



**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 Tuesday, October 27, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room, City Hall. Members present: Chairman - Police Chief Mark Leonard, DPW Commissioner John Ghiloni, Fire Chief Kevin Breen and City Clerk Lisa Thomas. Also present: Assistant City Engineer Tim Collins, Assistant City Clerk Steve Kerrigan, City Councilor Katie Robey, Tim Cummings of MEDC, Marlborough Economic Development Corporation and Pam Wilderman, Code Enforcement Officer. Minutes taken by: Karen Lambert, MPD Records Clerk.

1- Minutes

The minutes of the Traffic Commission meeting of Tuesday, September 22, 2015.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
TO APPROVE.

2 – New Business

Chief Leonard requested a suspension of rules to move New Business Agenda Item f up on the agenda. – All in favor.

2f) Traffic concerns, New St. at Granger Blvd.

Councilor Oram sent an e-mail to Chief Leonard expressing his concerns on this intersection. He called it an “accident waiting to happen, not only on Election Day but any daily use of the senior center.” Lisa Thomas also said there were some slight issues on traffic at the Primary Election and she wants to make sure that everything is all set for the upcoming General Election. Tim Collins passed out a GIS Diagram of the Ward Park Neighborhood on which he also noted traffic signal locations, the Senior Center and traffic flow on Orchard Street. Steve Kerrigan was also in attendance as he was at this polling location all day at the Primary. It was noted that the polls were open from 7:00am to 8:00pm and that between 4:00pm and 6:00pm the exit out of the area was

made one way. The City Clerk's office is requesting that this be made one way all day for the General Election.

Sgt. Ney was there on a detail and had noted some problems at New Street with traffic getting and out. Steve Kerrigan noted that cones were put out on Granger to merge traffic into the left lane away from New Street to make it easier to turn in and out. They were looking for a temporary order from Chief Leonard stating right turn only out of New Street onto Granger.

Mr. Kerrigan also said that there were a few issues with where the sign holders were standing. They need to stay 150 feet away from the polling location. He said that he went outside every hour or so and asked them to stand back a little further. Chief Leonard suggested marking the area with cones or something, without blocking the sidewalk, to delineate where they were to stand for safety and sight view purposes. Tim Collins mentioned that the sidewalk needs to have 3 feet available for handicapped access. Tim Collins said that he would mark out the area for sight distance. Mr. Kerrigan said that he could also contact the candidates and have them talk to their sign holders.

Chief Leonard noted that the issues with New Street and Granger Blvd. are a "bigger discussion" as the same issues will come up with any event being held at this location. He will prepare a "temporary order" for Election Day stating right turn only from New St. onto Granger and also speak with the detail officer about monitoring the sign holders.

Lisa Thomas also noted that the parking lot in front of the Senior Center will be used exclusively for voters. All election workers will be parked elsewhere and be driven to the location by the Constables.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Engineering for the proper "temporary signage" and cones required for merging traffic on Granger and right turn only from Newton to Granger. REFER also to Chief Leonard to prepare the "temporary order" to this effect.

Chief Leonard requested a suspension of rules to include an item not on the Agenda. This was an issue that came up at the last Site Plan Meeting. – All in favor.

New Item – Significant expansion at Fish Restaurant location and downtown parking issues.

Tim Cummings of the MEDC was in attendance to explain this issue in more detail. He said that Fish Restaurant will need 23 additional parking spaces. They currently have 18 or 19. The project is called "29 South Bolton Street" and will include 40 units of housing on top of the existing building.

This led to a discussion of parking issues and the possibility of permitting the parking decks or setting up a stabilization account for "payment in lieu of parking". A fee (he mentioned \$10,000 as an example) would be paid to the City for utilization of the parking garage. This would be set up by the City Council and the City would decide how to handle the management of it. The higher floors could have a yearly permit plan where residents would pay a yearly fee of say \$350, for a parking permit and overnight parking

would be allowed. Mr. Cummings said that they have a similar plan in Salem and Fitchburg.

Chief Leonard noted that the Traffic Commission has regulated the parking decks but that they are actually owned by the CDA. He was questioning if we actually have this authority. The Traffic Commission has set up overnight parking restrictions there. Mr. Cummings noted that all of this needs to be “flushed out”. He said that a “Care and Custody Change” was actually executed 6 to 8 weeks ago. He also noted that the \$10.00 fee for parking infractions would need to increase in order to better manage parking issues.

