

**TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2020, 8:00AM
HELD REMOTELY VIA GoToMeeting
MINUTES**

NOTE: Per the “Stay Home – Stay Safe” order issued by Governor Scott on March 13, 2020, this meeting was held remotely with no physical location using GoToMeeting.

Members present: Town Manager Peter Elwell, Police Chief Mike Fitzgerald, Public Works Director Steve Barrett, Planning Director Sue Fillion, Chamber of Commerce Representative Deb Bunker, Citizen Representative Louise Zak, and Selectboard Representative Daniel Quipp.

Other staff members present: Highway/Utilities Superintendent Dan Tyler and DPW Engineering Technician Josh Carnes.

Others present: Prudence MacKinney and Rikki Risatti.

Town Manager Elwell called the meeting to order at 8:00am.

Approve Minutes – January 16, 2020

Elwell asked the committee to approve the minutes from the January 16, 2020 meeting. There was no discussion.

**MOTION BY STEVE BARRETT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 16 MEETING.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Public Participation

None.

Monthly Report on Pedestrian and Bicycle Incidents – Police Chief Mike Fitzgerald reported that since the last meeting (approximately 4 months ago), 127 motor vehicle accidents had been reported, or an average of about 38 per month, 2 of which involved bicyclists, and 2 involved pedestrians. He reported the incidents, as follows:

Wednesday, 4/29, at 2pm, on Main Street at the Brattleboro Savings & Loan Association a 57 year old bicyclist was entering Main Street from the bank parking lot. She admitted that she did not see the vehicle traveling north on Main Street and she struck the passenger side of the vehicle. The bicyclist reported minor injuries and was not cited.

Monday, 1/20, at 1pm, on Canal Street by Circle K a 66 year old male was reportedly struck in the Circle K parking lot. The victim said he felt fine at the accident so did not call the police until two days later. He reported that his foot was still painful two days later so he went to hospital and was diagnosed with fractured toe. He did not provide identifying information on the driver or vehicle and no information was available on the security camera. Fitzgerald suggested that anyone involved in an accident or incident call the police at the time of the accident.

Friday, 2/7, at 4:30pm, at Canal Street and Fairview Street a 29 year old male reported that, earlier in the day as he was pulling out of Fairview Street onto Canal Street, he apparently struck a male pedestrian on the sidewalk. The driver reported that the pedestrian did not fall, there were no visible injuries, and the pedestrian walked away and did not want to exchange information with the driver.

Wednesday, 3/4, at 1:30pm, at the intersection of Main and High Streets a 26 year old operator traveling north on Main Street and towing a trailer struck a female bicyclist, who had stopped at the bulb-out at the intersection. The trailer clipped the bicyclist’s handlebars and knocked her to ground. When the driver

returned to the scene, they exchanged information, no injuries or damage was reported, and no investigation was initiated at the bicyclist's request.

There was no discussion by the committee on any of the above matters.

Monthly Report on Traffic Data Collection – Josh Carnes, Engineering Technician from the Public Works Department, reviewed the data collected from the mobile traffic devices in various locations, as set forth in his report dated May 14, 2020. There was a brief discussion.

Updates/Continued Discussion on Ongoing Matters

- (a) *Crosswalks at Intersection of Canal Street and South Main Street*
- (b) *Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Improvements for Putney Road*

(a) Highway/Utilities Superintendent Dan Tyler discussed the information contained in his memo, dated May 14. He noted that line striping had recently been completed at the intersection of Canal Street and South Main Street and that some reflective materials had been added to signposts in that area, which was particularly helpful at night. Planning Services Director Sue Fillion said she previously requested that Windham Regional Commission perform some data collection on pedestrian traffic in the area, but their operations had slowed due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus shut-down. Elwell noted that the committee previously discussed this matter and requested data on how many pedestrians used the area and how they used it. He said it would likely be several months before additional information was obtained. He also noted that accidents at that location were minimal, as reported by Captain Carignan in his memo dated February 4, 2020. Chief Fitzgerald said that the Police Department continued to monitor the area because of its activity. Rikki Risatti spoke about their concerns at the intersection and suggested adding a “yield” notation on the street. There was no discussion by the committee.

