



Engineering Services Division

Traffic Operations Committee

Meeting Minutes – November 17, 2015

Attendees: Rob Mack, PE, PTOE, Engineering Services
Ed Roberge, Engineering Services
Jim Major, General Services
Heather Shank, Planning Division
John Thomas, Concord Police Department

A. Regular Discussion Items

1) Overview of city-wide accident data, including prior-month accident summary and discussion of select accident locations, circumstances and potential action.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Crash data for October 2015 was reviewed. There were 116 reportable crashes in October 2015. This compares with 98 and 103 reportable crashes in October 2014 and 2013, respectively. 21 crashes resulted in total of 28 people injured. There were no fatalities.

There were no crashes involving pedestrians.

There were four crashes involving bicyclists: a bicyclist aged 60 years traveling northbound along Bouton Street on the southbound-side sidewalk (wrong way) and colliding into the side of a vehicle turning right out of Church Street onto Bouton Street (injuries, bicyclist at fault, helmet worn); a bicyclist aged 37 years traveling northbound along N. Main Street on the northbound-side sidewalk and colliding into the side of a vehicle crossing from Court Street into the Cumberland Farms (injury, bicyclist at fault, helmet not worn, no light, cycling while impaired); a bicyclist aged 45 years traveling southbound along Mountain Road and colliding into the side of a vehicle crossing Mountain Road from W. Portsmouth Street (injuries, motorist at fault, helmet worn); and a bicyclist aged 67 years traveling westbound along Loudon Road in the eastbound shoulder near Branch Turnpike and being struck by a vehicle turning right out of Branch Turnpike (minor injury, bicyclist at fault, helmet not worn).

2) City Council meeting update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: There were no TOC items considered at the November 9, 2015 City Council meeting.

3) Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) update.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At its October 22, 2015 meeting, TPAC discussed vehicle options being considered for CAT's planned purchase of new buses, as well as options to restripe the remaining segments of Main Street immediately adjacent to the Main Street Complete Streets project.

B. On-going Discussion and Action Items.

- 1) Referral to TPAC from City Council regarding a concern on wheelchair accessibility on Union Street (Council: 8/10/15).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: TOC action items on this referral are complete. This item is pending further consideration by TPAC at its November 19, 2015 meeting.

C. New Discussion and Action Items

- 1) Referral from City Council regarding a resident concern about traffic control at the Mountain/Hoit intersection and the passing zone on Mountain Road to the north (Council: 10/12/15).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a resident concern on traffic speed along the section of Mountain Road just north of the Hoit Road intersection. Of particular concern is the presence of a passing zone along Mountain Road just north of the Hoit Road intersection and in front of the resident's property at #569. Also noted was a safety concern at the Mountain/Hoit intersection where the passing lane ends.

This section of Mountain Road (NH Route 132) is under the jurisdiction of the NHDOT which would be the appropriate authority to consider the request. TOC did however review aspects of the request. Regarding traffic control at the Mountain/Hoit intersection, TOC felt that the NHDOT's use of multiple stop signs and overhead flashing beacon is appropriate, if not beyond, typical requirements for a two-way stop intersection. The subject two-way passing zone is about 1,500 ft long on the straight section of Mountain Road immediately north of Hoit Road. This length of passing lane appeared appropriate for the posted speed of 40 mph, but TOC members noted that the passing zone ends right at the Mountain/Hoit intersection which does have an elevated crash history. CPD three-year crash history in the area includes: 13 crashes at the intersection; and 16 crashes on the Mountain Road segment in the area of the passing lane, most of which were related to turns in and out of driveways. TOC concurred that the subject inquiry was an appropriate consideration for NHDOT. TOC members noted concern on crash history at and just to the north of the Hoit Road intersection and questioned the need for the short passing lane segment this close to the urbanized Concord area. Staff will forward the resident concern to NHDOT District 5 staff, as well as TOC discussion items relative to crash history and the need for the passing lane.

- 2) Resident request to add a STOP sign on the Albin Street approach to Rumford Street (Engineering: 10/25/15).**

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a resident concern that there is no STOP sign on the Albin Street approach to Rumford Street and that Albin Street vehicles don't stop before turning onto Rumford Street.

