

**BRATTLEBORO TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2013  
8:30AM – SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM  
MINUTES**

Members present: Town Manager Barbara Sondag, Public Works Director Steve Barrett, Police Chief Gene Wrinn, Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, Leo Schiff as Chamber of Commerce Representative, Robert Immler as Citizen Representative, and Betsy Gentile as School Representative.

Selectboard representative present: David Gartenstein.

Other staff members present: Police Captain Mike Fitzgerald, Highway/Utilities Superintendent Hannah O'Connell, and Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland.

Others present: Susan J. Avery, Matt Mann, David Schoales, Tobias Devoe, Peter Seares, Terry A. Carter, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Town Manager Sondag called the meeting to order at 8:34am. She confirmed that the meeting was properly warned.

Public Participation – James Banslaben complimented the crossing guards for their good work and friendliness. Peter Seares, Program Manager from RSVP, invited volunteers to assist the agency. He also introduced Tobias Devoe and discussed utilizing Devoe as an advocate for promoting youth bicycle safety. Sondag suggested that Seares and Devoe contact Alice Charkey with Safe Routes to School Program and who is also a member of the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee.

Sondag presented minutes from the January 22, 2013 meeting and asked if there were any changes requested. There was no discussion.

**MOTION BY LEO SCHIFF TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JANUARY 22, 2013. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Downtown Crosswalks – *Continue discussion from 11/27/12 meeting (degradation of crosswalks and markings throughout the year and especially through the winter).* Sondag said that the Committee previously asked to continue the discussion about the condition of crosswalks during the winter. Public Works Director Barrett discussed the various paints and processes used in crosswalk markings, the frequency of painting, and current condition of crosswalks downtown and in other areas. He said that starting in 2012 crosswalks and line striping were painted twice a year, and he expected that practice to continue and has been included in the FY14 budget. Peter Seares discussed the crosswalk in West Brattleboro near his office and suggested making crosswalks more distinctive and conspicuous either by painting, signage or illuminated lights. There was discussion by the Committee about the current condition of downtown and other crosswalks, signage and alternative-type pedestrian devices, changing plowing practices, maintenance of crosswalks and line-striping, and making crosswalks more visible to drivers. Sondag asked if the Committee wanted to continue to look into striping and signage and, if so, to identify particular crosswalks of concern. Gartenstein suggested taking an inventory of the condition of the crosswalks at this time of the year. There was further discussion about experimenting with different paint or signage, aligning maps of crosswalks with streetlights, investigating the costs of lighted/strobe signage, pedestrian push-button alert boxes in key places, and methods of painting. Barrett said that Public Works has maps of all of the crosswalks and would inventory their condition. Terry Carter reiterated her safety concerns on Putney Road north of Bradley Avenue. She also complimented the Town for pedestrian improvement efforts made over the past year.

Ad Hoc Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee – *Local Motion.* Sondag said that she continues to work with Local Motion and expected to meet again in March to continue outreach and look at other issues such as crosswalks and pedestrians. She said that the Town was currently promoting a reflective leg band campaign and was distributing the leg bands to the public which were being well received. There was no discussion.

### Ongoing Projects – Updates:

(1) Traffic Calming Plan – *Revisions*. Public Works Highways/Utilities Superintendent O’Connell provided and discussed a second draft of a Traffic Calming Plan. She reviewed some of the revisions made to the Plan after the last Committee meeting, and identified areas to be addressed, including determining priority locations, handling public complaints, and gathering traffic counts data on more streets in Town. Barrett said that he understood that the Plan had to be flexible enough to address matters as concerns and situations arise. He said that it was a struggle to keep the Plan simple, readable, and useable. There was discussion about obtaining traffic counts, developing criteria and guidelines for the Plan, determining a process to handle complaints, prioritizing and determining the handling of resources, and when to involve Public Works and/or the Committee in the complaint process. Peter Seares spoke of the perceived comfortability of pedestrians in crosswalks. It was agreed that the staff would meet and discuss the process, and then present suggestions to the Committee for further discussion.

(2) Williams Street Intersections – Matt Mann, from Windham Regional Commission, said that the bridge on Williams Street near Whetstone Drive was eligible to be included on the State Department of Transportation’s (VTrans) capital improvement plan, but that because the bridge was structurally in good shape it would not be high on VTrans’ short-term priority list. He suggested that the Town could apply for a structures grant with a 90/10 match, but that one or both the guardrails would have to comply with State standards. There was discussion about the need for an engineering study of the bridge, including costs, which would be necessary in order to apply for the grant. Susan Avery, representing the Whetstone Drive Association, spoke of the distinctive configuration and ongoing safety concerns at the intersections of Crosby Street, Whetstone Drive and Williams Street. She suggested opening Williams Street only to local residents to reduce the amount of through traffic. There was a discussion about Williams Street being specially designated as a Federal Aid Highway which would restrict changes that could be made at the local level. Terry Carter said that the population, geography and convergence of several roads presented a unique situation. James Banslben spoke of concerns about radioactive materials being transported to Vermont Yankee for its refueling in the spring.

(3) Western Avenue Grant Agreements – Sondag said that she recently signed two grant agreements and returned them to the State for approval. She said that one grant was for the re-construction of the intersection of Western Avenue and Union Hill. Barrett said that this Committee previously supported a concept design performed by Southern Vermont Engineering a few years ago. He said that the Union Hill grant was to fund the engineering, design and building of a system intending to reduce the width of the east/west and north/south crosswalks, build refuge islands near the crosswalk, change the geometry of the intersection, and narrow the street near Union Hill. There was discussion about the process to move the project forward.

(4) Academy School - Sondag said that the second grant was to hire a traffic safety engineer to look at safety alternatives on Western Avenue between Academy School and Greenleaf Street, including vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and possibly reducing the speed. Peter Seares inquired about a proposed street plan prepared by West Brattleboro Association (WBA). There was discussion about the cost of the WBA plan, and the public process in developing and implementing some type of a plan for the area.

### Other Business

None.

There was no further business.

**MOTION BY STEVE BARRETT AT 9:47 AM TO ADJOURN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**