



## **Transportation Advisory Committee**

Date: October 13, 2021.

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

### **Minutes.**

#### **1. Administration.**

Members in Attendance: Dan Amstutz (DPCD), Wayne Chouinard (DPW), Lenard Diggins, Ray Jones, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Howard Muise, Tycho Nightingale, Scott Smith, Laura Swan (Chair), and Shoji Takahashi.

Members Absent: Corey Rateau (APD)

Members of Public in Attendance: Petru Sofio.

The Chair provided notice regarding Remotely Conducted Meetings, referring the members to the agenda attachment entitled “Governor Charles Baker’s 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law”. The Chair reviewed the meeting ground rules and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

#### **B. Approval of September 8, 2021 Meeting Notes.**

Approval for the Minutes of the September 8, 2021, meeting was moved to the November meeting.

#### **C. Correspondence Sent/Received from 09/03/21 to 10/10/21.**

- Copy of letter dated September 11, 2021, from Paul Easton and Aura Obando to Select Board and TAC titled “Request for Crosswalk Across Summer St at Newland Rd for Peirce Elementary.”

TAC received this request from the Select Board. Laura Swan observed Peirce School dismissal and noted many adults and children crossing Summer St at Newland Rd. She added that there was no traffic supervisor on Summer St to discuss pedestrian crossing on this street.

A crosswalk at Newland Rd might not meet TAC and other guidelines as the traffic signal at Park Ave Ext is less than 200' away. A crosswalk at Sunset Rd would be useful, but it depends on how pedestrians use the roadway. Scott Smith asked where do pedestrians want to go (Newland Rd or Park Ave Ext)?

Wayne Chouinard commented that the controlled signal is the best location to cross (Summer St at Park Ave Ext). Petru Sofio observed that there is no crosswalk along Summer St east of Peirce School.

Ray Jones and Shoji Takahashi volunteered to observe pedestrian behavior at Peirce School arrival/dismissal and report their observations to TAC.

#### **D. TAC Rules of Governance.**

Laura Swan, Howard Muise, and Scott Smith worked on revising the TAC Rules of Governance. The proposed changes reflect how the TAC operates presently.

"Citizen" was changed to "Volunteer", as certain members might work in Arlington but live elsewhere, e.g., a Chamber of Commerce member. Volunteers are "special municipal employees", who are subject to ethics rules and open meeting law.

Clarifications are proposed on TAC liaisons to outside committees. This includes positions on Ad Hoc Committees, such as the Design Review Committee for Mass Ave and Appleton St.

New Members can be appointed to vacancies whenever they occur. Members are appointed to four year terms and must be reappointed in December of the year their term ends. Officers are elected in June of odd number years. Having Members reappointed at a separate time from officer elections is preferable for the functioning of the TAC.

Shoji Takahashi inquired about how the proposed Reprecincting of the Town would impact the Rules of Governance. Howard Muise responded that if the number of precincts is changed, this would require altered numbering in the Bylaws; Scott Smith said that the intent of the precinct distribution was to provide representative geographic distribution. After discussion, TAC Members decided to revisit the Bylaws and precinct representation in November when there is clarity in the Town precinct map.

#### **2. Public Comments.**

Petru Sofio observed motor vehicles turning right on the red light at Lake St and Brooks Ave. This is dangerous as many elementary school students cross at this location. He noted that the No-turn-on-Red blank-out sign turns on at the same time that the Walk indication illuminates; and the blank-out sign turns off when

the flashing hand begins. He suggested changing the timing of the blank-out sign to being at the yellow light phase continue until through the flashing-hand phase.

**3. Town Issues/Activities.**

**A. Dan Amstutz provided an update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).**

Minuteman Bikeway Project. November 3 Meeting has been scheduled with Town promotional materials being circulated. An intercept survey also is planned. Existing conditions of the Bikeway will be assessed.

MassTrails Grant. A consultant is being selected among three excellent proposals. MassTrails requires the project be completed by the end of June 2022.

Stratton School Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Sidewalk Project. This grant was awarded in 2019 and is scheduled for MassDOT funding for construction in spring, 2024. The project is along Hemlock St and Dickson Ave, and a MassDOT consultant is preparing the 25%-design plans. An online public engagement meeting is scheduled for November 10, and the 25%-design public hearing will be scheduled for the spring. Some challenges with project include large street trees and property impacts.

DPCD Staffing. Kelly Lynema is the new Assistant Director of DPCD. DPCD is also looking to hire a Town Sustainability Manager and a new Environmental Planner.

**B. Wayne Chouinard provided an update from the Department of Public Works (DPW).**

DPW is completing pavement preservation work for this season. As a pilot, an extra surface coating was applied for a smoother finish on Joyce Road.

Scott Smith inquired about roadway striping by the Reservoir. Wayne Chouinard responded that DPW is getting the endorsement for striping by the Reservoir and also the intersection of Mass Ave and Appleton St/Appleton PI. He noted that roadway striping is temperature dependent, and there have been challenges acquiring supplies and materials for construction.

Petru Sofio inquired about RRFB installation. Wayne Chouinard responded that RRFBs will be installed in mid to late November on Lowell St at the Reservoir and Gray St at Quincy St.

