

Engineering Services Division

Traffic Operations Committee

Meeting Minutes – August 20, 2013

Attendees: Rob Mack, PE, PTOE, Engineering Services

Ed Roberge, PE, Engineering Services Steve Henninger, Planning Division

Dick Lemieux, TPAC Chair

A. Regular Discussion Items

1) Overview of city-wide accident data, including prior-month accident summary and discussion of select accident locations, circumstances and potential action.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Traffic accident data for July 2013 was reviewed. There were 85 reportable accidents in July 2013. This compares with 101 and 72 reportable accidents in July 2012 and 2011, respectively. 17 accidents resulted in total of 23 people injured, 3 of which occurred on Loudon Road. There were no fatalities.

There were no accidents involving pedestrians

There were two accidents involving bicyclists: a bicyclist aged 35 years traveling northbound along the N. State Street sidewalk and striking the side of a vehicle turning out of Walker Street (injury, bicyclist at fault, no helmet worn); and a bicyclist aged 21 years traveling northbound along East Side Drive near Eastman Street, veering left in front of a northbound vehicle to cross the street and ride against traffic, and being struck by the vehicle (minor injury, bicyclist at fault, no helmet worn).

There was one accident involving a 10-year-old riding a motor scooter southbound on Broadway on the sidewalk and being struck by a vehicle turning out of the driveway at Ballard's (minor injury, scooter operator at fault, helmet worn).

2) City Council meeting update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At its August 12, 2013 meeting, Council accepted TOC reports on Council referrals regarding safety at the S. State/Thorndike intersection and Church Street speeds.

3) Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At its July 25, 2013 meeting, TPAC continued development of its list of accomplishments and received staff updates of the Main Street Complete Street project, the US Route 3 North Improvements project, and the Loudon Road Corridor Improvements project.

B. On-going Discussion and Action Items.

1) Referral from City Council regarding a driver concern on traffic conflicts between Centre Street vehicles and traffic turning left at the driveways to the Prescription Centre and TD Banknorth. (Council: 05/13/13).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Discussion deferred pending feedback from the Prescription Center and TD Banknorth regarding potential intersection modifications and related driveway access changes.

C. New Discussion and Action Items

1) Referral from the Police Department regarding a resident concern on traffic speeds along Oak Hill Road near Mapletree Farm (*Police: 07/26/13*).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Rob Mack reported that at the request of the police department, Engineering conducted speed counts on Oak Hill Road near the subject property for a four-day period during the week of August 5, 2013. Average recorded speeds were about 38 mph and 85th percentile speeds were about 44 mph; a 35 mph speed is posted. Concern was noted regarding a number of recorded speeds exceeding 51 mph, and even hitting the 70 mph range. The time-of-day speed data was provided to the police department to help in its enforcement efforts.

2) Referral from General Services regarding a request from Concord Coach Lines to install a crosswalk on Stickney Avenue between the bus terminal and the overflow parking area (General Services: 08/06/13).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a request from Heidi Lessard of Concord Coach Lines to consider painting a crosswalk on Stickney Avenue between the bus terminal and the overflow bus-terminal parking area on the west side. Rob Mack met at the site with Ms. Lessard to discuss the request and noted that vestiges of former crosswalk markings were still evident. Sidewalks approaching the crosswalk area have curb ramps. Research afterwards indicated that the NHDOT painted a crosswalk here in the 1990's when the bus terminal was built along with improvements to Stickney Avenue; the crosswalk has since worn off.

TOC members felt that the use of a painted crosswalk here was reasonable given the configuration of the bus terminal and the increasing use of the remote parking area. It was noted, however, that traffic volumes are fairly light at this location and that the application of a painted crosswalk could be considered optional. (In a follow-up discussion after the TOC meeting, Jim Major noted that General Services would repaint this crosswalk and add it to its annual painting program).

3) Referral from City Council requesting an examination of traffic performance at the Regional Drive/Chenell Drive intersection. (Council: 08/12/13).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue are recent concerns by business owners in the Regional Drive area about safety at the Regional/Chenell intersection. The specific concern noted in the Council referral regards intersection safety due to high truck volumes at the intersection. Additionally, TOC members noted prior concerns reported by area employees over the years regarding long delays to turn left or cross from the Chenell Drive approaches during peak traffic times.

Rob Mack noted that a similar request was considered by TOC in July 2008. At that time, TOC found that crash history was not excessive for an intersection of this type (about 3 crashes per year). Following TOC review, sight lines for eastbound traffic turning from Chenell Drive were enhanced by coordinating with the business on the southwest corner to trim some low-hanging branches on site landscaping. General Services also painted a crosswalk on the north leg of the intersection where there was sidewalk. Ultimately, TOC recognized that as traffic increases into the future, more advanced traffic control would be required at the intersection. The use of multi-way stop was felt inappropriate as Regional Drive is a major collector route. Signalization, if traffic volume warrants were met, would require substantial road widening for turn lanes. A roundabout option might also be very effective at this location as it would manage turning conflicts with less overall delay and greater safety, as well as reduce traffic speeds in the area. An intersection improvement project was ultimately accepted by Council as CIP 541 and is currently programmed for study/design in 2020 and construction in 2021.

