

Traffic Safety Committee, Meeting Minutes, March 15, 2024

Chief Kilcullen called the meeting to order at 9:01 hours

Members Present: Chief Kilcullen, Commander Whitehead and Officer Rosario

Guest's Present: Ralph Hadley, Donna Kennedy, Joseph Adams, Cathy Cioffi, Steve Waite, Rhonda Graham, Shauna Graham, Wilda Bourn and Ethan Pepin

Members Absent: Ted Gillen, John McCann and Bradley LaFaso of LaFaso Electric

NEW BUSINESS

1. Request for a Stop sign to be installed at the intersection of Pearl St/Wood Ave – Angela Reardon

Chief Kilcullen supports this request. He talked with Ted Gillen in DPW regarding this proposal. According to the MUTCD, a stop sign is necessary at intersection based on a number of factors (i.e. traffic volume, line of sight, etc.) He feels that this is certainly a reasonable request. It's a 90 degree intersection. In the interest of public safety, it would be best to have vehicles stop on Wood Avenue, to safely evaluate potential oncoming traffic, prior to entering Pearl Street. The City was awarded a grant to install stop signs on roads that intersect "residential collectors" but the grant can't support funding the install. It will be paid for out of the municipal budget.

2. Merchant's Row Crossing Pilot – Ethan Pepin

Ethan Pepin distributed some copies of the data that they were able to collect regarding this Pilot. Alderman John McCann had referred this to Committee. They were approached by the City & the Planning Commission regarding mid block crosswalk. Ralph Hadley asked if this is on West Street? Ethan said, Merchants Row. Ethan stated that the typical lane width downtown is 11 ft wide. Merchants Row is a 14 foot width. The number one concern is width is allowing higher speeds. If we could remove parking at the sides of the crosswalk, adjacent to crosswalk, that would help. We proposed to bring street in for width. 11 feet of width is Vt State standards. 11 feet at crosswalk, then put the rest into an island, will get people to go slower. Mid block crosswalk, no signaling, tighten things up, slow traffic down, in front of the Opera House. He mentioned that they took a tube counter that calculates how fast a vehicle is going. Chief Kilcullen asked how it accounts for wheel base of vehicle. Ethan stated by how many tires went over it and the space it took to get over. Chief Kilcullen asked how it makes a distinction of short wheel base or large. Ethan said by weight base. He also said that he can give a more in depth detail, afterwards.

Data collection was done September of 2023 and was collected for a 1 week period. Then, they decided to give it a month or two to try to screen out bad data (people not driving the normal speed that they travel) The average speed of travel was 17 mph and the fastest speed was 43 mph. Joseph Adams asked if there was anything about the time of day? Cathy mentioned there's an intersection close. Red light would change data, Green, too. Ethan said that there's a factor that when lights are flashing, this could be a factor to determine speed. Once folks are

going 30 mph, compliance with safety isn't achieved. Joseph Adams asked if the general speed is 30 mph. Ethan stated No, that's the 99th percentile. 80th percentile is going at 20-22 mph. The bollards were taken away, the pilot ended, then speeds enhanced 29 %. 1 % of people were going over speed limit when the pilot was in place. On the last page of the handout, you'll see the vast majority of vehicles are going around 28 to 29 mph. Pilot did calm traffic substantially. Just setting up the tube counters, a lot of people came up to him & mentioned they were supportive because speeds through there are high. Joseph asked Ethan if he had said that he did the pilot for 7 days. Ethan stated that there were 2, 7 day tests. Chief Kilcullen asked if the Planning Commission made this request. Ethan stated that Alderman John McCann just asked that he present this, here. Chief Kilcullen mentioned that he will talk with John about this. Ethan said that he believes there is extra money in DPW that can be allocated to this project. Ethan said that he identifies issues to allow solutions. Chief Kilcullen thanked Ethan for sharing this information with us.