**C. There was no update from the Police Department (APD).**

**4. Discussion: Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Dallin**

Dallin School is drafting a Memo to the Select Board regarding the SRTS Arrival and Dismissal Plan with assistance from Dan Amstutz and Laura Swan. Traffic counts are being taken on Oakland Ave as a baseline.

APD agrees to help with signage for the pilot. On October 19, awardees for MassDOT's SRTS Signs and Lines grant will be named, which might provide funding for this pilot. Temporary signs will be placed for the detour.

**5. Discussion: Bates Rd left turn**

Bill Copithorne observed motor-vehicle traffic on Mass Ave at Bates Rd in the afternoon (approximately 2:20pm – 3:15pm). He reported that vehicles were able to make the left turn without an extensive wait. At worst, there was a queue of two automobiles waiting to make the left turn, and they were able to make the turn during the cycle. The question is whether this situation is different during the morning or evening rush hour.

Ray Jones and Scott Smith offered to help with observations at Bates Rd. Wayne Chouinard will provide them with forms to provide consistency among observers.

**6. Discussion: Washington St One Way**

Melissa Laube: recommending two options for consideration. (1) Two-way with southbound traffic yielding; and (2) One-way traffic northbound. Working Group Memo will soon be circulated.

Wayne Chouinard asked whether the recommendations were sent to the abutters for comment. Melissa Laube responded that she has had some discussions with the person who wrote the letter to the Select Board. Wayne Chouinard thinks that TAC should send the recommendations to Town Counsel for review as the implementation and liability is on residents as it is a private way. Jeff Maxtutis agrees and urges caution.

Scott Smith said that he favored retaining two-way traffic flow as it is less invasive option. He then inquired about who would be responsible for signage. Wayne Chouinard responded that signage will be paid for by private-way abutters. If signs will be placed on Town property (e.g., No Outlet sign), those will be paid for by the Town.

## **7. Discussion: Mt. Gilboa Traffic Concerns**

Ray Jones mentioned that roadway striping and pedestrian improvements, such as the installation of RRFB, is pending. TAC received a letter complaining of speeding and non-compliance of stopping at the Westmoreland and Westminster intersection. He observed non-compliance during at least two site visits. He asked about the possibility of adding stop bars to the roadway as a visual cue to drivers.

Wayne Chouinard suggested that the Working Group document compliance/non-compliance for a few observation intervals to track volume and compliance for substantiation. He will provide data collection form. He added that there is a significant betterment process involving roadway paving nearby which will be completed in the next week. There might be more traffic volume and/or higher speeds as the neighboring roadway is improved.

Jeff Maxtutis asked if there was an All Way Stop placard at the intersection. The addition of stop bars would not require Select Board approval as the intersection already is regulated as an all-way stop.

Laura Swan noted that APD is presently checking for stop compliance at Downing Square. She added that perhaps APD also can monitor stop compliance on the Westmoreland and Westminster intersection.

## **8. Update: Thompson Area Traffic Calming**

Laura Swan and Scott Smith made a site visit at the end of September (N Union St side and Everett St side). Vast majority of people were walking with some biking. Traffic supervisor estimated that auto traffic is down ~75% from pre-COVID. Also noted fewer cut-through traffic driving by the school.

There is a new stop sign on Wellesley Rd/Patrick Stat Everett St. There is a new sidewalk on the eastside of River St, which might account for the increased pedestrian volumes on Wellesley Rd. It seems like more people are choosing Wellesley Rd instead of University Rd.

Notably, many more pedestrians were crossing at N Union St and Norcross St (112 crossed in ~15 min; 2010 traffic study 28 people in 45 min). There is a large residential fence on the southeast corner that might interfere with seeing pedestrians, and the painted crosswalk is on the north side.

## **9. Discussion: Park Ave at Appleton St**

Laura Swan had a discussion with a resident about pedestrian crossing at Park Ave at Appleton St, in particular the placement of a flashing pedestrian crossing signal. The conversation expanded to a discussion about the Park Ave corridor to

Mass Ave. Park Ave is wider roadway and has faster vehicle speeds than neighborhood roadways.

Wayne Chouinard has concepts for typical geometry changes and curb extensions for the intersection of Paul Revere Rd/Wollaston Ave and Park Ave. He will share the concepts with TAC to receive input and start a discussion. The concepts will be presented at the next TAC Meeting.

#### **10. Discussion: Eastern Ave Traffic Calming**

Jeff Maxtutis and Laura Swan will have a site visit and discuss existing conditions with the residents. They will consider obtaining traffic counts and check vehicle speeds.

#### **11. Update: Chestnut Street Traffic Calming**

Wayne Chouinard had discussed with Green International about changing the slip-lane traffic signal to green when the left-turn signal from Mystic St to Chestnut St is activated. The cost will be ~\$3,000 to prepare the traffic signal plan, change the switches, and inspect the results. (Notably, the MassDOT access permit is \$1,400.) A key assumption is that the existing traffic signal timings will be unchanged, therefore, turning movement counts and capacity analysis will not be conducted.

Scott Smith will discuss offline with Wayne Chouinard a possible phase-timing change to permit pedestrians to cross on two cycles instead of three.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.