Rob Mack noted that since 2008, crash history at the intersection has reduced to about 2 crashes per year. As such, TOC members did not feel that there were indications of a significant safety problem at the intersection. However side-street traffic turning left or crossing from Chenell Drive, particularly from the culde-sac side, continue to experience delays during the lunch and afternoon commuter peak when traffic flows from the multiple businesses peak. Engineering will conduct traffic counts and begin an updated intersection evaluation in September following the vacation season. Further discussion of this item will be deferred pending additional information from the updated evaluation.

4) Request from Councilor Patten regarding a constituent concern on traffic speeds on Ormond Street and a request to install a STOP sign on the Prescott Street approach to Ormond Street (Council: 08/19/13).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a concern by David Ford, resident of Ormond Street, on excessive traffic speed along Ormond Street. Included is a request to: add 'STRICTLY ENFORCED' to the currently posted 25 mph speed limit sign; install a double yellow centerline along both Ormond Street and Community Drive; and install a STOP sign on the Prescott Street approach to Ormond Street.

Rob Mack noted that TOC and CPD responded to a similar request from Mr. Ford in 2008. A speed count conducted by Engineering on Ormond Street between Prescott Street and Christian Avenue indicated average speeds of 22 mph and 85th percentile speeds of 28 mph; speeds not indicative of a speeding problem on the 25 mph-posted street. As is the case on most streets, there was a small percentage of inconsiderate drivers in the 'near 40' range, thus enforcement was recommended as the appropriate measure. At the time, TOC did not feel that a STOP sign was necessary on Prescott Street. TOC did coordinate with Parking Enforcement regarding cars parking along the southern end of Ormond Street near Loudon Road and blocking the travel way.

Lieutenant Cori Casey provided a communication summarizing recent CPD efforts in response to Mr. Ford's concerns. Lieutenant Casey spoke with Mr. Ford on several occasions for extended periods, and Mr. Ford indicated that he is very pleased with police department efforts. Officer Craig Levesque also met with Mr. Ford at his residence. The CPD has begun recording Directed Patrols for the area and will continue to do so. CPD is also seeking to educate Mr. Ford on actual speeds vs. perceived speeds and he was amenable to that effort. Officer Levesque has reported higher speeds on Christian Avenue but not on Ormond Street.

TOC members continue to concur that excessive speeding along Ormond Street is apparently limited to a few inconsiderate drivers and that enforcement is the appropriate action in this case. Installation of a STOP sign is not necessary on the Prescott Street approach to Ormond Street and is considered as optional per

Traffic Operations Committee – Minutes August 20, 2013 Page 4 of 4

Federal criteria and city policy. In any event, a STOP sign here would have no effect on speeds along Ormond Street. TOC felt that installation of a painted yellow centerline along either Ormond Street or Christian Avenue was not appropriate for these local streets. It was felt that installation of such a marking might act to increase 'perceived' speeds as drivers might tend to pass closer to pedestrians and cyclists also using the street. The potential introduction of a 'STRICTLY ENFORCED' speed limit was also discussed; however there was a concern that such a requirement would have to be predicated by city-wide policy rather than at a spot location. In any event, overall speeds along Ormond Street appear reasonable for the 25 mph posting.

Rob Mack noted that Parking Enforcement had just received a communication from an area resident with a concern on parking along Ormond Street that blocks existing sidewalk areas. Such parking was noted on aerial photographs reviewed by TOC, with particular adverse effects along the west side of Ormond Street from the restaurant at the corner of Loudon Road northerly a few hundred feet. There is no curb along the street and sidewalk is ill-defined as some driveway crossings; on-street parkers can park too close, or over, the sidewalk area. Engineering will follow up with Parking Enforcement on this concern.

D. Open Discussion Items

1) Staff response to miscellaneous inquiries (refer to correspondence in agenda packet).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Pursuant to a resident inquiry about pedestrian safety along Country Club Lane, Engineering received a communication from the chair of the Mountain Green Estates Homeowner's Association. At issue was a neighborhood concern on visibility at the crosswalk on Country Club Lane at Oakmont Drive. Rob Mack visited the site and noted overgrown vegetation on the north end of the crosswalk that limited potential sight lines to traffic approaching from the Concord Country Club exit. (In a follow-up discussion after the TOC meeting, Jim Major noted that General Services would trim the overgrown vegetation as appropriate).

Respectfully submitted,	
Robert J. Mack, PE, PTOE, Traffic Engineer Chair, Traffic Operations Committee	

The next Traffic Operations Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 17, 2013 @ 12:00 PM in the 2ND Floor Conference Room.