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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, July 26, 2023, 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, Commissioner of Public Works Sean Divoll and City Clerk Steve Kerrigan. Also present: City Engineer Tom DiPersio, Assistant Civil Engineer Ashley Miller, Sgt. Ronald Ney from the MPD Traffic Services Unit, and local resident Mr. James Joubert.

Minutes taken by Karen Lambert, MPD - Public Safety Administrative Assistant. (Note: Not present at meeting – minutes taken from recorded meeting.)

Chief Giorgi started recording the meeting at 10:04 a.m. and began by welcoming everyone and making introductions.

1- Minutes

Review of the minutes of the Traffic Commission meeting of June 28, 2023.

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

2 - New Business

2a) Speed Complaints on Bigelow Street, Westernview Drive, Valley Street

Chief Giorgi advised that these complaints were generated through the Traffic Unit. They will be accepted and placed on file.

Mr. Joubert, a resident of Bigelow Street, was in attendance for an update. Chief Giorgi reviewed the Speed Summary Report provided by Officer Larose. The speed sign was out on the Southbound side (coming from Donald J. Lynch Blvd. toward Elm Street) at

#340 from 6/14/23 to 7/14/23. The average speed was 26.69, the 85th percentile was 30.63, the maximum speed was 48 and the minimum speed was 5. The average volume of cars per day was 1,438.

He also reviewed the report for the opposite side. The sign was out from 6/5/23 to 6/14/23. The average speed was 26.82, the 85th percentile was 30.73, the maximum speed was 52, the minimum speed was 5. There were more vehicles coming down the hill, heading toward the rink (NESC). The average volume of cars per day was 2,237. The reports include an hourly breakdown showing total vehicles and average speeds & number of violators. Basically, every hour there is someone going fast, the max speed. Hockey tournaments at the rink are surely a factor. Even at 10:00 pm there are high speeds of 40's to 50's. The signs are currently back up NB at Shea Drive and SB at Flagg Road.

Chief Giorgi said it is more of an enforcement issue, with more police presence needed. However, we can't be sitting there all the time. Maybe we could target our enforcement around specific times. Sgt. Ney said that if there is a hockey tournament it could be any time. The Traffic Unit is currently very small with only one patrol officer. Chief Giorgi said he can get the shifts involved in enforcement.

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

Chief Giorgi also mentioned that Karen Lambert spoke to the resident of Valley Street, and she explained that speed bumps are not likely. The speed signs have only been placed on the EB side so far. Steve Kerrigan noted that the EB side really doesn't warrant speed bumps, based on the facts in the report. Officer Larose is planning to place the sign on the opposite side when he returns from vacation.

3-Old Business

3a) Review of unwarranted stop sign locations.

Update:

Ashley Miller prepared a detailed memo (copy attached) regarding the history/background behind the existing stop signs on Beach Street at Clover Hill Street, Clinton Street at Auburn Street, Clinton Street at Old Charter Road, and Old Charter Road at Clinton Street. She reviewed Engineering files and old Traffic Commission meeting minutes to find this information.

Beach Street at Clover Hill Street – Ms. Miller found traffic counts that were done in September 1999 and May 2002. A stop sign request came before the Traffic Commission prior to the reconstruction of the roadway. At that time, Beach Street was wider, there were no sidewalks and there were concerns about speed, volume, and the lack of sidewalks. At the June 9, 1998 meeting, the 'all way stop' sign at Beach Street and Clover Hill Street was voted on and approved through an Emergency Regulation. The City Engineer at the time, was in opposition to adding a stop sign here. At this same meeting, there were preliminary proposals for 3-way stop signs for the other Clinton Street intersections. Tom DiPersio said that the takeaway from the old minutes was that

Engineering, at the time, acknowledged that these intersections did not meet the warrants for stop signs when they were installed.

No analysis of accident history has been done in the last 12 months. Ms. Miller did find a more recent warrant analysis for Beach Street which showed that it did not meet the volume requirements on the main or side streets. Other criteria though, includes the sidewalk, which may be something to take into consideration. Coming from West Main Street down Beach Street there is a sidewalk on the north side which ends at Clover Hill, there is a crosswalk here and then the sidewalk begins on the opposite side of the street to South Street. The sidewalk goes all the way to the stop sign at the intersection.

