



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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

DATE: October 25, 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 Councilor Kenison regarding a constituent concern with intersection sight lines on the Thorndike Street approach to South Street.

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 Councilor Kenison regarding a constituent concern with intersection sight lines on the Thorndike Street approach to South Street. The request was refined by Councilor Kenison in a September 1, 2018 communication to the City Clerk which was provided to staff. This referral was reviewed by TOC on September 18, 2018 and by TPAC on October 25, 2018.

Discussion

At issue is a resident concern that it is difficult to turn left out of Thorndike Street onto South Street southbound due to restricted sight lines to South Street traffic approaching from the south. It was felt that because of on-street parking along South Street, Thorndike Street drivers had to pull well forward into South Street in order to see approaching northbound traffic. The resident also felt that the bump-out at the intersection crosswalk might be contributory to this problem.

Engineering visited the intersection and found that reasonable sight lines were available. The crosswalk bump-out on the south leg of the intersection actually enhances the sight line to the left more so than at most other downtown intersections where on-street parking is allowed within 20 to 30 feet of the side street. In this case, the bump-out sets back South Street parking about 60 feet from Thorndike Street resulting in better potential sight lines. These sight lines would be from a Thorndike vehicle pulled up to the edge of the travel way

on South Street, not back at the stop line which is set back considerably from South Street due to the crosswalk and stop sign locations.

The perceived sight-line interference here is typical across the city where on-street parking occurs. The Ordinance generally prohibits parking within 20 feet of an intersection and 30 feet from a stop sign. Because of crosswalks and the need to locate stop signs, stop lines are often painted well back from the through street, and certainly in advance of any crosswalks. The Concord Police Department advises that per state law, drivers must first stop at a stop sign or stop line, then proceed carefully forward to where they can safely see approaching traffic so that they can judge when it's safe to enter or cross the through street. The 'through street' is considered as the edge of the travel-way, or in this case the projected white edge line along South Street, which is well past the stop line painted on Thorndike Street. While this may seem intuitive to most, we still get occasional concerns from drivers that they can't see because they feel the stop lines are too far back from the cross street.

At its September 18, 2018 meeting, TOC attendees concurred that the current intersection configuration was reasonable and that appropriate sight lines were available with proper driver action. TPAC also concurred with these findings at its October 25, 2018 meeting.

cc: Transportation Policy Advisory Committee, Traffic Operations Committee