Mr. Cummings also noted that the City actually falls relatively short of maximizing demand for parking. He said that there are 900 parking spaces available within a ½ mile of downtown and only 30 to 40% of the spaces are being utilized. The recommended best practice is 80%. He has met with the CDA on how to better manage parking in the lots and outlined some recommendations to them. Some of the downtown parking restrictions could be “relaxed” to help development. The City needs to better utilize the parking we have rather than make new parking available.

Lisa Thomas noted that during the winter, there are a higher percentage of people parking in the garages as residents park here for snow removal. She noted that more city workers are parked at the Fish lot during the winter because there is not as much space available in the garage. Mr. Cummings said that the overnight permit would specify that cars needed to be out by 7:00 or 8:00am. All agreed that we have issues every year with parking during the winter parking ban. When a major storm is predicted the parking decks do fill up. There is also a commercial vehicle exclusion but people do leave their trucks there overnight. The City also only employs one Parking Enforcement Officer who works about 18 hours per week.

Mr. Cummings mentioned another “best practice” of alternate side street parking during the winter months rather than a straight ban between certain dates. Chief Leonard said that he agrees that we need a “serious discussion” about permitting the parking decks. Mr. Cummings was asked about the timeframe for this project. He said that it is 3 to 6 months out. They hope to get started for the next construction season. He also noted that consideration has to be given to seniors who use the garage. Chief Leonard said that how we handle this deck will ultimately determine how we handle the other deck.

Mr. Cummings has prepared a draft parking management plan that “he would love to share” that is based on “best practices”. We really need to start thinking about parking and “hammering out the issues”. He wanted to bring it up now and “get in on the radar”.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to keep this item on the Table for the next Agenda.

Chief Leonard requested a suspension of rules to move New Business Agenda Item e up on the agenda items to be discussed and also to include two additional items. - All in favor.

- 1) Parking on River Street by car dealership impeding traffic.***

2) Mill Street Central-**2e) Request for parking restriction exemption at 71 Maplewood Ave.**

Pam Wilderman forwarded a request from a resident at this address. The resident said in her e-mail that she and her partially disabled husband take care of his 92 year old father. In the past, they have parked their second vehicle in their neighbor's driveway during the winter when the parking ban is in effect. The neighbors have sold their home and they no longer have that parking option. They are requesting that they be allowed to park in front of their home or on the sidewalk during the winter.

Tim Collins passed out a photo of the address and a GIS map. He noted that there is a serious drop from the front of the property to the back of the property with a steep grade on the driveway. Chief Leonard said that he did not realize they were looking to park on the sidewalk. Tim Collins mentioned that the sidewalk plow does not go down this street. Chief Leonard said that the real concern is over snow removal. Even the streets that are exempt from the parking ban, require residents to move their cars for snow removal. On a warm winter day it is not a real issue but when there is a real snow event all cars need to be removed from the street.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Leonard to add 71 Maplewood Ave. to the list of addresses that are exempt from the winter parking ban. All cars would still need to be removed from the street during a snow emergency. Pam Wilderman will than forward this information along to the residents of 71 Maplewood Ave.

Additional item from Pam Wilderman - Parking on River Street by car dealership impeding traffic.

Pam Wilderman passed out three photos of the area that were taken on 10/27/15 at 8:00am. The used car lot at this location is using a "good portion of Maple Street to River Street" to park cars. It is a residential area and she is asking the Traffic Commission to take look into this.

Chief Leonard advised that he would have the Police Department look into this. They can run some of the plates to see if they are registered vehicles. He advised formally putting this issue on the agenda for the next meeting and looking into the possibility of parking restriction here.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to include this item on the formal agenda for the next meeting.

Additional item from Pam Wilderman - Parking of junk vehicles at the end of Mill Street Central impeding traffic.

Pam Wilderman passed out three photos of this area that were taken on 10/27/15. Tim Collins said that he has almost the same issue at Broder's at the other end. Ms. Wilderman said that last week she went there and the entire lot was full of cars (behind Giombetti Electric) and they were also using the street for parking. She said that it looked like a junkyard and it makes it impossible for other business trucks to get around

the area. Ms. Wilderman says that there are several entrances to the lot and she would like to see the South Street entrance onto 401 Maple closed off.