(b) Elwell provided an update on the Putney Road Improvement Project, as set forth in his memorandum dated May 18, 2020. He said that VTrans was in the active design phase for the project. He said that the agency was having difficulty obtaining necessary rights-of-way to create crosswalks and signal phase for pedestrians at the Hannaford Plaza signal. He said that VTrans had anticipated collecting data along Putney Road in the spring for other requests made by the Town, including lowering the speed limit, but those operations were temporarily ceased because of the COVID-19 pandemic. He said that VTrans was considering painting the bike lanes with green paint and was reviewing safety information about the request to install a RRFB (rectangular rapid flashing beacon) near Town Crier Drive. He said that Erin Parizo from VTrans offered to attend a Traffic Safety Committee meeting if the committee members requested it. There was a brief discussion.

Street and Sidewalk Safety Policy Action Requests

- (a) *Parking and Visibility Concerns on Main Street by Key Bank*
- (b) *Speeding and Other Safety Concerns in West Brattleboro Village*
- (c) *Speeding Concerns on Clark Street*

(a) Highway/Utilities Superintendent Tyler agreed that the location mentioned in the Safety Action Request was a difficult location. He said that staff reviewed the area and confirmed that line striping was done in accordance with the ordinance. He noted that some visibility difficulties had increased due to trucks and equipment parked near the Key Bank driveway in connection with the renovations taking place to the building on Main Street. He said that no action was recommended at this time. There was a brief discussion. No action was taken.

(b) Public Works Director Barrett said that a resident submitted a Safety Action Request form with a complaint about the speed of traffic on Western Avenue near the West Brattleboro Fire Station. Barrett stated that a number of speed surveys had been conducted in that area and the average speed was near the posted limit, so no further action was recommended. There was no discussion. No action was taken.

(c) Tyler said that a request was received expressing concern about speed on Clark Street with a request to install signage. He said that a speed study was currently underway and suggested adding this matter to the agenda for the next meeting for further discussion.

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) –

- (a) *Upcoming Installation of RRFB on Putney Road at North Street*
- (b) *Discussion re: Next Priority List of Locations*
- (c) *Consideration of RRFBs vs. Other Traffic Calming Measures*

(a)-(c) Tyler stated that the RRFB for North Street had been delivered and assembled, the site had been reviewed for dig safe, and the adjacent land owner provided permission, so the equipment would be installed in the coming weeks. He said that other locations to consider installation of RRFBs could be Western Avenue at Greenleaf Street, Western Avenue at Edward Heights, Canal/Birge/Washington Streets intersection, and the Canal and Fairview Streets intersection. Barrett noted that the Edward Heights location was considered because no sidewalk existed on the southerly side of Western Avenue but one did exist on the northerly side. He said that people had to cross Western Avenue to get to the businesses so could use the existing sidewalk on that side of the avenue. He stated that crosswalks existed at the Canal Street intersection with Washington Street and Birge Street which provided a link from the Esteyville neighborhood to the store and laundromat, and he agreed that it was a high hazard area. He said that the Fairview Street crossing at Canal Street was considered because many people cross there, including high school students. Quipp suggested considering one of the crosswalks crossing Main Street in front of the Post Office. There was some discussion by the committee, including possible locations, cost of the equipment, and budget considerations. The committee agreed to add this matter to next month's agenda for further discussion.

Other Business – Informational Items

(a) *Town Staff is Working with Brattleboro Housing Partnerships re: Speeding Concerns in the Ledgewood Heights Development.* Elwell informed the committee that the Town was working with Brattleboro Housing Partnerships about concerns on Ledgewood Heights. He said that the roadway was technically a public road but it functioned like a driveway serving only the development. He said that many children play in the street so traffic in general was of concern to the neighborhood. He said the Town and BHP were working together to make the area feel and be safer. He said if the matter became an item for the Traffic Safety Committee to consider, he would add it to a future agenda for discussion.

There was no further business.

ELWELL ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 9:07AM.