

**BRATTLEBORO TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2013
8:30AM – SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM
MINUTES**

Members present: Interim Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Public Works Director Steve Barrett, Police Chief Gene Wrinn, Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, Planning Services Director Rod Francis, Citizen Representative Robert Immler, Chamber Representative Leo Schiff, and School Representative Betsy Gentile.

Selectboard representative present: David Gartenstein.

Other staff members present: Highway/Utilities Superintendent Hannah O'Connell.

Others present: Matt Mann, from Windham Regional Commission, Terry Carter, Leon Boyd, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Interim Town Manager Moreland called the meeting to order at 8:32am.

MOTION BY STEVE BARRETT, AND SECONDED BY GENE WRINN, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 27, 2013 MEETING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Public Participation – None.

1205 Western Avenue – Guardrail and Improvements Discussion. Moreland said that David Chappell submitted a letter requesting that a guardrail be installed in front of his house at 1205 Western Avenue to protect his home. David Chappell was present and said that he was requesting four items: (1) placement of a guardrail in front of his property; (2) placement of "No U-Turn" signs in his driveway; (3) removal of a large rock in his front yard near the side of the road, and (4) installation of some type of warning signs down the road alerting drivers to the potentially dangerous driving area. Chappell spoke of the recent fatal car accident in his front yard where a driver was speeding in the early morning hours and hit the rock in his yard causing the car to become airborne. He said that Town snowplows often graze the rock during snow storms. He also said that most vehicles travel at excessive speeds in that area, many cars use his driveway as a turn-around, and the road had a negative pitch from Meadowbrook Road to his house creating a safety issue. He said he believed that it was a dangerous driving area and suggested installing warning signs to alert drivers. Police Chief Wrinn said occasional accidents occur at the location but it is not a high accident area. Public Works Director Barrett said that a DPW representative reviewed the area a few years ago and determined that a guardrail was not necessary. Leon Boyd said that he believed the problem to be drivers not obeying traffic laws.

There was discussion by the Committee about the road conditions in that area, vehicular accidents in the area, whether the rock was within the Town's right of way, visibility problems that may be created by installing a guardrail, and conditions of the road being suitable to reasonable drivers. Gartenstein suggested that Chappell speak with the Zoning Administrator about installing "No U-Turn" signs on private property. Barrett said that he would determine whether the rock was within the Town right of way. The Committee agreed to review the area individually and discuss it again at the October 22 meeting.

Putney Road/Harris Avenue Area – Decision. Moreland said that this matter had been ongoing and he reviewed the history of discussions by the Traffic Safety Committee, including a recent site visit, sidewalk and crosswalk concerns, the Committee's July 24, 2012 decision to let the matter sit and take no action, and a 2004 Committee decision that voted down a motion to install crosswalks at this location.

Terry Carter stated that she understood the cost and engineering dynamics around installing a crosswalk and connecting sidewalks, but she wanted to emphasize her concerns around making the intersection more noticeable to drivers by line striping or stenciling similar to that done on Western Avenue. She wanted some creative, visually eye-catching method of curbing drivers from passing on the right or to slow down traffic and make drivers aware that it was a congested area with pedestrians.

There was some general discussion by the Committee. Moreland said that in order to better document the Committee's decision on this matter he would ask for a motion and a vote.

MOTION BY GENE WRINN, AND SECONDED BY STEVE BARRETT, THAT THE TOWN INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF INSTALLING A CROSSWALK LEADING FROM HARRIS AVENUE ACROSS PUTNEY ROAD TO THE SIDEWALK. MOTION FAILED UNANIMOUSLY.

Carter asked about communications between the Town and State about working together to make the Town, and specifically Putney Road, more pedestrian-friendly in a manner similar to Burlington. There was discussion about the Putney Road Improvement Project, minor sidewalk improvements that the Town could consider sooner, costs, and budgets. Carter said that she was disappointed about the narrow conclusion decided by the Committee, and she asked that the Committee consider at its next meeting her request to improve the safety in the area of Putney Road and Harris Avenue in a broader manner. The Committee agreed to discuss it at the October 22 meeting.

Twenty-Minute Parking – 138 to 150 Elliot Street. Moreland reviewed his memo to the Committee proposing an ordinance change to the limited parking area between 138 Elliot Street and 150 Elliot Street. He said that he had been contacted by two businesses whose business transactions were typically over an hour and the twenty minute parking in front of their businesses presented parking problems for the customers. He said that the proposal was to change the limited parking to the area between 138 Elliot Street and 148 Elliot Street, and the proposed change would reduce the length of limited parking area and extend the length of the unlimited parking on Elliot Street. There was discussion by the Committee about the existing ordinance, consequences of changing the limited parking area, and businesses in the area. Moreland said that the process would be to take the Committee's recommendation to the Selectboard who would hold two readings and a public hearing.

MOTION BY BETSY GENTILE, AND SECONDED BY ROD FRANCIS, TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE CHANGE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Traffic Calming Plan – Review Proposed Changes. Moreland said that the Committee was asked to discuss the draft Traffic Calming Plan and suggested revisions. Gartenstein clarified his previous requests and suggestions. There was much discussion about compliance, prioritization, tiers of importance, and characteristics of concerns. There was also discussion about the Plan containing advisory language and not being regulatory in nature.

An unidentified speaker spoke about concerns for handicapped children living and walking on Upper Dummerston Road, and asked if the Plan would take such factors into consideration.

Terry Carter asked if the Plan would consider pedestrian safety on Putney Road in the Harris Avenue area.

It was agreed by the Committee that O'Connell would revise the Plan incorporating all of the changes and send it to the Committee for review and comments prior to the next meeting. The Committee agreed to review and possibly adopt the revised Plan at the next Committee meeting.

Other Business

Wrinn discussed a letter that was received from Pal Borofsky with several concerns. Moreland said that he had been in contact with Borofsky about those concerns.

There was no further business.

MOTION BY BETSY GENTILE, AND SECONDED BY GENE WRINN, AT 9:50AM TO ADJOURN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.