign at intersection of Farm Rd./Boston Post Rd. E/Mustang Ave.

A resident of Farm Road sent a letter to Chief Giorgi requesting this signage. There is currently a red light and crosswalk at this intersection. He explained that people drive through this light as if it were a right-hand turn. He has experienced “drivers honking angrily at me for not going through this light”. He posted about his frustration at this intersection on the City of Marlborough Facebook page. He attached the transcript of the post with his request to the Traffic Commission as “it has become obvious that the legality involved in whether or not this intersection is a legal turn is ambiguous”.

Tim Collins brought up an aerial photo of the intersection for reference. He said that the stop line is way before the red light but people tend to creep up and then assume they can take a right turn on red. He advised that he sent an email to Duane Thomas at MA DOT on 2/24/20 with a photo and the specific question. “Can a vehicle, after stopping at the stop line on Farm Road proceed on (merge onto) Boston Post Road East, under the condition that right turns on red lights are allowed unless specifically prohibited?” He received an automatic response back that Duane Thomas was on vacation until March 3rd. He also said that this intersection will be changed under the proposed layout for improvements on Boston Post Road East. The project is scheduled to go out to bid in the fall of 2021.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to follow up on the response from the DOT and advise at the next meeting.

2e) Request from Vin Bin for designated parking space for order pick up.

Christina Lombardi from the Vin Bin made this request through Pam Wilderman, Code Enforcement. She is asking if one or two of the parking spaces in the lot next to the Vin Bin could have a notice indicating that it is to be used for limited parking for pickup at the Vin Bin. She noted a similar scenario in the lots near Starbucks and Crown Chicken.

Tim Collins pulled up an aerial photo of the area for reference. Commissioner Ghiloni explained that the lot next to the Vin Bin is a Municipal Lot with two-hour parking allowed, while the area near Starbucks and Crown Chicken is private property. The main lot there is a Municipal Lot with all day parking but the area close to the building is private property. Councilor Robey asked if overnight parking was allowed in the Municipal Lot. She said there is always at least one truck parked there every day and it seems to stay overnight. She asked if it could be ticketed. Chief Giorgi advised that he would have the Police Department take a look at this.

Commissioner Ghiloni said that there are several other restaurants on Main Street that would want the same type of parking arrangement if the City were to allow it for The Vin Bin. If the City did it for one restaurant they would have to do it for all. Commissioner Ghiloni thinks that part of the problem is that people are parking for longer than 2 hours in this lot.

Tim Collins advised that there are three parking spots in the back of the building and asked if they could possibly negotiate something with those. It was discussed that these

spots would not work as they are too far to walk from the entrance. Councilor Tunnera asked about handicapped parking. Commissioner Ghiloni advised that one of the spots in the back is marked as handicapped parking and that there is an elevator at the back entrance.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Giorgi to advise The Vin Bin of the discussion.

NOTE: Chief Giorgi had to leave the Traffic Commission meeting at this time to attend another meeting.

2a) Meadowbrook Garden – continued.

The new owner of Meadowbrook Child Garden, Annette Fernandez, arrived at this time. The normal time for the monthly Traffic Commission Meetings is 10:00 am. Today's meeting was rescheduled for 9:00am and she was unaware of the change.

Tim Collins reviewed the discussion for her and explained that a crosswalk needs to go from a sidewalk to a sidewalk. He asked if she could explain more clearly as to what they are trying to "fix" with the crosswalk. She explained that the speed of cars on Concord Road is very dangerous. West bound cars are going downhill and east bound cars come around a sharp curve where there is not enough time to see them coming when trying to cross. The cars do not appear to be keeping to the 25-mph speed limit. There are 77 students (ages 2.9 to 6) in the school who are dropped off and picked up on Mosher. The main concern is with the speed of cars when students are trying to cross. She thinks that a crosswalk and appropriate signage may slow cars down and allow for more time to cross.

Tim Collins advised that there may be some type of warning signs that can be posted that would help to slow cars down. Commissioner Ghiloni said that he would like to investigate this more before making any decisions. Sgt. Attaway said that the Police Department could put out the portable speed signs in the spring to check for speeding and then conduct directed patrols. Officer Larose asked if the speed trailer could be placed on island in from the preschool. Ms. Fernandez advised that this would be fine.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Engineering to review possible signage for further discussion at the next meeting.

2e) Parking for Vin Bin – continued.

Christina Lombardi from The Vin Bin also did not realize the meeting was changed from 10:00am to 9:00am. She came in at the end of the meeting when Chief Giorgi was leaving. Her issue was readdressed by Tim Collins and he explained that if a spot was set aside for The Vin Bin, all other restaurants would want the same thing. It was also further discussed that if the 2-hour parking limit were enforced, it would free up a few spots. It appears there are at least 5 cars that park there all day. There are many different types of businesses in the area including office buildings that are using the lot and parking from 9 to 5. There needs to be more enforcement of the 2-hour parking. Ms.

Lombardi said that there used to be more ticketing. She has received tickets in the past. It was noted that there is currently no parking clerk.

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

3-Old Business

3a) Poor Streetlight Conditions – West Main St./Winthrop St.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to TABLE.

3b) Request for Crosswalk Warning Signage – West Main St. @ Winthrop.

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 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Lambert
Records Clerk
Marlborough Police Department

List of documents and other exhibits used at the meeting:

- City of Marlborough Meeting Posting for Traffic Commission Meeting on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 including meeting agenda.
- Draft of Traffic Commission Minutes from Wednesday, January 29, 2020.
- Email from Officer Parente to Chief Giorgi and Sgt. Attaway, dated 2/7/20, re: Crosswalk Request on Concord Rd. (original request from owner of Meadowbrook Child Garden – including 3 photos).
- Email from Councilor Tunnera to Chief Giorgi and Commissioner Ghiloni, dated 2/13/20, re: Parking on Lakeside Ave. (includes email from Vera Copeland of Waterwind Knolls with 4 photos and email from Alice Wertheimer).
- Email from Councilor Dumais to Chief Giorgi, dated 2/10/20, re: Brigham Street Concerns (includes email from Michael Kerick).
- Email from EJ Kropp to the Police Department, dated 1/29/20, re: request for No Right on Red sign at the intersection of Farm Rd., Boston Post Road and Mustang Ave. (including a map and copy of FaceBook group discussion).
- Email from Pam Wilderman to Chief Giorgi, re: request from VinBin for limited time parking space for order pick up).

Additional Handouts:

- Email from Tim Collins to Duane Thomas of MA DOT, dated 2/24/20, Re: Farm Road Right on Red.

- Email from Bill Franke, dated 2/26/20, re: Lakeside Ave. parking issue. (including 4 photos).

- Email from David Chen to Chief Giorgi, dated 2/24/20, re: Parking on Lakeside Avenue.

- Aerial photo of intersection of Bolton Street and Main Street, including parking lot at Vin Bin.

- Diagram of Alternate Route for Commercial Vehicles on Brigham Street.