



# Town of Hudson

## Internal Traffic Committee

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Minutes of Meeting – December 16, 2016

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A meeting of the Town of Hudson's Internal Traffic Committee (ITC) was held on Friday, December 16, 2016. Jeff Wood, Chair convened the meeting at 10:00 AM.

**The following ITC voting members were in attendance:**

John Blood, Deputy Fire Chief  
Michael Burks, Police Chief  
Eric Ryder, Director, Public Works

**The following non-voting ITC members were in attendance:**

Kristina Johnson, Asst. Director of Planning and Community Development  
Jack Hunter, Director of Planning and Community Development

**The following individuals were also present:**

Selectmen Fred Lucy  
Chuck Randall  
Jef Fasser, BSC Group  
Connor Semler, Kittelson and Associates

### Site Plans

198 Washington Street

Alpha Omega Engineering provided an overview of the proposed expansion of an existing dental office located at 198 Washington Street. Omega Engineering stated that the addition is needed to accommodate dental patients. They indicated that he will not be creating any additional parking, and that the existing parking on site is in compliance with the requirements of the zoning ordinance. Furthermore they stated that he spoke to Max Kamel at the DPW regarding any drainage or sewer; no upgrades will be needed.

Chief Blood asked whether the additional rooms would be used as exam rooms, to which the owner of the business responded that rooms would be used for sedation and recovering of patients. Within in the rooms, monitors, nitrous oxide tanks, and a table for root canals would be placed. Chief Blood followed up and asked if the nitrous tanks are stored in the basement, to which the owner responded no and indicated that the tanks are portable.

Eric Ryder moved to approve the site plans. Seconded by Chief Burks. 3-0-0

### Transportation and Parking Issues

Grove Street

Kristina Johnson was directed by the ITC Board at the November meeting to investigate the cost of hiring an outside engineering firm to complete a truck exclusion study on behalf of the Town for Grove Street. Ms. Johnson reached out to an engineering colleague at McMahon and Associates—a firm who is already working with Eric Ryder on designing intersection safety improvements at Main Street and Lewis

Street—to provide a “back of the napkin” estimate to complete a complete the scope of required for a truck exclusion study. McMahon Associates indicated that they would anticipate a study of this nature for Grove Street to cost up to \$5,000 to complete a truck exclusion including their engineering staff accompanying the Town to MassDOT to help make the case.

Jack Hunter added that this cost estimate is good information to have on hand, as ITC receives many requests to investigate truck exclusions. He noted that in his experience, the Regional Planning Agency would help member communities prepare truck exclusion studies through the Local Technical Assistance program; however, the Town of Hudson is within the MAPC region, and they do not provide such services. Ms. Johnson inquired if the DPW had the staff capacity and the traffic counting equipment to complete this work, to which Eric Ryder responded no.

Eric Ryder inquired whether we—the Complete Streets Steering Committee—could use MassDOT complete streets funding to complete the truck exclusion study. Ms. Johnson noted that Grove Street was ranked by the steering committee as a high priority project. Mr. Hunter agreed to contact MassDOT and/or the Town’s complete streets consultant to inquire if completing a truck exclusion study would be an eligible cost.

No vote was taken.

#### Washington Street/Giasson Street intersection

As requested at the last ITC meeting, Eric Ryder provided a cost estimate for purchasing a static right-turn only sign that would be activated upon pedestrian activity in the crosswalk. He indicated that this type of signage would cost between \$6,800 and \$8,100, and that he did not have adequate funding in his budget for this purchase. ITC members discussed alternative safety measures; all agreed that a static “yield to pedestrians” sign could help to raise awareness to motorists about pedestrians crossing.

Chief Burks moved to approve the yield to pedestrians sign. Seconded by Chief Blood. 3-0-0

#### Update on Crosswalk at Main Street and Church Street

At several meetings, the ITC board has been discussing the lack of a crosswalk at Main Street and Church Street, which had originally been removed for not meeting ADA design standards. Per the direction of the Board of Selectmen, Eric Ryder and Chief Burks have investigated an appropriate ADA design solution to accommodate the restriping of the crosswalk at this location. Eric and Chief Burks discussed the public safety issue with affected business and all agreed that the desired option would be to put back the crossing in its original location with the understanding that this action will result in the loss of one parking space (directly in front of Hair by Chaves).

Eric Ryder moved to forward to the Board of Selectmen a request to put back the crosswalk in its original location with the understanding that this design option will result in the elimination of one parking space directly in front of Hair by Chaves. Seconded by Chief Burks. 3-0-0

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### Downtown Rotary Design Project

Jack Hunter provided an update on the status of the downtown rotary design project since it has been several months since the design team last presented at an ITC meeting. Mr. Hunter mentioned that his Department along with the design team has engaged in a robust, transparent public outreach process. A number of traditional public forums were held as well as attending various community events to solicit feedback on the rotary design. He noted that lately the focus of the team has been on parking—ratifying the parking within the project limits today and understanding what could be lost with different scenarios.

Mr. Hunter underscored that the Rotary Steering Committee felt strongly about bringing this to the Board of Selectmen for their direction regarding parking before moving forward with a finalized design.

Mr. Hunter turned over the floor to Jef Fasser at the BSC Group and Connor Semler from Kittelson Associates to begin the presentation. Jef first provided an overview of the rotary design process and highlighted the overall goals and objectives that were developed as a result of the many public engagement opportunities that were held over the past several months.