Tom DiPersio said that none of the strict warrants for stop signs were met, but the MUTCD does take other considerations into account. They didn't measure any pedestrian volume, but it may be something to consider. Commissioner Divoll said that he has gone by the area multiple times and at different parts of the day and has never seen someone crossing here. If the concern is coming down Clover Hill and taking a right onto Beach Street, can you see someone crossing Beach Street at this location? He said there is perfect visibility. There could potentially be some overgrowth that would restrict sight and there is a utility pole, however, they can handle any overgrowth internally. There are no issues with the sightline or slope of the road. Mr. DiPersio said that pedestrian issues may be more of a specific event type thing like on Memorial Day or something with people crossing for the cemetery. He said they could paint the crosswalk with the ladder style to make it more visible. They would also install advance warning signs for the stop sign.

Chief Giorgi asked if this is a flashing stop sign. Engineering advised that it is. The Chief asked if we could possibly free it up and use it at another location instead as the crosswalk would be mitigated with more visibility and advance warning signs. This stop sign is regulated, however, Steve Kerrigan asked if the crosswalk was regulated. Pedestrian crossing signs do not need to be regulated as they are just warning signs.

This item will remain on the agenda for the next meeting so that Engineering can confirm that the crosswalk is regulated. Chief Giorgi will create the regulation to repeal the stop sign at Beach Street and Clover Hill Street.

Clinton Street at Auburn Street and Old Charter Road -

Ashley Miller found that the request for 3-way stop intersections was brought before the Traffic Commission in the past (June 9, 1998) and voted on, however, she could not find meeting minutes indicating that the request was approved but the stop signs did go up. She found it interesting to note that traffic counts on Clinton Street show there was significantly more traffic in 1998 than now. The total count between Old Charter Road and East Main Street in 1998 was 585 vehicles, in October 1999 the total count in the same stretch was 660. The count that was just completed showed a total average count of 178 vehicles over a 3-day period. In the past it was used as a cut through street, but not so much anymore. Volumes do not meet the warrants for stop signs in either direction. Engineering did not do any new counts at Old Charter Road and Clinton Street. Steve Kerrigan noted that this is a similar situation to the stop signs on Bigelow Street, where the stop signs were added as a traffic calming measure. Tom DiPersio said that the data

would suggest that the volume went down because of the stop signs, however, this may not be the case.

Chief Giorgi asked for clarification on the number of stop signs we are questioning on Clinton Street. Ms. Miller said there are 5, 2 in each direction on Clinton Street at Auburn Street and at Old Charter Road and then 1 at the end of Clinton Street at Old Charter Road. GIS mapping on the city website was pulled up for reference. The stop sign where Clinton Street hits Old Charter Road would stay. Ms. Miller noted that sight is slightly limited at Auburn Street due to a fence within the zone. The Chief asked to see the map closer and was able to view a photo and diagram. All agreed that it makes sense to keep the sign where Clinton Street feeds onto Old Charter Road but that the others should come down. It was further discussed that the Ward Councilors would need to be notified before any changes were made. Also, warning signs would need to be put up, similar to those on Bigelow Street, stating that cross streets do not stop and another sign indicating when the stop signs would be coming down.

This issue will remain on the agenda for next month but in the meantime, the Chief will create the regulation to repeal the stop signs at Clinton Street and Auburn Street (both directions) and Clinton Street and Old Charter Road (both directions). He will also notify the Ward Councilors and Engineering will put up warning/advisory signs like those on Bigelow Street.

3b) Mt. Pleasant Street Traffic Concerns

Update:

At the last meeting, it was discussed that the electronic speeds signs would be put out to collect data on volume and speed so that the Traffic Commission could determine the specific timeframe that was causing the most issues. Officer Larose had the speed sign out on the Northbound side from South Street up for 21 days, 6/29/23 to 7/20/23, and included the Extended Speed Summary Report for review. The timing of the lights at South Street was also discussed at the last meeting.

