

TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes of June 20, 2014

PRESENT: Chief Baker, Lt. Geno, Alan Shelvey, Jeff Wennberg, Jon Kiernan and Mayor Louras

ABSENT: Chief Schlachter and Butch Shaw

GUESTS: Ron Hemenway, Russ Lennon and Ted Shattuck

The meeting was called to order by Chief Baker at 9:00 A.M. Chief asked if anyone had any issues or concerns with the minutes from our last meeting. No issues.

NEW BUSINESS

1. No parking here to corner sign on Pine Street - Marjorie Johnston

Chief Baker asked Alan if the sign could be moved. Chief mentioned that he will call Marjorie to have her please advise us if people are parking where they shouldn't be. Alan will check the standards to see if this sign can be moved.

2. Request to lower speed limit to 25 mph – Russell Lennon & Ted Shattuck on behalf of “25 Saves Lives”

Russell mentioned that as part of the repaving project on Hillside Road, the stop sign at the intersection of Hillside Road and Woodstock Avenue was changed to a Yield sign. Ted Shattuck also mentioned that he has noticed that most streets from East side, intersecting with Woodstock Avenue, have been changed from stop signs to Yield signs. Chief Baker asked Alan Shelvey if he could check with Vtrans regarding this. Jeff Wennberg mentioned that it may be better to just change these back to Stop signs after the project is complete.

Russell mentioned that when he had come to the Traffic Safety Committee meeting on behalf of HALT, their concern was speed. He also mentioned that they brought this issue of speed to Mayor Louras. It was said that speed is regulated by state statute. He was at a meeting lastnight that pointed out that in the state statute, that the speed limit could be changed to 25. He referred to a document that he brought to the meeting and mentioned he would be concerned with the second page, section E. He said that the question becomes, do you declare the speed limit is 25 mph, unless otherwise posted? Ted Shattuck mentioned that Fred Nicholson said there are only 2 signs in the City of Rutland that state that the speed limit is 30 mph.

Chief stated that he understands their concerns in wanting to have the speed limit in the city lowered but we would want a legal opinion on this and a Traffic study, too. He's not sure that every one of the streets should be changed. So, it seems that the statute is in conflict? Russ mentioned that maybe they could see if an amendment can be done to statute without having an engineering or traffic study done. Chief Baker also mentioned that they may find it difficult to have the State change the Statute. Russ stated that it seems that the Chief is saying that they need to have traffic study done. Russ mentioned that the Rutland Regional Planning Commission has said that they have the ability to do these studies for free. Maybe they could use his neighborhood, Hillside Road area, to do a study. Jeff Wennberg mentioned that whether the Statute requires or not, we do need an engineering study done. Jeff thinks it may have been an oversight, when the speed limits were changed from 25 mph to 30 mph, some years ago. Study would be rationale basis to move forward with a change. Legislature is concerned with towns being speed traps.

Chief, can I make this suggestion to talk with City Attorney, Romeo, then talk with Lt. Geno, Jeff Wennberg & Mayor Louras and talk with Regional Planning Commission? I'm not sure if Susan was referring to traffic study & engineering piece. When this came up before, there wasn't funding with DPW.

Lt. Geno thinks that we may need a broader scope. Chief, downtown has been the point of our concern and there is sign for 15 mph outside of this building. Ted Shattuck asked if second study could be done on Temple Street. He mentioned his concerns regarding people cutting through there and speeding. Lt. Geno stated that he didn't see this pattern on Temple Street. He mentioned that most of the speeding was people bringing kids to & from school. Alan Shelvey asked if we realized that the counters can calculate speed, too. Lt. Geno stated, yes. Susan and he have talked about this. Jeff mentioned that Susan has the data. Lt. Geno asked Jeff Wennberg if he could send the data to him. Yes, he will do that.

3. State-Pierpoint-Columbian intersection – a resident of Evergreen Avenue
Possible solutions to the problem:
“All stop” at this location or
Make the block between Pierpoint Avenue & Emmett one-way headed west or
Create a roundabout at the intersection.

Jeff Wennberg mentioned that Representative Russell has concern because driveway is near State Street, past Columbian Avenue. Hidden drive sign has been rejected several times. Complains when heading East, it's difficult to get out. People do come around corner quickly. There was a complaint from a resident on Evergreen Avenue, that wondered about getting a 4 way stop here. I expect a 4 way stop is probably not something we can embrace. Maybe designate two blocks as one way coming from Evergreen Avenue, one way street, from West Street? Lt. Geno mentioned that we might be able to stop at Pierpoint. Chief mentioned that the data doesn't support it to be the situation it is being portrayed as. Chief asked if we could set up a meeting with the neighbors up there and give them the data? Jeff mentioned that he isn't ready to embrace that unless we're ready to do something. Chief mentioned that he thinks that somehow, we need to get this data to the residents. Chief asked Lt. Geno if the state keeps a list of most dangerous intersections. Lt. Geno stated that they do and this location isn't on the list. Jeff will respond to the neighbors directly. Jon mentioned that the cure that they are looking for, may be worse than the traffic pattern now.

