



Engineering Services Division

Traffic Operations Committee

Meeting Minutes – June 17, 2014

Attendees: Rob Mack, PE, PTOE, Engineering Services
Ed Roberge, PE, Engineering Services
Steve Henninger, Planning Division
Jim Major, General Services
Greg Taylor, Concord Police Department
Eric Crane, Concord Police Department
Kevin Partington, Concord Police Department
Rick Wollert, Concord Fire Department
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 May 2014 was reviewed. There were 84 reportable accidents in May 2014. This compares with 93 and 84 reportable accidents in May 2013 and 2012, respectively. 24 accidents resulted in total of 28 people injured. There were no fatalities.

There were no accidents involving pedestrians.

There was one accident involving a bicyclist: a bicyclist aged 16 years traveling westbound on the sidewalk along Loudon Road and while crossing the driveway at Salisbury Green without stopping was struck by a vehicle leaving the driveway (minor injury, bicyclist at fault, helmet worn).

2) City Council meeting update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At its June 9, 2014 meeting, Council referred a request for Borough Road pedestrian and intersection improvements to TOC. Council also set July public hearings to consider the following changes to the Ordinance: parking setbacks from driveways on Christian Avenue and S. Fruit Street; a No Parking zone along S. Curtisville Road in the vicinity of Broken Ground School; and stipulation in the Ordinance that specific intersection or driveway setbacks in parking could be overridden if signing indicated otherwise.

3) Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: TPAC did not meet in May.

B. On-going Discussion and Action Items.

- 1) Request from Jason Manning, resident at 16 Guay Street, to reduce the posted speed limit on Guay Street due to high speeds (*Engineering: 4/11/14*).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Rob Mack spoke with Mr. Manning on June 6 and explained that the city doesn't use children at play signs as they are not federally recognized signs. Regarding speeds, it seems that his concern was for a few drivers in the neighborhood as well as delivery trucks that he feels go too fast. Since this is a small cul-de-sac neighborhood with short streets that generally promotes slower speeds, it was noted that enforcement might best address these concerns, especially if he could provide a vehicle description. It was noted that the police department was aware of his concerns. He was appreciative of the city's follow-up to his inquiry. TOC members concurred with the responses noted. CPD will look into enforcement as schedule allows and will try to visit Mr. Manning while there.

- 2) Referral from Councilor Herschlag requesting that additional traffic calming methods be considered on Wildflower Drive between Abbott Road and Woodbine Avenue and on Woodbine Avenue between Mayflower Drive and Sorrell Drive (*Council: 4/14/14*).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Engineering deployed the radar speed counters on the subject road segments from Friday April 11 through Wednesday April 16, 2014. On Woodbine Avenue just west of Daphne Court there was about 460 vehicles per day with average and 85th percentile speeds of 22 and 28 mph, respectively. On Wildflower Drive just west of Astor Court, there was about 330 vehicles per day with average and 85th percentile speeds of 19 and 26 mph, respectively. The posted speed limit within the subdivision is 25 mph. Since 2009, there was only one reported crash on these roadway segments; the crash was due to unsafe backing by a school bus and not related to speed. Observed sight lines along the subject segments appeared appropriate.

TOC felt that measured speeds along the subject segments of Woodbine Avenue and Wildflower Drive were not indicative of a general speeding problem, and were in fact, reasonably consistent with the posted 25 mph speed limit. These speeds are largely promoted by the short street segments and curving alignment developed in this subdivision. A few vehicles were recorded as having excessive speeds and it was felt that those inconsiderate drivers would be best handled by enforcement action. A general overview of the daily traffic volumes recorded on these streets does not indicate an excessive volume of cut-through traffic. Some traffic cut-through would be expected, but in general, recorded volumes are close to what would be expected to be generated by a neighborhood of this size.

As the subject streets are all local streets and not emergency response routes, the potential use of speed bumps is an option. There are three speed bumps in the neighborhood already: Woodbine Avenue east of Sorrell Drive; Woodbine Avenue at Chicory Court; and Alder Creek Drive west of Yarrow Way. Since average speeds are already fairly low, additional speed bumps may have little noticeable effect on speed other than at the bump location. Multiple bumps with spacing of about 200 feet may reduce average speeds at the midpoint between bumps to about 20 mph. However, use of bumps on curves or next to intersections or driveways is not recommended. This limits potential bump locations to: Woodbine Avenue near Lovage Place or Verbena Way and Wildflower Avenue between Bittersweet Lane and Astor Court. New speed bumps would also require signage and the issue of increased vehicle noise at the bump location would be a consideration for nearby residents. Per the city's 2005 Traffic Management Policy,

installation of speed bumps would need at least 60 percent approval of neighborhood residents prior to the request being forwarded to City Council for consideration and action. General Services estimates a cost of about \$3,500 to install a speed bump with signs, similar to those already located in West Village. Per city policy, bumps so installed must remain for at least five years; a neighborhood request for earlier removal of the bumps might be required by City Council to fund the removal. Engineering staff will share initial findings with Councilor Herschlag.

