



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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

DATE: November 19, 2018

SUBJECT: Report from the Traffic Engineer on behalf of the Traffic Operations Committee and the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee in response to a referral from City Council regarding a petition from residents in the Guay Street area to reduce the speed limit on Guay Street or install sidewalks.

Recommendation

Accept this report.

Background

On August 13, 2018, City Council forwarded to the Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) and the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) a referral from City Council regarding a petition from residents in the Guay Street area concerning excessive traffic speed and requesting consideration of a reduced speed limit on Guay Street or installation of sidewalk in the neighborhood. Engineering and Police followed up with investigation, speed measurement and enforcement efforts. This referral was reviewed by TOC on September 18, 2018 and by TPAC on August 23 and October 25, 2018.

Discussion

Tom Burrill, resident of Guay Street, spoke at TPAC's August 23, 2018 meeting regarding a petition submitted to City Council in August from 31 residents on Guay Street, Cricket Lane, Temi Road and Dennis Drive asking for a reduced speed limit or sidewalks in the neighborhood. His primary concerns resulted from a close and uncomfortable encounter with an inconsiderate and speeding driver who was soon after identified and spoken to by CPD. His concerns include some traffic driving too fast, streets narrowed by on-street parking and potentially restricting access by emergency or other large vehicles, lack of stop and speed limit signs, and walking safety as there is no sidewalk. TPAC referred the inquiry to TOC which considered the request at its September 18, 2018 meeting.

The above streets constitute a small cul-de-sac neighborhood of about three dozen homes. These streets are short and vary in length from about 200 ft to 1,000 ft. Engineering Services recorded speeds along Guay Street over a several-day period in early September,

2018. Of about 600 vehicles sampled, average speeds were 17-18 mph and 85th percentile speeds were 24 mph. While no speed limit signs are posted in the small neighborhood, overall speeds are lower than either the 30 mph statutory speed limit, or a potential 25 mph posting. CPD also performed targeted speed enforcement on Guay Street, but did not note any inappropriate speeds. TOC and CPD concurred that significant speeding does not appear to be an overall problem on this street. Inappropriate speed could certainly be attributable to a few inconsiderate drivers and that enforcement would be the appropriate action, as was the case here as initiated by the resident. TOC noted that these streets were good examples of the many local residential streets that would be included in the potential city-wide 25 mph speed limit to be considered by TPAC and others during the 2020 update to the City's Transportation Master Plan.

Regarding the installation of a sidewalk along Guay Street, TOC noted that the City's 2017 Pedestrian Master Plan recommends a future sidewalk along Cricket Lane from the gate south to Temi Road, along Temi Road from Cricket Lane to Guay Street, and south along Guay Street from Temi Road to Pembroke Road. The Pedestrian Master Plan included these sidewalks segments as planned sidewalks from the Comprehensive Master Plan and are not indicated as priority sidewalk segments, which would typically be necessary for consideration when the street is reconstructed (not yet programmed in upcoming years). The Pedestrian Master Plan does not currently recommend a sidewalk along Guay Street north of Temi Road.

Regarding the request for stop signs in the neighborhood, it was noted that city practice is to install stop signs at locations based on an engineering study for need and not solely for speed control. Minor-street approaches to T-intersections do not generally require stop signs as the minor side street very clearly terminates at the cross-street and NH Statutes (rules of the road) require drivers to yield the right-of-way to drivers on the through street. In small residential pockets like this neighborhood, use of stop signs is optional; adding more stop signs would have no apparent effect on vehicle operation but would contribute to sign clutter and visual impact.

Mr. Burrill's concerns also include potential street blockage by on-street parking which might occur if cars parked on the street opposite each other. Staff notes that Guay Street, along with the other neighborhood streets, is about 22 feet wide. This is wide enough to park on one side of the street and still allow a minimum of 12 feet for other vehicles to pass by per the Ordinance. At the August 23, 2018 TPAC meeting, Mr. Burrill was advised that if cars were ever parked on both sides and immediately opposite each other, that the 12-foot minimum would not be maintained; in this case the police department should be contacted.

CPD met with the Burrills on October 17, 2018 to further discuss each of their petitioned concerns as well as summarize TOC's findings as summarized above. They were appreciative of the CPD enforcement efforts and felt that they have seen a change in neighbors' driving habits. They said with the added police patrols and recent talk among the neighbors about speeds, it appears folks are more cognizant of their speed. They still noted a concern on the potential for cars to park on both sides of the street and emergency vehicles not being able to fit through. The officer noted that he had never observed

anything like that, but will continue to keep an eye out for it. He suggested that residents call CPD if they ever see such an issue. At its October 25, 2018 meeting, TPAC concurred with these findings and follow-up actions.