Albin Street intersects Rumford Street in a T-configuration, with Albin Street being the minor side street. There is no STOP sign on the Albin Street approach. A sign is not required as it is apparent to drivers that Albin Street is the minor side-street in a three-way intersection, and per NH Statutes Albin Street vehicles must yield the right-of-way to vehicles traveling along Rumford Street. Sight lines are appropriate and a street light is located at the intersection. There has not been a crash reported at this intersection in the last 5 years. TOC concurred that addition of a STOP sign was not necessary on this minor side-street approach to the intersection. TOC suggests that if a specific driver is observed driving carelessly, that a plate number or vehicle description can be reported to CPD who will follow up.

3) Referral from Councilor Shurtleff regarding a resident request to extend the 25 mph speed limit on Elm Street from Chandler Street westerly another 1900 feet. (Engineering: 11/8/15).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a resident concern on traffic speeds in the area of #135 Elm Street and a request to extend the 25 mph speed limit that is currently posted east of Chandler Street to a point near #135, or about 1900 feet westerly. Elm Street west of Chandler Street is currently posted 35 mph. Cited was the higher density of residential properties between #135 and Chandler Street as opposed to the more rural nature to the west.

The city's Urban Compact zone ends at Chandler Street. By state statute, the speed limit should be 30 mph within the compact (east of Chandler) and 35 mph outside (west of Chandler). TOC noted a concern with extending 25mph further west of Chandler Street as there are currently no postings that far below the statutory speed on the city's through-street network. Council dropped the speed limit to 25 east of Chandler (in the Urban Compact) in the early 2000's when it lumped that piece of Elm Street in with 100 or so 'local residential-only' streets across the city that were similarly down-posted.

Rob Mack noted that TOC has in the past discussed the current disparity in posted speed limits on residential local streets within the urban core and suggested bringing this city-wide speed limit issue to TPAC this coming Thursday. TOC concurred that a city-wide overview of speed limits would be very beneficial. Regarding Elm Street, the suggestion is to let TPAC look at the big picture first and then see where Elm Street falls in with the rest of 'similar' streets city-wide. In immediate response to Mr. Bouchard's concern on speeding, TOC reviewed some recently-acquired weekday and weekend speed data on Elm west of Chandler Street and there were a number of vehicles recorded traveling on the excessive side. The time-of-day data will be shared with CPD to assist in their enforcement efforts.

4) Referral from City Council regarding residents' request to install deer crossing signs on Borough Road between Blueberry and Millstream Lanes. (Council: 11/9/15).

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: At issue is a resident request to install deer crossing signs due to observed presence of deer on this stretch of road. Rob Mack inquired of staff living in the area who indicated that a doe with several fawns had often been seen grazing in the area of #61 Borough Road this season. CPD reported that only one deer collision was reported along this area of Borough Road in the last 11 years, and that occasional sightings were not atypical of other streets in the rural area.

Deer are ubiquitous in the Concord area. Their potential presence on or near the city's street network can occur at any time and at any place. As such, the 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 can 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, or where crash incidence is 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 animals that could and should be expected at any location.

D. Open Discussion Items

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

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: None.

2) Discussion of city-wide truck route map.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: Discussion deferred to next meeting.

3) Crosswalk request at Franklin/Liberty.

DISCUSSION / ACTIONS: General Services received a request this morning from a resident on Gladstone Street to consider installing another crosswalk at the Liberty/Franklin intersection. There is currently a painted crosswalk that crosses the eastern leg of Franklin Street which connects with sidewalk heading along the east side of Liberty Street. However, there is no crosswalk painted to cross Liberty Street in the east-west direction so as to allow pedestrians from Franklin Street to the west to access the sidewalk along the east side of Liberty Street. The current intersection has sidewalk along north side of Franklin Street with curb ramps at both the northeast and northwest corners. After some discussion, TOC members concurred that a painted crosswalk across the north leg of Liberty Street would be appropriate given the higher traffic usage of the intersection. Additional sidewalk modifications are not necessary to accommodate the painted markings. General Services would schedule the painting of the requested crosswalk at its earliest convenience.

***The next Traffic Operations Committee meeting will be held on
Tuesday, December 15, 2015 @ 12:00 PM in the 2ND Floor Conference Room.***