

**Town of Arlington
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Wednesday, September 18, 2002 7:15 PM

Committee members present: Rich Bento, Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Ralph Elwell, Larry Englisher, Lt. Jim McHugh, Mike Rademacher, Scott Smith, Ed Starr, David Walkinshaw

Others present: Gene Beneson, Jim Britt, Ed Cuoco, Bob McKersie, Mark Miller, Chris Leich

Administrative Items

The minutes of 8/21 were approved.

Symmes

Lt. McHugh arrived during this discussion, at 7:20.

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported that there were two well-attended public meetings. The first was to obtain ideas for the use of the Symmes property. The second was a presentation of work by the consultants.

The third public meeting will be on Thursday 9/26, 7 PM in Town Hall. During this meeting, the consultants (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.) will present some concrete ideas and will get feedback. She encouraged all TAC members to attend this meeting.

Transportation concerns from the neighbors include the amount of traffic that might be generated, both on Summer Street and on adjoining streets. The Summer/Brattle intersection is now at LOS E. With two schools nearby, lack of sidewalks is also an issue.

David Walkinshaw arrived at the end of this discussion, at 7:25.

MBTA Survey

Larry Englisher contacted Maureen Trainor and David Barker of the MBTA Service Planning office. He reports that one of them will be available to meet with TAC. He also handed out the results of the 1995 MBTA passenger survey for our review.

After some discussion, we agreed that the MBTA should be invited to the November 20th TAC meeting. [Note: Sen. Havern is expected to attend on 11/20 - so the invitation has been changed to 10/16.]

Possible topics for discussion include the following

- Informing the MBTA about activities on the Mass. Ave. Corridor and the Symmes property, since the projects may affect one or more bus routes.
- Obtaining their perspective on topics such as encouraging transit use and commuter parking.
- The processes for moving a bus stop and requesting modifications of service.

We agreed to exchange ideas over the next week via email so the MBTA representatives can be given an advance view of our topics of interest. We will aim for scheduling them early, and for at least one hour.

Jason / Brantwood / Hillsdale

David Walkinshaw reported on a meeting earlier this month with about 15 residents of the Jason/Brantwood/Hillsdale area. This group is not interested in major changes to the traffic island, and feel that substantial paint or signs will destroy the character of the area. The pedestrian warning sign on Jason has helped; however, David also noted that there have been very few crashes in the area. A yield sign on Hillsdale northbound at Jason would be acceptable to these neighbors. Elisabeth Carr-Jones cautioned that the current absence of control may serve to reduce speeds at the intersection, and that the yield sign might encourage higher speeds on Jason. Another possibility is a crosswalk on Jason at the south side of the island.

We concluded that the next step was to hold a public meeting to discuss alternatives for that intersection., and invite a broad segment of the neighborhood, Thus far, the alternatives include

- do nothing
- yield sign on Hillsdale
- crosswalk on Jason south of island
- convert the island into a mini-rotary

Views from some of the residents present include the following:

Bob McKersie explained that about 40 people, from Brantwood, Hillsdale and Jason were invited to the community meeting (but it was with short notice)

Gene Beneson suggested

- It might be better to have public meetings in public places. Some might find going to someone else's home intimidating.
- Traffic should not be restricted
- The pedestrian warning sign has made a remarkable improvement; consider a speed table at this crosswalk.
- He doesn't like the mini-rotary, but suggests dotted lane marking near the island, as well as another crosswalk on the south side of the island.
- Don't forget Pleasant Street. There is a big backup at Gray for left turns.

Jim Britt gave the Committee a letter stating his views.

Preparation for 9/23 BOS Meeting (Spring / Jason / Pleasant View Intersection)

David Walkinshaw presented the draft memo to the Board of Selectmen. It includes the following recommendations:

1. Crosswalk across Spring Street, near school bus stop, with appropriate pedestrian warning signs
2. Yellow center lines at the bottom (south end) of Jason and Pleasant View, extending only about 60 feet up from the intersection
3. Yellow center lines on Spring between Jason and the Concord Turnpike entrance
4. Stop signs and stop lines at the bottom (south end) of Jason and Pleasant View

Scott Smith suggested that tightening the curb radius for the right turn from Jason to Spring would a) enable the crosswalk to be placed closer to Jason, where it would be more visible, and b) improve visibility of Spring Street traffic for drivers on Jason. He thanked Mark Miller for making the initial suggestion. We agreed that doing this was within the scope of the above recommendations. The above recommendations were unanimously approved.