Other Old Business

1. Assess Horton Avenue for appropriate parking restrictions

Chief Kilcullen stated that over the past several months, our Officers have responded to many calls regarding parking issues at this location. Emilio Rosario deals with parking complaints. Complaints are that the road is narrow. When cars are legally parked, it may present issues for fuel trucks. We spent some time up there. We did see a fuel truck go to the end, make a delivery and didn't have any issues. Cathy Cioffi asked if she could stop the Chief right there. Chief, stated yes. Cathy said that there were two Officers that said they were observing the fuel truck. The fuel truck had to back down the road into a driveway. Cathy stated that she's not sure what Chief Kilcullen saw. Chief said, last house on the right. Cathy stated No. It was last house on the left. He finished the delivery, then had to back up. Chief Kilcullen stated that he didn't observe any issues by any vehicle parked on the street. Cathy said she was gonna stop the Chief again. She responded that You're saying that any delivery person that has to go to 3 houses there, they should have to back up and turn around? Chief Kilcullen stated that the car parked on side of road didn't appear to cause any issues. Cathy questioned with a No? He could have pulled into driveway where he's delivering, then turn around. Rhonda Graham stated that she is the last house on the left. Fuel truck parked in Cathy's driveway, blocking them, to deliver to Rhonda's house. Cathy stated that the snow plows have the same issue. Rhonda mentioned that UPS wouldn't deliver during Christmas because of issues with cars parked on the street. Also the garbage trucks & the plow guy. It has happened numerous times. Chief Kilcullen stated this is the reason we wanted more people here from that road, so they can understand my authority. Street is 20 feet. Ralph Hadley stated that if there are restrictions on parking, it will lower property value. Chief Kilcullen stated that we could restrict parking on both sides. Currently, you can park on either side of street but have to leave 10 feet of roadway open. There are no restrictions and you're not violating any City ordinances. He also stated that he doesn't feel what we saw addresses your concerns. Chief Kilcullen mentioned that we have talked with the neighbors. Someone mentioned that the Post Office didn't want to deliver mail. Sounds like they prefer to have mailboxes. Cathy mentioned that if a car is parked on the side of the street, the snow plow will stop and leave a big amount of snow right there. Cathy said that

if you want me to call you every time it happens, not sure you'll like that. Chief Kilcullen stated that he hadn't heard that from DPW. Chief also stated that if plow were to come up to a car, it wouldn't be reasonable for them to stop and then not do the rest of the street. Cathy said, so you're saying where the car is parked, who cares about the rest of the street? Don't understand where you're coming from and not have any compassion. Chief Kilcullen replied that he does have compassion. One guys visitors park before his driveway on the street. He doesn't have any issues with plowing. A lady proposed that they all park on the street. There were no violations observed by the Police when fuel truck was delivering. It was asked how you would decide what side to put up a sign if you elected to do 1 side? It was decided that we will have DPW install a "No Parking Here to Corner" sign on Horton Street.

Chief Kilcullen stated that Horton Street tapers to the East. He is proposing a parking lane for plow trucks to turn around. Chief will speak to DPW Commissioner.

If there are vehicles parked on the street while the Winter parking ban is in effect, the residents were encouraged to call us.

It was mentioned that the mail person parks their truck on the Corner of Curtis Avenue, near Route 7, in violation. Chief Kilcullen will speak with the Postmaster.

The Residents on Horton Street requested that the Speed cart be placed on Curtis Avenue. We will put one out there once we get them out of storage.

2. Traffic lights flashing at night

Ted Gillen reviewed the accident data that was provided and see no reason to revert the flashing phase from 10 pm to 11 pm. In fact, it appears as though we've only had 1 accident so far this year during the 10 pm hour.

3. Updates from DPW Engineer in regards to Old Business Items

Parking Concerns on Curtis Avenue – The concerns on Curtis Avenue at Todd Transportation location and the Railroad tracks have been addressed by us putting up signs. Chief Kilcullen stated that he is looking at other parking restrictions on Curtis Avenue with Schedules & Restrictions possibly.

Merchants Row Crossing Pilot – Based on the data that was provided, traffic slowed down to an average speed of 17 mph from 27 mph during winter months when the delineators are removed. This shows that they were effective in calming traffic. There have been discussions about installing delineator bollards that can be temporarily fastened or glued to the asphalt surface. They are flexible, allowing vehicles to easily drive over them. Following impact, they re-erect themselves. I've talked about this with the Highway Supervisor and we are both in support of installing these. The RRA & RRPC proposed the idea and have access to a funding to

pay for the purchase of materials. DPW could install them. Ted Gillen asked the Chief to please let him know his thoughts on this proposal.

Pedestrian Crossing activation downtown - Ted Gillen spoke to Brad LaFaso and asked him to look into this issue. He told him that when the traffic lights are in flashing mode, the crossing phase "blacks out" and does not have the ability to turn on. He was insistent that this was the case. Ted asked if Chief Kilcullen could ask our Police Officers to take a video of this issue if they happen to come across it in the future.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 Hours.

Submitted by Nora J. Moore, Records Clerk