



CITY OF DOVER

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: FINANCE DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE ROOM,
(TOP FLOOR, CITY HALL)
Meeting Date: **Monday, July 27, 2009**
Meeting Time: **7:00 pm**

Meeting called to order by Councilor Weston at 7:07 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Councilor Weston, Marn Speidel (Police), Bruce Woodruff (Planning), Ben Clark (Community Services), Ed Wentworth and John Scruton. Absent: Dennis Munson, Sharon Reynolds and Peter Schmidt (COAST).

In the absence of the Secretary Mr. Munson, Councilor Weston asked for a volunteer to take meeting minutes. Mr. Wentworth volunteered to take the minutes.

It was voted to move two items from new business to the fore to accommodate residents who were present to provide input.

NEW BUSINESS

Spring Street Parking

With resident Catherine Faure present, the concern voiced was that Spring Street is not wide enough for parking on both sides. It was noted especially that some fire trucks would not be able to negotiate the street if cars are parked on both sides. Sgt. Speidel pointed out that the street is generally just under 24 feet wide and the largest fire apparatus is 11 feet wide and would not be able to negotiate the street between parked vehicles.

Sgt. Speidel recommended that parking be restricted to the side of the road with the fewest driveways. It was suggested that the best side for parking would be the side with the sidewalk (south).

Councilor Weston stated that input should be obtained from affected neighbors. They will be contacted to allow them to voice their opinions at the Aug. 24 meeting, and a motion by Mr. Woodruff, seconded by Mr. Scruton, to table final action until that time was approved, 5 approving, with one abstention.

Ezra's Way Speeding Concern

Four residents were present. All voiced concerns about speeding on Ezra's Way. Sgt. Speidel showed statistics derived from a traffic count the week of July 13-20, showing that of the 1,334 cars traversing the street 95 % were traveling 32 mph or less. Residents present suggested a speed limit of 20 mph, but it was pointed out by Sgt. Speidel that under state law 25 mph was the lowest the city could go.

Councilor Weston pointed out that traffic calming options in the area are limited because of the narrowness of the street. Mr. Woodruff pointed out that cost is always a concern when deciding about speed reduction methods. The effect it has on plowing in the winter also has to be considered. He said the Planning Department would support a change to 25 mph, but it was suggested by Sgt. Speidel that the traffic count statistics showed the reduction would not make much difference in the long run. Woodruff pointed out that speed concerns at the entrance to Ezra's Way could not be controlled by the city since Route 9 is a state highway.

Mr. Woodruff suggested the neighbors go before the City Council at budget time with a specific proposal for a calming method. On a motion by Mr. Woodruff to ask the city engineer to find out what a speed



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advisory sign might accomplish, seconded by Mr. Scruton, 5 voted in favor, with one abstention (Clark). The subject was tabled until the Aug. 24 meeting.

Mr. Scruton suggested the city should set aside money each year to fund traffic-calming costs in neighborhoods. Councilor Weston suggested such rules should be enforced with developers and it was suggested that the TAC suggest some changes to present rules that would help alleviate the problem.

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes from the June 22, 2009 meeting were corrected and approved unanimously.

Fisher Street Parking

Earlier concerns by a resident that the street is not wide enough for parking on both sides were discussed by the Commission. No residents of the street were present. With traffic statistics showing that in 2005 85 % of vehicles on the street were traveling at 29 mph or less, with the average speed even less, it was suggested that since the pavement is wide enough to allow the parking with no problem for emergency vehicles there should be no change. Some concern had been voiced that student parking on the west end of the street was hampering traffic, but Sgt. Speidel pointed out there have been no accidents in the area. Sgt. Speidel motioned that no action be taken, seconded by Mr. Clark, and 5 voted in favor with one abstention (Woodruff).

Garrison School Parking and Traffic

With action anticipated before the opening of school, Mr. Clark said the biggest issue is how to get teachers easily and safely from the parking lot to the front entrance of the school. He said Doug Steele thinks a four-foot-wide ramp instead of the fixed steps now there, would help. Mr. Woodruff enquired about an earlier proposal to put in a ramp to the sidewalk on Garrison Road. Mr. Clark said it was deemed somewhat steep. Councilor Weston asked about lighting in the area, which must be addressed. It was suggested by Councilor Weston and Mr. Woodruff that Mr. Clark have his department check more into adequate lighting and the proposal to build the ramp to the sidewalk as a more cost-effective solution and one which might be accomplished in a short time.

NEW BUSINESS

Neighborhood Design

Commissioner Scruton brought up the subject of improving neighborhood design so as to ward off some of the problems which develop later. He introduced a report by the Strafford Regional Planning Commission on how to better design neighborhoods to handle water and other issues and he suggested it was time the city tried to get people out of their cars and into walkable neighborhoods.

Mr. Woodruff promised to go through the report point by point to see how Dover fares as far as the suggestions are concerned, and he'll report back on the issues that could be improved. A motion was made by Wentworth to table the issue to the next meeting to allow Woodruff to do so, seconded by Mr. Woodruff, and the vote in favor was unanimous.



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Williams Street Crosswalk Concern

Sgt. Speidel noted that this concern has been voiced previously. Mr. Woodruff said the bus stop should stay where it is, but something needs to be done without taking away parking.

It was decided to go, after the meeting, to the area only a short distance from City Hall to view the crosswalk and its environs.

Member comments:

Mr. Woodruff commented that the state talked with the Planning Department and he was able to discuss bicycle safety issues at the junction of US Rte 4 and Boston Harbor Road and get an agreement from the state to install video sensors at the traffic signals on both sides so that cyclists will be able to trip the lights and get turn options. The present below-pavement sensors are not tripped by bicycles. Woodruff noted it was an instance of the state and city working together to improve the city's bicycle routes.

Mr. Scruton suggested that TAC members go together to Durham to see what the town has done for traffic calming in the downtown area. It was decided to get together and do so on Aug. 10 for those who are available. Mr. Scruton will make arrangements with Steve Pesci.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Wentworth, seconded by Mr. Woodruff.

(Following adjournment of the meeting at 9:32 pm, all six members present gathered at the crosswalk at the corner of Williams Street and Central Avenue to discuss possible ways to upgrade safety at the location. Suggestions included moving the crosswalk signs back a short distance to give drivers more warning, widening the crosswalk to make it more visible, eliminating adjacent parking spaces to increase visibility, and constructing build-outs at the crosswalk so that persons wishing to use it can get out to the edge of the traffic lane with more safety and visibility. Planning will try to come back to the TAC with suggestions at a subsequent meeting.)