Rich Bento departed after this discussion, at 8:40 PM.

Long Term Planning

Ed Starr presented the results of the TAC 2002-2003 planning survey. This survey included a long list of potential activities for the TAC in the next year, and Committee members were asked to prioritize this list by voting for items they believed were most important and timely. It was agreed by all that there is not enough hours available to do the whole list. Each Committee member had four 5's, four 3's, and four 1's to vote for items on the list.

The top ten items selected as the highest priority were as follows:

Item	Votes
Safety: Mass. Corridor Project	33
Mobility: Initiate analysis of Mass/Rt 60 intersection	24
Neighborhoods: Traffic calming devices	23
Safety: 10 year crash analysis to identify hot spots	19
Fed/State/Regional: Issues re Rt 2 / 16, Mass Ave / 16	19
Safety: Ottoson Middle School	12
Safety: Crosswalks	12
Mobility: Roadway classifications	12
Mobility: Measurement program	11
TAC/Town: Transportation policy statement for Town	10

Two items were discussed that were not on the initial survey: ZIPCAR, and posting a 30 mph speed limit at all town entries. Scott Smith suggested that we should identify the easiest items of the top 10 (such as crosswalk guidelines), and do them first.

Speed Humps

Paul Campbell obtained data on two portable speed bumps. A third portable speed table designed by Portland, OR has been identified, but price and availability has not yet been determined. Committee members have concerns about the design of the first two (designed for too low of a speed , and were thought more appropriate for parking lots rather than roadways. The third was appropriate for roadways. DPW was asked to pursue the Portland portable speed table, and to obtain the ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers) design guidelines for speed humps.

Mass. Ave. Corridor Update

Scott Smith reported that the working group met on 9/4. The primary focus of this meeting was improvements to the Mass. Ave./Route 16 intersection. Volunteers will be collecting peak period pedestrian, bike and bus counts during September. The next meeting of the working group is scheduled for Thursday 10/10, Fox Library, 7:30 PM.

Town Transportation News

Jim McHugh reported that fire lanes have been painted at appropriate places near the schools, and that the measurement program is in progress, with measurements being made on Highland, Gray, Quincy and Bellington streets.

David Walkinshaw met with approximately 20 residents on Pleasant Street. Concerns include

- Crosswalks without pedestrian warning signs
- Large number of crashes on the sharp curve near Gray Street
- Truck traffic. Residents report a big increase in large trucks, especially late at night. There have been some reported crashes with rollovers.

Ralph Elwell presented the idea of a “Pace Car” pledge. This is a pledge to drive courteously and within the speed limit, and to stop for pedestrians. The idea is that with enough Pace Car vehicles on the road, traffic will be slowed. Initial possibilities mentioned for “taking the pledge” include

- TAC members
- Selectmen
- Town Meeting members, at the special Town Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Handouts:

Agenda packet including agenda, e-mail exchange on Speed Humps, Legal Aspects of Traffic Calming – from Ed Starr

Minutes from August 21, 2002 – from Scott Smith

Symmes Hospital Reuse and Feasibility Plan, Phases I and II – from Elisabeth Carr-Jones

Excerpts from 1995 MBTA Systemwide Passenger Survey, Bus System, Somerville Garage, Arlington MBTA Bus Service Summary – from Larry Englisher

Memo to the Board of Selectmen containing recommendations for Jason / Spring – from David Walkinshaw

Memo to TAC, responding to the proposals for Jason/Hillsdale and Pleasant View – from Jim Britt, 141 Jason Street

Tally of votes for TAC priorities – from Ed Starr

Speed Bump website from Sacramento, and motorists.com “Problems with Traffic Calming” – from Mike Rademacher

Pace Car handout – from Ralph Elwell