Chief Leonard said that the Traffic Commission could look into parking restrictions here. He asked Tim Collins to take a look at the dimensions and advise at the next meeting. Tim Collins advised that they have enough frontage for 2 opening but not 4. It was discussed that the number of openings is more of a zoning issue than a Traffic Commission issue and that Pam Wildman already has them cleaning up the lot.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to provide recommendations for parking restrictions at the next meeting.

2a) Communication from Councilor Elder, Re: Beach St. speeding concerns.

Councilor Elder said in his e-mail to Chief Leonard that Beach Street “is becoming a real drag strip” with all the new development in the area. He was asking about the possibility of speed bumps here. The group discussed the fact that changes have been made to Beach Street. The road was narrowed years ago and changed from a two way street to a one way street. It is zoned as 25mph and slows to 20mph at South Street. There are also stop signs in place. Chief Leonard said that sometimes speed perception is actually more than the reality, however, he would have his officers focus on enforcement.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to the POLICE DEPARTMENT for enforcement.

2b) Speeding Concerns, vicinity of 628 Elm St.

The resident of this address advises that there are four children under the age of five living here and says “the street is really dangerous as there is no pedestrian buffer zone between our drive way or front lawn and Elm Street.” He is requesting stop signs in both directions on Elm in front of this address. Chief Leonard said that he would put this item on the agenda, however, he also explained that this area would not meet the warrants required for a stop sign as required in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

Tim Collins also agreed that this area would not meet the warrants for a stop sign, however, he did note that the intersection is “geometrically odd”. All agreed that this was more of an enforcement issue for the police department.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to the POLICE DEPARTMENT for enforcement.

2c) Speeding concerns, Chestnut St.

The resident of 53 Chestnut Street came into City Hall to express concerns about the intersection of Chestnut St. and Howland Street. He said that cars continuously go through the four-way stop sign and it is extremely dangerous. He was asking if it was possible to have speed bumps here.

Tim Collins passed out a GIS map of the area. Chief Leonard noted that the recent accident here was a different scenario as it involved issues with alcohol. It was discussed that this is a narrow, residential street with no special speed regulations. The speed limit is 30mph. Again, it was noted that sometimes the perception of speed is greater than the reality. The speed bump issue continues to come up but as the Chief said, "It boils down to an enforcement issue." Chief Leonard said that he would get this area on the list for directed patrols.

Tim Collins said this intersection actually does not meet the warrants for a four-way stop sign. He noted that this is part of the problem with putting stop signs where they are not warranted. People tend to roll right through them.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to the POLICE DEPARTMENT for enforcement.

2d) Traffic blocking intersection on East Main St. at Hosmer St.

The Mayor's office forwarded a request from a constituent regarding the issue. He stated in his e-mail, "I am constantly being held up exiting Rt. 20 at the Hosmer Street lights due to vehicles racing to beat the traffic lights blocking the intersection." He was looking for signs indicating – Do Not Block Intersection.

Tim Collins advised that this is a State Highway and is not in the layout of the City of Marlborough. The lights can be changed but MA Highway would have to be involved. Chief Leonard asked Tim Collins to forward this issue on to the MADOT.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to ENGINEERING to forward the issue to the appropriate parties.

Chief Leonard requested a suspension of rules to include an additional agenda item which came up on SeeClickFix (forwarded by Evan Pilachowski).

Broad Street Parking Restriction Request

A request came in to eliminate parking from Fay Ct. to Rte. 20 (West Main Street) on one side of Broad Street. Requestor stated it is "tight to maneuver with all the vehicles there".

It was noted that the condos have over 100 parking spaces required by code. If there is no room to park some of these cars are probably parking on the street. The issue was discussed, however, all agreed that the width of the road is significant. There is no problem getting cars can get through when vehicles are parked on both sides. The Traffic Commission couldn't tell from the post on SeeClickFix what the real issue was.

3-Old Business

3i) West Hill Road Traffic Counts

Tim Collins advised that Engineering has the traffic counts back, however, in the process of reviewing them they found a couple of problems. One is that someone driving an

F150 can trigger the counter as a commercial vehicle. Also, vehicles passing at the same time in both directions can be counted as a six wheeled vehicle. They want to tweak the counters and do it over again. The counts were also submitted at one hour intervals and they actually needed half hour intervals. Engineering will do the counts again and report their findings at the next meeting.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
To TABLE.

3b) High School parking regulations

Recently a bus was stuck on the bus loop out in front of the school due to cars parked on both sides of the loop. It was discussed that it is a common occurrence to find cars parked on both sides around 5:00 or 6:00pm when there are numerous games going on. All agreed that the loop gets very congested and that it would be difficult to get an ambulance through in an emergency situation. The same situation would occur with a fire truck.

