

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

Wednesday, October 17, 2001 7:30 PM

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

Others present: Charles Crevo, Sudhir Murthy (both of Louis Berger Group), Alan Jones

**Regional Truck Study**

Alan McClennen presented an update on the regional truck study. This study came out of an attempt by Cambridge a number of years ago to ban trucks at night on all streets. The outcome was a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that called for this truck study and suspended enforcement of the Cambridge ordinance . The MOU was recently extended to April 2002.

In Arlington, most trucks use state numbered roads. Banning trucks from a state numbered road requires both State permission and a substitute route. However, one recommendation of the truck study committee was to designate Broadway in Somerville and Arlington as a truck route. The Arlington Board of Selectmen (BOS) are on record as opposing this recommendation. Alan also reported that the Somerville Board of Aldermen do not support the recommendation. Another recommendation was to permit two axle trucks on Alewife Brook Parkway between Broadway and Mass Ave. The Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) opposes this recommendation.

**Report from Louis Berger Group (LBG)**

Sudhir Murthy reported on the overall transportation study. A number of maintenance issues were received from residents. These issues will not be part of the study. Non-maintenance areas of community concern include the following:

- Cut-through traffic. To help the town address this, LBG will propose a regional classification map, and potential traffic calming strategies
- Problematic intersections
- Traffic Signals
- Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Parking (especially overnight)
- Public Transportation (especially off peak, crosstown)
- Bicycle (mostly, bike path)
- Pavement Markings and Signage
- Institutional issues (traffic committee)

He invited additional comments on these areas from committee members.

Charles Crevo reported on the Mass. Ave study. Traffic counts were taken the week after Labor Day. It appears that the critical link (with highest traffic volume) is between Lake and Linwood Streets. With projected 2011 traffic volumes a one-lane in each direction design would end up at LOS E...an unacceptable level of congestion. Areas the study is considering include a bicycle lane, pedestrian refuge islands and bus stops.

(Alan McClennen departed at 8:30 PM)

### **Jason Street Discussion**

The discussion lasted from 8:40 to 9:55 PM, and focused on the specific motions that were passed by the BOS on 9/24 (Jack Hurd arrived during this discussion, at 9 PM.) :

1. Crosswalk at Norfolk. Issues raised with the crosswalk include the following:
  - It may have very low pedestrian volume (only one person requested it, that to bring a child to the school bus stop at this corner).
  - Would it be sensible to move the bus stop to Jason and Gray?
  - It is very close to an existing crosswalk (at Jason and Gray)
  - In order to meet requirements for people with disabilities, a new crosswalk would require a curb cut and ramp. Rich Bento indicated that the concrete work for this could not be done until warmer weather returns next spring.

We agreed to

- At this time, not offer a recommendation on whether a crosswalk should be installed at this location
- Request that Town-wide criteria be developed for crosswalk installations, similar to what is being done for stop signs.

(Sudhir Murthy departed during this discussion.)

2. Increased enforcement. The committee unanimously supports this.
3. Heavy trucking restriction. Issues include the following
  - What does "heavy" trucking mean? It is so vague so as to be unenforceable.
  - How will local deliveries be handled? Recent informal observation by committee members indicates that most of the truck traffic on the street seems to be for local deliveries. One possibility would be to change the restriction to read "No trucks except local deliveries."

The committee unanimously recommended no action pending clarification of these issues.

4. Do Not Enter signs on Jason. Issues include the following
  - Is Jason really a cut-through? Rather, for many origin-destination pairs in the area, it is the most direct route.
  - Committee members expressed great concern about the impact of a closure on other streets, noting that alternate routes on other residential streets were posted on the town's e-mail list within days of the 9/24 vote. Lt. McHugh noted that the

- recent traffic count indicated 20,000 vehicles in 7 days on Highland Avenue. Would diverting traffic, say, from Jason to Highland be equitable?
- Once a change (such as a closure) is made, it can become politically very difficult to undo. A “6 month trial”, practically, may not mean much.

We asked Charles Crevo (from Louis Berger Group) his view. He recommended no action at this time, and suggested that further information be gathered, for example via a license plate survey.

Because of these concerns, the committee unanimously recommended no action.

### **Minutes of 9/20/01 meeting**

The minutes of the 9/20/01 meeting were approved unanimously.

(Alan McClennen returned at approximately 10 PM.)

### **Oak Hill Drive**

Jim McHugh presented the Police Department report on safety concerns. Rich Bento noted that because of the geometry of the Oak Hill/Joyce intersection, Public Works is recommending no action on the stop sign.

### **Town Day Survey**

Scott presented partial results. The top area of concern was pedestrian safety.

### **Town Census**

Alan McClennen reported that we may be able to tag some transportation questions onto the Vision 2020 survey, which is put in the Town Census. This usually results in about 3,000 responses, and can be powerful support for actions at Town Meeting. The survey committee should contact Jane Howard within the next few weeks.

**The meeting adjourned at 10:10 PM.**

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### **MEETING HANDOUTS**

Agenda package (this included the agenda, publicity plan for the 10/24 meeting, LBG design study deliverables, LBG Mass Ave. corridor study deliverables) – from Ed Starr

Regional Truck Study – from Alan McClennen

Minutes from 9/20/01 meeting – from Scott Smith

Flyers for the 10/24 meeting – from Scott Smith

Jason Street petition, charge from the Board of Selectmen, 9/24 votes, and synopsis of Ed's and Scott's field observations – from Ed Starr

Slides for Arlington Transportation Assessment Study – from Sudhir Murthy

Draft criteria for four-way stop signs – from Rich Bento

Massachusetts Avenue Progress Report handout – from Charles Crevo

Oak Hill Drive Safety Status Report – from Jim McHugh