



CITY OF CONCORD

New Hampshire's Main Street™

MINUTES

Traffic Operations Committee

August 15, 2017, 12:00 PM
2nd floor Conference Room
City Hall, 41 Green Street, Concord, NH

Staff Present:

Rob Mack, Engineering Services (Chair)
Ed Roberge, Engineering Services
Jim Major, General Services
John Stoll, Planning Division
Rick Wollert, Fire Alarm Division

Guests:

1. Regular Discussion Items

a. Overview of City-Wide Crash Data

Crash data for July 2017 was reviewed. There were 103 reportable crashes in July 2017. This compares with 100 and 110 reportable crashes in July 2016 and 2015, respectively. 11 crashes resulted in total of 13 people injured. There were no fatalities.

There were four crashes involving pedestrians: a pedestrian aged 29 years walking in the parking lot of the Morning Star Apartments and falling into a passing truck (minor injury, pedestrian intoxicated and at fault); a pedestrian aged 43 years stepping out in front of a Washington Street (Penacook) motorcyclist he felt was driving too fast, and causing the motorcyclist to lose control and crash into the pedestrian (injuries to both; pedestrian intoxicated and at fault); a pedestrian aged 69 years crossing N. Main Street in the Warren Street crosswalk and being struck by a southbound vehicle that was attempting to pass a taxi that was stopped in advance of the crosswalk (no injuries, driver at fault); and a pedestrian aged 42 years walking westbound on the Loudon Road sidewalk in front of Valvoline and being struck by a driver exiting the Valvoline driveway (no injuries, driver at fault).

There were no crashes involving bicyclists.

b. City Council Meeting Update

No TOC items were considered.

c. Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) Update

At its July 27 and August 10, 2017 meetings, TPAC continued discussion of the Pleasant Street rezoning proposal and preparation of a recommendation for the Planning Board. TPAC also discussed anticipated availability of Pan Am Railroad right-of-way for potential use as rail trails.

2. Ongoing Discussion and Action Items

- a. **Review of sight lines at the Sewalls Falls Road/Second Street intersection (*Administration: 6/19/17*).**

Engineering is reporting TOC's discussion back to Administration for further direction.

3. New Discussion and Action Items

- a. **Concern by a resident of Douglas Avenue on cut-through traffic and speeds (*Engineering: 7/26/17*).**

At issue is a concern by Michael Jefferson, resident of 6 Douglas Avenue, on increasing speed and volume of traffic using Douglas Avenue as a cut-through between Fisherville Road and the homes and apartments off of Alice Drive to the west. Engineering noted that the concept of 'neighborhood connectivity', using local streets for connecting adjacent neighborhoods, is incorporated in the City's Transportation Master Plan. This concept was envisioned by the Planning Board as it considered residential land development in the area west of Douglas Avenue over the past decade. It was noted that a speed and volume study was performed on both Douglas and Winsor Avenues in 2007, and that a comparative study was felt appropriate to document changes since then.

Engineering conducted radar speed counts on both Douglas and Winsor Avenues in August 2017. This data was also compared to August 2007 data collected at the same locations. Speeds along both streets are essentially unchanged over the last 10 years, with average speeds of 24-27 mph and 85th percentile speeds of 29-31 mph. With a posted speed limit of 25 mph, TOC members did not think this data reflected an overall speeding problem. There were a few drivers recorded at higher speeds and enforcement was felt to be the appropriate solution. Regarding traffic volumes, there were 500 and 380 vehicles per weekday on Douglas and Winsor Avenues in 2007, respectively. In 2017, daily volumes have increased to 700 and 610 vehicles per day. TOC felt that current volumes are still reasonably low for a connected neighborhood street in Concord. Volumes also appear to correspond reasonably well given the current level of residential development to the west; a significant cut-through by non-local traffic is not indicated.

- b. **Concern by a resident of Tow Path Lane with U-turning traffic on Tow Path Lane (*General Services: August 10, 2017*).**

At issue is a concern by Donald Gott, resident of 5 Tow Path Lane, that some vehicles are using Tow Path Lane (a dead end street) to make U-turns from Mountain Road. As there is no turnaround at the end of the street, these vehicles turn around in driveways or on the grass as they make the turn. His main concern is with a few private buses.

Tow Path Lane is a short cul-de-sac street off of Mountain Road that provides access to 7 residential driveways. The street has a 50-foot right-of-way which is insufficient to construct a turnaround. General services noted that it uses a residential driveway there to turn around when snow plowing in the winter. TOC members felt that the use of the street as a turnaround by some drivers could not be prevented if it was in fact their choice to do so. Posting of a No Outlet sign might inform others of the cul-de-sac condition. TOC members felt that U-turning traffic would be an infrequent condition here, although the recent roundabout construction at Exit 16 might have caused delays leading to some folks wanting to change direction on Mountain Road. It was not known if the alleged buses were picking up or dropping off people on Tow Path Lane. General Services had earlier suggested that the resident could contact the bus company(s) to inquire why they were turning around here. TOC did not see a significant issue with turnarounds here. General Services would install a No Outlet sign at the entrance to Tow Path Lane.

4. Open Discussion Items

- a. **Staff response to miscellaneous inquiries (refer to correspondence in agenda packet).**

None.

- b. **Referral from Councilor Todd regarding a constituent request to install Deer Crossing signs on Blackwater Road (*Engineering: August 15, 2017*).**

At issue is a request by a resident at 82 Blackwater Road to install Deer Crossing signs due to observed presence of deer on this stretch of road between Runnells Road and the Webster town line. Noted was a deer that was struck in front of his residence earlier this year. General Services searched its maintenance record for the length of Blackwater Road over the last year and noted the subject deer incident which occurred on February 22, 2017 as well as a report of a dead skunk on June 17, 2016. Staff felt that animal sightings here were not atypical of those on other streets in the rural area. Planning staff was not aware of notable game-crossing trails in the area.

Deer are ubiquitous in the Concord area. Their potential presence on or near the city's street network can occur at any time, at any place, and may vary from season to season. As such, the potential posting of Deer Crossing signs wherever they are observed would result in the proliferation of such signs across the city with resulting loss of effectiveness. Use of such signs may be helpful to alert drivers at well-known game crossings on higher speed travel roads where it is common to expect animals to be crossing the road at a much higher frequency than elsewhere, year after year, or where crash incidence may be particularly high. TOC concurred that this is not the case at the subject location and that installation of such signage here would have little benefit. It is a driver's responsibility to be cognizant of the road ahead at all times, including avoidance of any animal that might and should be expected in the road at any location in the city.

TOC considered a similar request on November 17, 2015 from residents on Borough Road and came to the same finding and recommendation. TOC's recommendation was accepted by City Council on December 14, 2015.

Next meeting date: September 19, 2017