Below is a bulleted summary of the presentation, which was co-presented by Jef Fasser and Connor Semler:

- Jef discussed the traffic counts taken at the rotary in June 2016 and the key movements at the rotary. He discussed a visual depiction of the rotary movements; the thicker the line, the more heavy the volume for that movement.
- Jef noted that the Washington Street Bridge replacement project underway has been incorporated into the rotary design process.
- Jef noted that three design options were developed after the first public forum for discussion: the T-intersection, the double-lane approach, and a single-lane approach. Queue lengths were measured and presented for each design option. Jef stated that the single-lane approach was selected as the preferred option to advance.
- Jef described the proposed cross section for the single-lane approach and highlighting the recaptured resulting recaptured public space. Jef discussed examples of how the resulting space could be used: green space, wider sidewalks, spaces for businesses to spillover, outside cafes, etc.
- Jef noted accommodating bicycles within the rotary was a circulation issue raised throughout the public process. Connor discussed that there are two options for accommodating cyclists within the rotary: allowing them to ride in mixed-traffic with enhanced pavement marking and signage, or providing a separated facility that would allow circumnavigate the rotary. Connor and Jef underscored that both of these options are not final, and would like feedback on these two options.
- Jef then focused the presentation on parking, specifically what parking currently exists today and the location of the future parking if the preferred option was advanced. Conducted an inventory of the existing parking within the rotary design limit of work. Indicated the number of parking spaces around the rotary and the location of fire hydrants, curb cuts and crosswalks, handicap parking, driveways. Jef explained that the rotary design limit of work was divided into four different sections for the purposes of counting the number of existing on-street spaces and the number of future on-street spaces.
- Mr. Hunter noted that the parking number Jef would be presenting had been ratified by the Rotary steering committee.
- Jef walked through section by section to discuss the numbers. He underscored that there is a “range of parking” that could be lost—2-6 spaces, and that minimizing the amount of spaces lost

would require relocation of fire hydrants and shortening the width of an existing curb on Washington Street.

Below is a summary of the comments and questions raised by the ITC Board and meeting attendees:

- Chief Blood expressed his concern about the removal of the fire hydrant at the corner of Main Street/Pope Street and indicated that he wants that hydrant to remain. He noted earlier in the parking discussion there must be a hydrant every three hundred feet for commercial buildings.
- Chief Blood expressed serious concern that the single-lane option especially on the Washington Street approach from the Fire Station could significantly hinder this Department's ability to respond to an incident in a timely fashion. He noted that with the existing design of the rotary presents a challenge for emergency response; however, he noted that at least now there is space for traffic to move over to allow emergency vehicles to pass. Connor underscored that the single lane approach provide essentially the same cross section width as the existing condition with some speed deflection measures that will lower general vehicular speeds and enhance pedestrian safety.
- Eric Ryder and Kristina Johnson mentioned that a T-intersection option was developed and examined at the beginning of the process. Eric and Chief Blood noted that motorists are more familiar with how to function at a T-intersection intersection rather than a rotary; both underscored that the rotary in Hudson has a special significance to the Town.
- Jef and Connor identified a potential modification to the single-lane design option to allay Chief Blood's concern about emergency response: a dual-lane design on Washington Street south. Chief Blood expressed his support for formalizing two lanes on the Washington Street south approach. Both Jef and Connor stated that this design modification could impact the amount the recaptured public space and on-street parking.
- Chief Burks expressed his opposition to having bicyclist encouraged to ride in mixed-traffic within the rotary, and would rather see a separated facility for cyclists instead.
- Selectmen Fred Lucy re-verified the number of existing on-street parking spaces and the range of future on street-parking spaces within each individual rotary design project section. Selectmen Lucy reiterated his understanding that each parking space represents 2.5% of overall parking within the rotary design project limits.
- Chuck Randall offered his remarks about the rotary design effort, and how the redesign fits into the longer-term picture of Downtown Hudson. Chuck mentioned that how one feels about the redesign of the rotary depends on whether you are a pedestrian, motorist, an emergency responder, a cyclists, and what the time of the day your use of the rotary is occurring. Chuck believes ,as an owner of property abutting the rotary, that he brings a multifaceted, unique perspective on the use of the rotary. Moreover, he feels that prioritizing the design options based on these different use perspectives is the prudent way to move forward. He firmly believes that it is extremely dangerous for pedestrians to ciruclate in and anroud the rotary because of the length of the existing crosswalks and the unofficall dual lane design of the rotary. Chuck, therefore, expressed his firm support for the single-lane approach.

- Chief Burks, Selectman Lucy, and Chief Blood expressed their support for the shortened pedestrian crossings, as they feel it will enhance pedestrian safety and draw attention to motorists that pedestrians are crossing the rotary.
- Chuck Randall expressed his opinion that downtowns are changing and our downtown will look different in the future, with more residential developments and pedestrian activity.

Chief Blood moved to direct the BSC Group to address concerns raised at the meeting and return to ITC in the future. Seconded by Chief Burks. 3-0-0

#### Pine Street

Chief Burks provided an update on the targeted speed enforcement activities on Pine Street. He noted that the average speed was between 25-27 MPH, and that no citations have been issued. Chief Burks mentioned, however, that the officers have received positive feedback from the neighborhood residents.

#### Minutes

Eric Ryder moved to approve the minutes from November 18, 2016. Second by Chief Blood, vote 3-0-0.

#### Adjournment

Eric Ryder moved to adjourn the meeting, second by Chief Burks, vote 3-0-0.