



CITY OF CONCORD

New Hampshire's Main Street™

MINUTES

Traffic Operations Committee

October 18, 2016, 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 Thomas, Police Department

Guests:

None

1. Regular Discussion Items

a. Overview of City-Wide Crash Data

Crash data for September 2016 was reviewed. There were 83 reportable crashes in September 2016. This compares with 86 and 88 reportable crashes in September 2015 and 2014, respectively. 13 crashes resulted in total of 17 people injured. There were no fatalities.

There were no crashes involving pedestrians.

There was one crash involving a bicyclist: a bicyclist aged 27 years traveling along the southbound NH Route 106 shoulder line near Makris and being struck by the side-view mirror of a passing southbound vehicle (minor injuries, both driver and cyclist at fault, helmet worn).

b. City Council Meeting Update

At City Council's October 11, 2016 meeting, Council set a November 14 public hearing to consider a revised appropriation for the CIP 19 Loudon Road project as a 4-lane access management alternative. Council also accepted TOC/TPAC's recommendation to retain the current flashing yellow arrow operation at the Fisherville/Borough intersection.

c. Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) Update

TPAC met on September 22, 2016 and considered: the current flashing yellow arrow operation at the Fisherville/Borough intersection; the 4-way stop request from Christa McAuliffe Elementary school; and bicycle/motor-vehicle laws and enforcement.

2. Ongoing Discussion and Action Items

a. Referral from Councilor Kenison regarding a constituent request to consider reversing the one-way travel direction on Federal Street (Council: 9/12/16).

At issue is a resident concern on some traffic cutting through and speeding on Federal Street toward Warren Street in order to avoid traffic signal delays at the Pleasant/Green intersection. At its September 20, 2016 meeting, TOC concurred that switching the one-way on Federal Street would result in safety concerns for Federal Street residents due to egress on busier and higher-speed Pleasant Street versus current egress onto the slower and more-lightly-travelled Warren Street. TOC also felt that changing the one-way direction would not eliminate the occasional cut-through; it would only change its direction. Such a southbound cut-through movement might also attract a southbound driver from Green Street trying to avoid the long queues that occasionally form approaching the Pleasant/Green intersection.

Engineering staff deployed a speed-radar counter in the middle of the long straight section of Federal Street from Wednesday September 28 to Sunday October 2, 2016. About 40 vehicles per day were counted (less on the weekends). TOC found that volume to be exceedingly low and about what would be expected from the residents there; it was not indicative of a significant cut-through issue. Staff also observed traffic on Federal Street several times but saw very few vehicles which is consistent with the low numbers of vehicles recorded. TOC felt that overall measured speeds were appropriate; the average speed recorded over the 5 days was 17 mph and the 85th percentile speed was 21 mph. An occasional careless driver driving too fast can be expected, as happens on many of our streets. That would be best addressed through enforcement by reporting a tag number or vehicle description to the police department who would attempt to identify and follow up with the driver.

TOC felt strongly that the current northbound one-way on Federal Street is the appropriate choice. If, however, the neighborhood desired to further pursue a change in the one-way direction, then per the City's Traffic Management Policy the following would be required: a neighborhood meeting; concurrence of 60 percent of the street's residents; a public hearing; and action by City Council to amend the Ordinance.

b. Tallant Road Paving Request.

At issue is an inquiry from Engineering and General Services regarding a request from Ben Stephenson of 32 Tallant Road to pave Tallant Road and reconstruct the Hoit/Tallant intersection to allow large vehicles to turn left from Hoit Road into Tallant Road. Following up on TOC's initial discussion into this request at its September 20, 2016 meeting, Jim Major noted that General Services staff field-viewed the northeast corner of the intersection and did not note any obvious significant constraints (such as ledge) that would make an intersection reconstruction cost-prohibitive. It was suggested that Engineering Services prepare a sketch layout of a potential intersection realignment that GSD could use in order to make a more detailed verification of constructability.

Engineering requested an opinion from the Concord Fire Department regarding emergency vehicle access to Tallant Road, specifically the highly-skewed left turn from Hoit Road to Tallant Road. Further discussion of the item was deferred to the next meeting.

3. New Discussion and Action Items

a. Request from a resident of Curtisville Road to install a street light in the new Broken Ground Trailhead parking area (Planning: 10/5/16).

At issue is a resident request for a street light at the new gravel parking area to deter potential undesirable activity that might occur there at night. Rob Mack noted that the city does not typically light trailhead parking areas, and this new area in particular shows no evidence of such a need. The

city has been considering de-lamping many street light locations city-wide where need is not demonstrated to reduce unnecessary power costs. As such, new lighting locations are carefully considered and eventually need Council approval as there is an annual fiscal impact for power usage that must be considered. TOC could not find support for adding a street light here at this time. TOC concurred that it was appropriate to try out the new parking area as it is and monitor.

b. Inquiry from Councilor Herschlag regarding vehicles driving over the grass at the Washington/Borough/River intersection (*Engineering: 10/12/16*).

At issue is a resident report of wheel tracks across the landscaped bump-out constructed at the intersection last year. Rob Mack shared photographs of the site showing skid marks in the grass area possibly caused by a River Road vehicle continuing straight onto Borough Road. Based on the time of the resident inquiry, it appeared that the event occurred on the Columbus Day weekend. John Thomas checked CPD records and there was no report of a crash or DUI driver in the vicinity over that weekend. Engineering and General Services staff visited the intersection and felt that current chevron signage and landscaping was adequate to delineate the road alignment. However, to be conservative, Jim Major reported that GSD had just installed an additional curve chevron sign on the River Road eastbound approach to the subject curve in the middle of the tracks of the errant vehicle.

4. Open Discussion Items

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

None.

b. Old Loudon/Portsmouth intersection.

Jim Major reported that General Services had just installed three chevron curve signs on the Old Loudon Road southbound approach to the intersection. Two trees were just planted in the new bump-out area to better define the new intersection alignment, and the possibility of adding a few low-growing shrubs next year was also being considered. The temporary drums outlining the revised street alignment had been removed. Rob Mack visited the site and noted that the new tree locations appeared appropriate. It was noted that the resident on the corner was beginning to erect a wood fence that appeared to be within the right-of-way along the new edge of the road. Engineering staff would send a letter to the property owner to inform him/her of the apparent incursion into the right-of-way.

c. Fisherville/Bog intersection.

Rob Mack reported that the signals at this intersection were the first in the city to include a flashing yellow arrow (FYA) operation. Activated in 2010, the northbound left turn lane is controlled by a traditional exclusive red/yellow/green arrow signal during the afternoon commuter peak period, but reverts to FYA operation at all other times. The original intent of the scheduled operation was to test local driver reaction to the (then) new FYA operation. Since then, full-time FYA operation has been installed and successfully-functioned at adjacent US Route 3 North intersections at Borough Road, Sewalls Falls Road and McGuire Street. In light of the observed operational benefits of FYA (reduced unnecessary delays and queuing) at all of these locations along the US Route 3 North corridor, and especially during the peak periods, TOC concurred that it would be appropriate to revert to full-time FYA operation at the Fisherville/Bog intersection. Engineering would coordinate the change with Fire Alarm and would monitor afternoon intersection operations.

Next meeting date: November 15, 2016