



Town of Hudson

Internal Traffic Committee

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Minutes of Meeting – 4-27-2018

A meeting of the Town of Hudson's Internal Traffic Committee (ITC) was held on Friday, *April 27, 2018 at Hudson Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room*. Jeff Wood, Building Commissioner, convened the meeting at 10:00 AM.

The following ITC voting members were in attendance:

Jeff Wood, Building Commissioner
Michael Burks, Police Chief
Eric Ryder, Director of Public Works

The following non-voting ITC members were in attendance:

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

Other Attendees:

Richard Braga, Downtown BID
Chuck Randall, Randall Properties
Katharine Vannase, Hudson Resident
Natalie Isley, Hudson Resident

Priest Street- Neighborhood Speeding Concerns

Kristina Johnson first stated that Katherine Vanasse had reached out to the Planning Department to express traffic concerns in the Priest Street neighborhood. Kristina encouraged Ms. Vanasse to appear before the ITC Board and engage her neighbors on this issue. Kristina passed around several emails from Priest Street neighbors echoing the same traffic concerns as Ms. Vanasse.

Katherine Vanasse, a resident of Priest Street presented an overview of the neighborhood's concerns regarding high traffic volumes and speeding. She noted that many children reside on Priest Street, and parents are concerned that there could be a potential accident, as children play in driveways and yards close to the street. Ms. Vanasse described a recent accident involving a neighborhood dog. She inquired whether a "Slow Down" "Children at Play" sign and/or traffic calming devices could be installed.

Eric Ryder expressed his concerns about installing traffic calming devices, as they become difficult to manage during snow removal operations. He stated that ultimately

speed bumps get ruined and torn up during the wintertime months. Eric also expressed his skepticism (based on his experience) that speed bumps have any reasonable impact slowing down traffic. He did, however, commit to installing “Children at Play” signs at strategic locations on Priest Street. Chief Burks committed to deploying radar enforcement on Priest Street. He noted, however, that the speeders pulled over by officers are oftentimes neighborhood residents.

River Road and Port Street– Traffic Concerns

Natalie Isley, a resident of River Road reached out to Kristina Johnson in the Planning Department regarding excessive speeding on River Road and Port Street. Kristina encouraged Natalie to appear before the ITC Board, as speeding has been a longstanding traffic issue the Town is trying to address. Natalie described the speeding traffic conditions and requested that the speed limit be reduced to 30 miles per hour and that “Slow” sign be installed at a strategic location along River Road.

Eric Ryder stated that “Slow” sign can be installed provided that it meets the standards specified in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Chairman Wood noted that the Hudson Police Department is continuously out on River Road enforcing the speed limit. Chief Burks underscored that he consistently deploys officers to this area between 3:30 PM-6:30 PM every day for targeted speed enforcement.

South Street and Fire Station Parking- Downtown Business Improvement District

Jack Hunter presented an overview of the newly formed Business Improvement District (BID), and how they have been working to help the Town maximize parking in the Downtown. Using the Nelson/Nygaard study prepared in 2015, Jack discussed the idea of returning the 5 northwest most facing parking spaces at the Fire Station to general-purpose Downtown Parking, and eliminating the “employee only” designation. Jack noted that the Fire Chief is comfortable with the re-purposing of those spaces for general parking. Accordingly, Eric Ryder moved to approve the re-designation of the 5 northwesterly facing parking spaces closest to the access driveway to general purpose parking. Seconded by Jeff Wood. 3-0-0. Unanimous

Steve Goldberg, Planning Board Member and Member of the BID subcommittee on Parking presented a plan to reconfigure the spaces within the South Street parking lot, as recommended in the Nelson Nygaard Downtown Parking Study. Steve presented an overview of the existing parking layout of the South Street Lot, and noted that the actual number of parking space is actually 150, not 157 as indicated in the parking study. Steve re-examined the layout on Google Earth and in the field, and with some space re-orientation, a net gain of 10 spaces could be achieved. Jack indicated that the BID understands the associated cost (striping and sealing) to achieve the re-oriented layout, and no decision about funding sources has been made. Eric underscored the need for seal coating if the parking layout is re-oriented. ITC Board members were generally supportive of this proposal. Eric Ryder moved to support the change of the parking

configuration within the South Street as presented to ITC. Seconded by Chief Burks. 3-0-0. Unanimous