Tim Collins passed out a diagram which includes all of the signs that should be there and the proposed wording for the regulations. He marked the no parking areas in pink on the diagram and restricted parking in yellow. He also included the three crosswalks and the proposed wording for the regulations as well.

The loop is marked as one way for drop off as is the admin. parking area. He included the proposed wording for regulations for everything marked on the diagram. It was initially signed this way back in 2007, however, many of the signs are missing and corresponding regulations were missing.

Chief Leonard advised that he would prepare the formal regulations for a vote at the next meeting. Once the area is properly signed and regulated it will become an enforcement issue. Councilor Robey asked how this would be communicated to the School Committee. Chief Leonard said that does make sense to do as no one is aware that this is being done. He advised that he can let the High School Principal and the School Committee know. Lisa Thomas also advised that all of this information will be communicated on the Traffic Commission website and that it will be advertised in the local paper.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Leonard to prepare the appropriate regulations, as per Tim Collins' diagram and proposed wording, for a vote at the next meeting.

3h) Traffic pattern, parking deck behind City Hall.

The existing conflict is that traffic entering the lower level does not necessarily see the traffic coming down the ramp. Tim Collins passed out a diagram of the lower level of the parking deck which included the proposed signage for One Way and Do Not Enter and the wording for the proposed regulations. He is proposing that when cars enters from Court Street they are instructed to go right and circle around the lower level. He advised that this is the best direction for traffic flow.

Chief Leonard advised that he would like to hold onto this issue for the next meeting as the Traffic Commission first needs to clarify who has authority to regulate the parking garages.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED to REFER to Chief Leonard to determine who has authority over the garages before any changes can be made.

3a) Municipal off street parking regulation.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
To TABLE.

3c) Stop signs on Bigelow St.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
To TABLE.

3d) Traffic Commission rules and regulations update.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
To TABLE.

3e) Towing vehicles from municipal lots for snow removal.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
To TABLE.

3g) No parking regulation, Williams St.

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
To TABLE.

3f) Communication from Janet Vigeant Re: Brigham St. traffic concerns

MOTION was made, seconded, duly VOTED:
To TABLE.

That there being no further business of the Traffic Commission held on this date, the meeting adjourned at 11:25 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen L. Lambert
Records Clerk
Marlborough Police Department

List of documents and other exhibits used at the meeting:

-Meeting Agenda for Tuesday, October 27, 2015. (Including City of Marlborough Meeting Posting.

-E-mail from Councilor Elder to Chief Leonard, dated 9/22/15, re: Speed bumps on Beach Street.

-E-mail from Giorgis Isaac to Chief Leonard, dated 9/8/15, re: Request for stop sign at 628 Elm St. and Millham St.

-E-mail (forwarded by Marcia Josephson of the DPW) to Chief Leonard, dated 9/29/15, re: 53 Chestnut St., Arman Aghaminzm Howland & Chestnut.

-E-mail (forward by Trish Bernard to Chief Leonard) from David Wolf, dated 9/29/15 re: Intersection of East Main St. and Hosmer St.

-E-mail from Pam Wilderman to Chief Leonard, dated 10/5/15, re: Parking variance for 71 Maplewood Ave.

-E-mail from Lisa Thomas to Chief Leonard, dated 10/7/15, re: Traffic Flow on New St. & Granger Blvd.

-E-mail from Trish Pope to Chief Leonard, dated 10/8/15, re: New Street Traffic Concern.

-Draft of Traffic Commission Minutes from 9/22/15.

Additional Handouts:

-E-mail from Evan Pilachowski to Chief Leonard, dated 9/19/15, re: Broad Street Parking Restriction Request.

-GIS Map of 71 Maplewood Ave. along with photo of 70 Maplewood Ave.

-GIS Map of Vicinity of 628 Elm Street.

-GIS Map of Chestnut St. & Howland St.

-E-mail from Pam Wilderman to Chief Leonard, dated 10/23/15, re: Traffic Commission Agenda Items.

-GIS Map of Ward Park Neighborhood.

-Diagram of High School Parking Lot including proposed/ & / or missing signage and wording for regulations.

-Diagram of parking deck with proposed signage and wording for regulations.

-GIS map of 401 Maple Street with corresponding photos from various angles and/or locations.