

**BRATTLEBORO TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2012
8:30AM – SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM
MINUTES**

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

Selectboard representative present: David Gartenstein.

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

Others present: Susan Avery, Donna Zhao, Terry Carter, Matt Mann, David Long, Stewart McDermet, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Town Manager Sondag called the meeting to order at 8:31am. She confirmed that the meeting was properly warned. Minutes from the October 23, 2012 meeting were presented.

MOTION BY BETSY GENTILE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 23, 2012 MEETING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Public Participation – Terry Carter reiterated her concerns about the Harris Avenue and Putney Road intersection.

Downtown Crosswalks – *Review of crosswalks near Post Office and other locations.* Sondag asked for Committee members' reports and observations with respect to safety of downtown crosswalks. Barrett noted that visibility of pedestrians in the southerly crosswalk by the Post Office was obstructed by cars parked in the metered parking space in front of the Gibson Aiken Center heading northbound on Main Street. There was discussion about safety at that crosswalk, whether the parking space should be removed and whether the parking space met regulations. It was agreed by the Committee to recommend to the Selectboard to eliminate the parking space.

There was further discussion about adding a yield-to-pedestrian device in the crosswalks and about the degradation of crosswalks and markings throughout the year and especially through the winter. Barrett said that traffic calming devices would be discussed later in the meeting. It was decided to discuss crosswalks maintenance at the February, 2013 meeting, at which time Barrett would provide detailed information about the type of paint being used and the specifications for painting.

There was also discussion about the removal of a temporary crosswalk on Canal Street by the Co-Op project. Many committee members agreed that the temporary crosswalk was not properly removed and it appeared as if a crosswalk still existed in that location creating an unsafe situation. Barrett said that he was compiling a list of projects that the Co-Op project needed to complete and that he would add removal of the crosswalk to the list, which also included resurfacing the Whetstone Pathway before winter, proper lighting, and drainage from the Co-Op driveway onto Main Street. Terry Carter spoke of her concerns regarding handicap accessibility at the Co-Op.

MOTION BY LEO SCHIFF, AND SECONDED BY BETSY GENTILE, TO RECOMMEND TO THE SELECTBOARD THAT THE METERED PARKING SPACE NEAR THE FRONT OF THE GIBSON AIKEN CENTER SOUTH OF THE SOUTHERLY CROSSWALK ON THE EAST SIDE OF MAIN STREET BE ELIMINATED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Williams Street intersections – *DPW/WRC Update.* Sondag said that Matt Mann and Steve Barrett recently met with Marcos Miller from VTrans regarding the Committee's concerns about the intersections on Williams Street. Mann said that Miller concurred that work being done on Williams Street at the westbound intersection after the bridge should improve sight distance, and Miller suggested looking into

potentially moving or removing some of the guardrails and looking at other options to improve sight distance on the west side of bridge, although he noted that no State funding was available. Mann said that when bridge was built about eight years ago, there were concerns about pedestrian and bicycle safety so guardrails were installed. He said that he would explore acceptable options to the State, including permissible work that could be done by the Town because the roadway is a Federal highway. He said that he would provide an update at the January, 2013 Traffic Safety Committee meeting. Barrett suggested sending a letter to VTrans from the Committee requesting information about options and alternate designs to improve safety in the area. Schiff suggested also sending a copy of the letter to Brattleboro Representative Mollie Burke as she sits on the State Transportation Committee and lives in the neighborhood so is aware of the safety concerns. Susan Avery inquired about guardrail standards and the differences in the guardrails in the area.

MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN, AND SECONDED BY BETSY GENTILE, TO AUTHORIZE TOWN MANAGER ON BEHALF OF TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE TO CORRESPOND WITH VTRANS ABOUT ALTERNATE DESIGNS FOR THE BRIDGE AND GUARDRAILS ON WILLIAMS STREET WEST OF THE WHETSTONE DRIVE INTERSECTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program – Update. Sondag introduced Hannah O’Connell, Highway/ Utilities Superintendent at Public Works, who was recently hired and asked her for an update on the neighborhood traffic calming program. O’Connell said she had been researching traffic calming plans around the country and comparing towns similar to Brattleboro. She said that she could provide a draft plan at the January meeting with proposals for the timeframe and process. Terry Carter asked that the area from Howard Street to St. Michael’s Episcopal Church be considered in the Plan. Mann said that VTrans had developed traffic calming matrixes for State roads and that he would provide a copy to O’Connell. There was some discussion by the Committee.

Request for Crosswalk – Intersection of Estey and Birge Streets. Sondag said that a citizen request had been made to install a crosswalk at the intersection of Estey, Birge and Holden Streets. Barrett said that it was a dangerous intersection and he defined some of the factors contributing to the safety hazards, including the grade of the hill, road curvature, and limited line of sight. There was discussion by the Committee about the possibilities of adding a crosswalk, the length of a proposed crosswalk, adding an island to provide a pedestrian refuge, making the intersection a 4-way stop, pedestrian expectations in a crosswalk, and possible signage. The Committee requested engineering specifications from Public Works Department for the intersection, and agreed to add the matter to the January, 2013 agenda.

Local Motion – Update January Meeting. Sondag said that a meeting with Local Motion was scheduled on January 9, 2013 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. She asked whether the Committee wanted to part of the meeting or if a separate ad hoc committee or group of citizens should be formed. There was discussion and it was decided that a representative of the Committee should be present, along with representatives from other organizations such as Safe Routes to School, Safe Kids, Healthy Communities, Bike/Ped, and Department of Public Health. Bob Immler volunteered to be the Traffic Safety Committee representative. Gartenstein also suggested that the matter be added to a Selectboard agenda to solicit interested participants and publicize the meeting.

Wrap Up - Pedestrian-Bike Grants/ Academy School/ Co-Op Project/ Crosswalk Painting. Sondag said that grant agreements had not yet been received for the two Western Avenue projects for the areas of Greenleaf Street and Union Hill. She expected to have the Agreements in the near future and would then send out RFPs for engineering work. The Committee asked for an update at its next meeting.

Academy School – Sondag said that bollards in front of the school were taken down for winter and a representative from the school had been putting up signs daily. She said that at the school’s request, one driveway to the school was painted to make it one-way exiting the school. She also said that the road in front of the church was also made one-way going east and the pavement was re-stripped and do-not-enter signs were installed. She said that problems may reappear in the winter months because of the width of the road and that crosswalks may not be clear. Sondag said that permanent solutions would first require engineering work. There was discussion about temporary and permanent traffic-calming solutions. There was also discussion about using a speed-indicator trailer at times to slow the traffic. The Police Department was asked to look into borrowing such a trailer from the Sheriff’s office.

Co-Op Project – The matter was discussed earlier in the meeting.

Crosswalk Painting – The matter will be discussed at the February, 2013 meeting.

Gartenstein said that he wanted to continue to look at bike and traffic safety on Putney Road. The matter will be added to an agenda in the Spring, 2013.

Other Business

The Committee agreed not to meet in December. The next meeting will be on January 22, 2013.

There was no further business.

**MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN, AND SECONDED BY BETSY GENTILE, AT 9:36AM TO
ADJOURN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**