4. Synchronization of lights at the intersection of Woodstock Avenue/Deer/Lafayette Streets – Ron Hemenway

Ron mentioned that he was pleasantly surprised when he walked on Woodstock Avenue and saw the intersection with new timed lights. He is completely thrilled. Thanks to all of you for whatever you had to do to get lights with the timers. Have they been programmed yet? Lt. Geno mentioned that it still allows people to turn right on red. Jeff mentioned that they are still waiting for the final operation of the intersection. Ron mentioned that he walked up there 4 times crossing from Beauchamp & O'Rourke to Deer Street, earlier in week and someone turned from Deer Street to right of way and a man yelled at him, then said he didn't see him. Jeff also mentioned that they are still waiting for equipment. Be careful crossing there right now. Lt. Geno mentioned that it will be straightened out soon. Chief Baker addressed Ron and mentioned that he appreciated the fact that he comes in with an issue and also comes back to the committee to acknowledge that we have worked on the issue. Ron stated that everyone seems to come and complain but not everyone says Thank you. Chief stated that we appreciate Ron's thanks and to please keep us up to date on any issues he sees. Everyone thanked Ron for coming.

5. Requesting a sign for curve at Columbian/Pierpoint/State: “Watch for Turning Vehicles” – Herb Russell

Chief mentioned that he will have Mary Kaye draft a letter to Herb Russell, explaining the crash data. Our Opinion is that if we change the signage at this intersection, that it could cause more problems.

6. There is no stop sign at Summer & Maple – Herb Russell

Chief asked Lt. Geno if there is a stop sign at this location. Lt. Geno stated that he didn't think there was one at this location. Chief asked Alan Shelvey if we could put up a stop sign here. Lt. Geno will issue a work order for this to be done.

7. Why is there a Yield sign at Maple & Grove? Seems a candidate for a stop sign – Herb Russell
Lt. Geno will check into this issue.

8. Other new business

Mayor mentioned that on the South corner of Royce Street & Strongs Avenue, the sight view in front of muffler shop is very bad. Lt. Geno mentioned that Evan and himself went down and looked at this and mentioned that if we take away too many parking spots here, we may hurt his business. Mayor mentioned that he has almost gotten hit here, a few times. Chief Baker stated that he went by there lastnight at 8:00 p.m. and there were no cars parked there. Mayor mentioned to maybe just give one parking spot there. He also mentioned that he would defer to engineer that knows all the angles. Thinks there's adequate parking on other side of street. Jon recalled someone having spoken with the business owner on this in the past. Chief will have Lt. Geno talk with business owner about how much this would affect his business if we changed the amount of parking spaces.

Alan Shelvey mentioned that at the corner of Evelyn Street & Merchants Row, that maybe we could put up a jersey barrier, temporarily. Mayor Louras wondered if there are signs, stating no trucks are allowed. Jon wondered about putting up a cable with a height limitation. Mayor mentioned that he would want to have further discussion on this, before putting up the jersey barrier. Lt. Geno mentioned that he was monitoring traffic on Grove Street for 4 hours and there were 4 tractor trailers headed north during this time frame. Wondering what is up with this. It was stated that maybe Google maps might be sending people this way. Alan mentioned that maybe we could take light posts down. Jeff mentioned that we need to talk with Mike Coppinger and mention that we are contemplating doing a test to temporarily get rid of the turn. Talk with people. Jon mentioned that he would be surprised if people have concerns with this. Mayor thinks that the McNeil boys and the bank may have issues. Jeff Wennberg mentioned that he would want to get Brennan Duffy to be part of this conversation.

Jeff Wennberg stated that Brennan Duffy has a request. It's regarding entrance signs, welcoming people to the City. We need locations. The location at Curtis Avenue/South Main Street sign is the only location with an issue. There must be an easement for the 3 arrow signs. This would be perfect location for Welcome sign. Can we move the 3 arrow sign to section near road? Alan mentioned that the edge of sign needs to be 2 feet from curb, 7 feet high. Lt. Geno thinks it can be done. Jeff mentioned that this is a great location for a Welcome sign. Alan mentioned that maybe the Garden Club could do something at the bottom of it. These signs are real nice.

Chief mentioned that Gerry Hansen has asked Nora to have his letter read at this meeting. Chief mentioned that this isn't the forum to talk about this and to rehash this in the Traffic Safety Committee isn't a wise use of our time.

Old Business

1. Other old business

No other old business discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:18 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Nora J. Moore
Records Clerk

Cc. Mayor
Captain Tucker
Lt. Geno
Police Commission
Board of Alderman
City Clerk
Post