Richard Braga, Executive Director of the BID passed around specifications for benches (same as what is slated for South Street) that are proposed to be installed throughout downtown. He noted that the proposed locations including the sidewalk. ITC members expressed concerns about the sidewalk locations. Six benches are being proposed including two at the Veteran's monument (the Veteran's Agent supports these benches). Mr. Braga noted that 48 feet of travel space will be maintained, benches would not impede on any of the brickwork in the sidewalks, and would be removed for wintertime snow removal operations. Chief Burks expressed concerns about excessive loitering, and Eric Ryder expressed caution that the benches get scratched up during the installation and removal process. Eric also volunteered to store the benches behind the DPW near the dog pound. Generally ITC members express support of the benches. Accordingly, Eric Ryder moved to support the installation of the six benches at the prescribed locations throughout Downtown. Seconded by Chief Burks. 3-0-0. Unanimous.

Tucks Auto Repair- Preliminary Discussion about Access Driveways

Nothing was discussed relative to the above topic, as there was no information provided to Board for consideration.

Hudson Business Improvement District- Outdoor seating on Main Street

Jack Hunter provided an overview of the formation of the Downtown Hudson Business Improvement District. He noted that the Town Administrator had directed him to investigate the feasibility of allowing outside café seating at various locations throughout the Downtown. Jack stated that his investigation was cursory and his initial opinion was that there may not be enough sidewalk space to accommodate outside seating; however, Dick Braga, the new Executive Director of the BID has taken a second look at opportunities for outside seating.

Dick Braga stated that he researched ADA requirements online and went out and measured sidewalk widths in several locations in Downtown. The idea is to accommodate small tables and chairs while still providing adequate pedestrian access, complying with ADA requirements, and maintaining public safety. Dick Braga's measurements indicated that there would be adequate sidewalk space in front of several existing restaurant spaces, and passed around a graphic to solicit feedback from ITC members.

Eric Ryder expressed his concerns that the existing brick on the sidewalks is a maintenance headache. If bricks had to be removed to accommodate the outside seating, Eric recommended that a concrete "brick dye" or stamped concrete be used as a replacement. Acting Fire Chief Deputy Geldart concurred with Eric regarding the brick, but stated that outside seating may work downtown. Chairman Wood expressed his support of the outside seating concept; however, he noted that all seating must comply with ADA and building code requirements.

Eric Ryder also noted that it has been his experience that tables and chairs are not always maintained, put away at the end of the night, or cleaned; and further, that sidewalk area where folks are eating outside becomes extremely dirty. Dick Braga underscored that these issues could be addressed through the licensing process.

Should outside seating for downtown be considered, regulations would need to be developed and reviewed by ITC and approved by the Board of Selectmen. No vote was taken.

Pedestrian Safety on Brigham Street at Hudson High School

Carey Napoleone, a resident of Luther Drive and has children who attend Hudson High School, explained to the Board that the pedestrian conditions in the vicinity of the high school are poor. She explained that children crossing from the neighborhood to the High School are subjected to treacherous conditions, including high speeds and poor vehicular site lines. Specifically she noted that the bottom of Brigham Street at the intersection with Park Street is extremely problematic as the crosswalk is faded. Denise Reid, Hudson Public Schools Director of Communication, also concurred with Ms. Napoleone about the pedestrian safety issues on Brigham, particularly at the conclusion of the school day.

Eric Ryder explained that the Park Street/Brigham Street intersection is being reconstructed as part of the Town's Complete Streets funding, which will include new sidewalks, signage, and tip downs . He also noted that all crosswalks will be repainted in the Spring. Eric stated that the signage and crosswalks at the bottom of Curley are in compliance, and suggested that a crossing guard could be posted at that location. Captain DiPersio said that he would look into the matter a little further with the School Resource Officer. Ms. Reid inquired about the possibility of installing a pedestrian flashing signal at this location. Eric noted that the pedestrian flashing signal equipment is extremely expensive.

Kristina Johnson offered to contact the Director of the MassDOT Safe Routes to School program. Because Middle School-aged children attend the High School, this location could be eligible for the Safe Routes to School program, whereby Planners and Engineers from MassDOT conduct a safety audit, recommend improvement. No vote was taken.

Approval of Minutes from 3/23/2018

Eric Ryder moved to accept the minutes from the January 26, 2018 ITC meeting. Seconded by Chairman Wood. 4-0-0.