



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Robert J. Mack, PE, PTOE
Traffic Engineer

DATE: October 21, 2016

SUBJECT: Report from the Traffic Engineer on behalf of the Traffic Operations Committee in response to a referral from Councilor Kenison regarding a constituent request to consider reversing the one-way travel direction on Federal Street.

Recommendation

Accept this report.

Background

On September 12, 2016, City Council referred an inquiry from Councilor Kenison regarding a request from a resident of Federal Street to consider switching the one-way direction on Federal Street from northbound to southbound. The request was considered by the Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) on September 20 and October 18, 2016.

Discussion

At issue is a resident concern on traffic cutting through and speeding on Federal Street toward Warren Street in order to avoid traffic signal delays at the Pleasant/Green intersection. Federal Street is a short and narrow residential street, partially bounded on the east by the former Sacred Heart Church. Travel is limited to one-way northbound from Pleasant Street to Warren Street. The intent of the inquiry to TOC is to assess the feasibility of switching the one-way direction on Federal Street with the objective of eliminating vehicle cut-through potential.

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-thru issue. Staff also went out several times to observe traffic

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. The northbound one-way movement allows residents to turn onto Warren Street, a relatively slow and low-volume collector street. If the one-way changed direction, residents would need to pull out onto Pleasant Street, a high volume arterial street with elevated speeds and potential traffic queues from nearby signals. This would likely increase resident delays and potential for crashes. Furthermore, changing the one-way direction would not eliminate the occasional cut-through; it would only change its direction. A hypothetical southbound one-way on Federal Street could just as easily attract a southbound driver from Green Street trying to avoid the long queues that occasionally form approaching the Pleasant/Green intersection.

Per the City's Traffic Management Policy, consideration of a change in the one-way direction on Federal Street (if still desired) would require a neighborhood meeting, concurrence of 60 percent of the street's residents, a public hearing, and action by City Council to amend the Ordinance.

cc: Traffic Operations Committee