The data collected from the speed signs, shows that speed is not the issue. The speed limit is 30 mph, the average speed at this location was 14.04, the 50th percentile was 13.56 and the 85th percentile was 18.18. The report also breaks down the volume by day and time. Sgt. Ney commented that it still doesn't look that bad, based on the report, however, 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm seems to be the highest volume. For some reason, the report also shows heavy volume on Sunday, 7/2, especially between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm. This could have been due to something specific going on in the area. There were also a couple days with heavier traffic between 9:00 and 10:00 am. Tom DiPersio said that this could have been due to a construction detour. All agreed that 4:00 to 6:00 pm does appear to have the heaviest volume in general. The few areas where the report shows N/A was probably due to a battery issue with the sign.

Chief Giorgi reviewed that the thought was to do the same thing that we did at State Street and Chandler Street with no left turn during certain hours, from South Street onto Mt. Pleasant Street. At the moment, we don't have data from the other direction, but he doesn't see that as the issue. It appears that drivers are using this turn as way to avoid the lights to get out of the City. He asked if anyone had any thoughts on this? Is it

worthwhile to do this on weekdays or not? 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm does seem to be the most consistent timeframe for the higher volume. Commissioner Divoll asked about starting at 3:00 pm? He does agree that the volume drops between 6:00 and 7:00 pm. The data does support the 3:00 to 6:00 pm timeframe. Engineering would also need to contact Waze and advise them of the change.

Councilor Dumais had said that he did not think signage would be enforced. Steve Kerrigan noted that we can't restrict it to residents only, which was also discussed at the last meeting, as this would be impossible to enforce. Chief Giorgi said that he has not heard much feedback from anyone since the no left turn restriction was put up at State Street and Chandler Street, but if it's working, then it's working even if residents may not like it.

Sgt. Ney said that their apartments at this location on the right at West Main Street. The entrance is on Mt. Pleasant Street. He is wondering if some of this traffic is due to people heading home to this apartment complex, as 30 cars on the street in 1 hour seems like a lot. Some of the higher numbers are unusual too, like the 78 cars on a random Saturday. He also noted that if you look at 5:00 pm all the way down, it's not consistent. Steve Kerrigan said that if we make this restriction, no left turn from South Street to Mount Pleasant, is someone going to request this on other streets. Do we want to go down this road regarding other feeder streets between major arteries? It will also affect all the residents of the apartments. It is sort of a "can't win" situation and is purely the decision of the Traffic Commission.

Commissioner Divoll said that he was not apposed to trying it on a temporary basis and seeing how it goes. Chief Giorgi explained that the problem with this, is that a temporary restriction is not regulated and is not enforceable. Sgt. Ney said that people living there would need to know that the signs were not enforceable, or they would keep calling and reporting that someone was turning this way. If residents know it is not enforceable then everyone will continue turning here. Steve Kerrigan also noted that no one is choosing to turn from South Street onto Mount Pleasant Street in January to go up that hill. Sgt. Ney said that many people would rather go all the way up to the light to have easy access onto West Main Street. The left turn on Mount Pleasant is the only way residents of the apartment complex can get home.

Tom DiPersio questioned where exactly the counts were taken. He suggested we do another set of counts closer to West Main Street. We could then compare it to the numbers in this Speed Summary Report and see how many were just going to Mt. Pleasant. Ms. Miller said that Engineering has a counter that can be attached to a pole which would allow them to put it in a better location. Chief Giorgi agreed that this was a good idea and suggested using the Police Department's speed sign and the Engineering Department's counter at the same time, in the two different locations, and then compare the data for a more accurate count that would take residents into account.

The Chief asked if there were any additional questions or concerns. None noted.

That there being no further business of the Traffic Commission held on this date, the meeting adjourned at 10:52 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 July 26, 2023, including meeting agenda.

-Draft of Traffic Commission Minutes from Wednesday, June 28, 2023.

-Email from Officer Larose to Chief Giorgi and Sgt. Ney, dated 7/20/23, re: Speed Reports. Including speed reports for Bigelow Street, SB & NB, Westernview Street, NB and Valley Street, EB.

-Email from Ashley Miller to Chief Giorgi, Tom DiPersio & Sean Divoll, dated 6/28/23, re: Stop Signs – Engineering Studies – Final – Beach Street – Clinton Street. (Including Memo dated 6/6/23)

-Extended Speed Summary Report for Mt. Pleasant Street, NB

Additional Handouts

-None