C. New Discussion and Action Items

- 1) Referral from Councilor Herschlag requesting that additional traffic calming methods or stop signs be used at the Washington/Borough/River intersection, and that consideration be given to filling sidewalk gaps and enhancing pedestrian travel along Borough Road between Alice Drive and River Road (Council: 6/09/14).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Rob Mack visited the Washington/Borough/River intersection and provided an overview of current intersection operation and geometric challenges. As there have been no reported crashes at the intersection since 2011, safety does not appear to be a significant issue. However the odd shape of the intersection does create several undesirable operational characteristics such as: promoting higher-speed eastbound movement between River Road and Borough Road; making a difficult sight line and head turn for drivers at the Borough Road stop line turning left onto River Road; and offering multiple choices for drivers to turn at the intersection making it more difficult for drivers to anticipate what other approaching driver's intentions are. Recognizing the need to revise this intersection's configuration into a more customary 'T' configuration (such as had been done at the Mountain/Shaker intersection), this intersection has been included in CIP 520, Intersection Safety Improvements. Improvements would be done in conjunction with the next street-repaving project (distant out-year).

TOC concurred that the most appropriate configuration for the intersection would be to relocate the Borough Road westbound approach to the right of the existing utility pole in the island and to intersect Washington Street at a right angle. Washington Street - River Road would be defined as the non-stopping through street. The existing pavement to the south of the utility pole (the current two-way movement between Borough Road and River Road) would be discontinued. The discontinued pavement area would need to be planted/landscaped and could provide an 'adopt-a-spot' opportunity for an interested neighborhood group. TOC members endorsed the potential concept and felt it could provide substantial public benefit. Jim Major noted that if Engineering staff can develop an intersection layout that can be created by sawing and removing existing pavement only (i.e. no new paving/low cost), that perhaps General Services could consider the changes with its own crews at an earlier time. Engineering will look into the potential intersection layout in more detail and report back to TOC next month.

Regarding the construction of missing sidewalk links along Borough Road from Primrose Lane to Alice Drive, Ed Roberge described past staff efforts to consider sidewalks including meetings with residents regarding options to build sidewalk on either side of the road. Limited right-of-way, close proximity of some homes to the street, location of utility poles and large trees, and location of guardrail were design challenges. Staff opinion was that sidewalk along the southern side of the road was more realistically constructible than along the northern side. In the 1990's, options to construct sidewalk between Primrose Lane and Lilac Street were rejected by abutting Borough Road residents who did not want sidewalk. Sidewalk in this area was considered again in the early 2000's under a Federal TE grant, but was met with

significant local opposition. Due to this opposition, the only sidewalk link constructed (around 2008) was the 200-foot segment between Mill Stream Lane and Primrose Lane. Engineering will research the options then shared with the neighborhood, including neighborhood feedback, and report history back to TOC.

2) Referral from City Council regarding a resident request to limit Ripley Street to local access only (Council: 6/09/14).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a resident concern with cut-through traffic and speeds along Ripley Street and a request that the street be limited to local traffic only. The concern notes cut-through traffic that avoids the signal at the Airport Road/Old Turnpike Road intersection.

Ripley Street is a local street about 1,000 feet long and intersects with Old Turnpike Road to the west and Airport Road to the east. It provides access to a mix of business and residential properties. The northern side of the street provides access to seven lots, six residential and one commercial. The southern side provides driveway access to one commercial lot and borders an undeveloped 17-acre lot. All properties surrounding Ripley Street have been zoned Industrial since at least 1977. The street is posted with a 25 mph speed limit as well as No Thru Trucking.

Police department staff noted a history of multiple speed enforcement efforts along the street, including prior contacts with Mr. Munroe. Through these efforts, enforcement staff indicated that speeding and substantial cut-through traffic had not been observed. Engineering staff also observed traffic flow along the street during the afternoon commuter peak with similar observations.

TOC felt that observed speeds along the street were generally appropriate and that, while a small number of cut-through movements occur, adverse traffic conditions were not evident. Because the street is in the industrial zone with potential for future development, TOC felt that connectivity currently provided by the street was appropriate. Conversion to a cul-de-sac condition in order to limit access to only select properties was not recommended.

3) Concern by Lyman Brooks, resident of 99 Broadway, on excessive speeds along Broadway (City Clerk: 3/24/14).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Officer Eric Crane noted that enforcement staff has talked with Mr. Brooks on a number of occasions regarding his concerns, including providing speed enforcement at that location on Broadway. Rob Mack noted that a recent speed study on Broadway south of Allison Street indicated reasonable overall speeds with 85th percentile speeds less than about 30 mph or less. Ed Roberge noted that traffic calming improvements (including lane narrowing and bumpouts) along Broadway to encourage lower speeds were discussed with the neighborhood in the early 2000's. However, local residents' preference was to maintain the existing wide curb-to-curb widths which can result in higher travel speeds by some drivers. Enforcement staff will continue to monitor and coordinate with Mr. Brooks.

4) Concern by Sandra Gagne of #20 Weir Road, on excessive speeds Weir Road (Engineering: 6/13/14).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a concern with vehicles 'speeding' around the tight curve in Weir Road near #20 and the potential need for more signing. Weir Road is unpaved and the subject curve is fairly tight. A right-turn advisory sign is posted on the northbound approach and no sign is posted on the southbound approach. Weir Road is a cul-de-sac road serving several homes as well as a trailhead with

parking at its northern terminus. TOC concurred that the current signage should be expanded to include advisory right-turn signs and 10 mph advisory plaques on both approaches to the subject curve. General Services will order the signs and have them erected in a few weeks.

5) Request by Michael Arsenault of 193 East Side Drive to install a street light on East Side Drive just south of Portsmouth Street (*Engineering: 6/13/14*).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: There is no continuous street lighting along East Side Drive south of the Portsmouth Street intersection to Loudon Road; lighting is located only at intersections. There is continuous street lighting along Portsmouth Street to the east and along East Side Drive to the north of Portsmouth Street. Requested is a street light roughly across the street from the driveway to #193. Ed Roberge noted direction from Council to consider reductions in unnecessary street lighting rather than additions in order to control the city's energy costs. TOC members did not note any issues with safety or night-time walking along this section of East Side Drive.

TOC members did not support the addition of a new street light at the subject location on East Side Drive. The resident alternatively has the option to contact Unutil for options to install a street light on his property and at his expense.

6) Concern by Claire Michlovitz of #47 S. Curtisville Road on excessive speeds along S. Curtisville Road during school times, including concerns on speed limit sign location and school zone flashers (*Engineering: 6/02/14*).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Rob Mack reported that he observed traffic operation along S. Curtisville Road during the morning school drop-off period. Traffic speeds appeared quite reasonable in the vicinity of the schools. A crossing guard controlling school crossings at the Dominique Drive intersection noted that this particular morning was about normal in his experience, and was not aware of a traffic-speed issue along this section of S. Curtisville Road. Engineering staff deployed speed radar counters on S. Curtisville Road during the week of June 16 and the results would be available in a few days. (*Subsequent to the TOC meeting, recorded speeds near Tocci's Path for 48 hours averaged 21-22 mph with 85th percentile speeds of 27-29 mph. Speeds were somewhat lower in the 16-25 mph range during school peaks due to the 20 mph flashing school zone signs and the crossing guard stopping traffic near Dominique Drive*).

Rick Wollert confirmed that the school zone flashers were timed to flash for 45 minutes before the start of classes at 7:45 AM and for 45 minutes after the end of classes at 2:30 PM, all times being in accordance with state RSA's. TOC members discussed the current locations of the school zone flashers, one on each Portsmouth Street approach to S. Curtisville Road and one on the S. Curtisville Road eastbound approach to the intersection at Portsmouth Street. TOC felt that some of the flashers might be located somewhat far in advance of the school zone, although the availability of electric service might be a factor. Greg Taylor noted that the sign locations were adequate for appropriate speed enforcement. He also noted that traffic enforcement is done annually at the Portsmouth/S. Curtisville intersection, usually around the start of the school season in September. Rob Mack noted TOC's past recommendations for a uniform city-wide school zone signage system. If a future grant opportunity arises, that would afford an opportunity to review the locations of these school zone flashers and make adjustments as necessary.

TOC members discussed area speed limits. Street approaches to the school are generally 30 mph, although the segment of S. Curtisville Road between Portsmouth Street and East Side Driveways was one of the one hundred or so various streets reduced to 25 mph about 10 years ago. TOC felt that current

speed limits seem appropriate, and are in fact overridden by the school zone flashers (20mph) during school times. Speed limit consistency would be a consideration under a future evaluation of speed limits city wide.

D. Open Discussion Items

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

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None.

5) Weeble map update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Not discussed.

Respectfully submitted,

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

***The next Traffic Operations Committee meeting will be held on
Tuesday, July 15, 2014 @ 12:00 PM in the 2ND Floor Conference Room.***